



HPUMC
wedding
HANDBOOK

Welcome!

We're so grateful that you've given Highland Park United Methodist Church an opportunity to share with you in your wedding. Our goal is to provide both the personnel and the setting which will uphold the sacredness of God and magnify the joy that characterizes all Christian worship, especially the service of Christian marriage.

We'll work diligently to enable you to experience your wedding ceremony as a true spiritual celebration while maintaining Christian integrity in traditions that have enriched the marriages of countless generations before us.

The opening words of the marriage service begin, "Dearly Beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God..." We'll do our best to enhance the consciousness of God's presence—in your mind and in the minds of those sharing in the service.

The opening statement also contains the words, "to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony." These words remind us that each person is an individual with unique needs and feelings. Through listening and providing careful guidance, we hope the way in which we serve you will clearly demonstrate the warmth and caring of the members of this congregation.

At Cana of Galilee, Christ "adorned and beautified" a wedding with his presence. Through our assistance with your wedding, we hope that you and all concerned will experience his presence again.



Highland Park United Methodist Church
Dallas, Texas

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SCHEDULING OF WEDDINGS

To schedule a wedding or inquire about date(s), please email the HPUMC Wedding Coordinator, **Chelsea Wilderotter** at **214-523-2283** or **weddings@hpumc.org**. Tentative dates can be held for one week by members.

- Arrangements must be completed and finalized during this one-week period by the bride, groom, parents, or a responsible party acting on their behalf.
- Weddings are scheduled so as to allow
- a three-hour time period between the start of each service. The wedding party may arrive 90 minutes before the scheduled time of the wedding and must be out 90 minutes after the scheduled time.
- Weddings are not scheduled in the Sanctuary and in Cox Chapel at the same time.
- Friday weddings are held at 8 pm. Saturday weddings are held at 1, 4, and 7 pm.
- No weddings or rehearsals may be scheduled on Sundays or holidays. For an online version of the Wedding Booklet, please visit hpumc.org/about-weddings. To request a wedding date online, please fill out our form [here](#).

FACILITIES AVAILABLE

- Sanctuary Capacity: 800
- Cox Chapel Capacity: 180

FALL WEDDINGS

The process of scheduling a wedding date for the fall (including the last week of August, all of September, October, and November) is different from scheduling for other times of the year. Because HPUMC is so close to SMU's Ford Stadium, no weddings are booked on "home" dates or on the "open" date on the SMU football schedule. No wedding dates will be booked for fall months until after the official SMU football schedule is confirmed. Confirmation may be as late as April in any given year.

DECEMBER WEDDINGS

Both the Sanctuary and Cox Chapel are decorated beginning with the first Sunday of Advent. Christmas greenery with red ribbon and red poinsettias are used. Once these decorations are in place, they are **NOT** to be removed until after the first Sunday in January. Additional floral arrangements are not needed. Please discuss arrangements with our Wedding

Coordinator so you will have an understanding of these special decorations. No refunds will be issued for weddings booked in the month of December.

MEMBER SCHEDULING

For purposes of this policy book, “member” can be the bride or groom, parents or grandparents of the bride or groom, or children of the bride or groom. The term “member” means persons who have been official members for more than a year at the time of scheduling. Members of Highland Park United Methodist Church or Munger Place Church may reserve these facilities for weddings as far in advance of the ceremony as they wish. December weddings are open only to members.

NON-MEMBER SCHEDULING

“Non-members” are persons who either do not attend HPUMC or MP or who have been official members for less than a year at the time of scheduling. Non-members may schedule their weddings no more than six months prior to the ceremony. We do not schedule weddings for non-members during the month of December.



WALK-IN WEDDINGS

A “walk-in” wedding is defined as one in which there is no music, no flowers, no reception, no rehearsal, a maximum of 10 guests, and in which no church staff members are involved except the officiating minister. Walk-in weddings may be performed by an ordained minister of our staff. They can be held in Cox Chapel or other rooms at HPUMC, such as Cox Parlor, storm lounge, or garden area. Walk-in weddings can only be scheduled for members and are held Monday-Thursday. They cannot be scheduled more than 30 days in advance. To schedule a walk-in wedding, please email the HPUMC wedding coordinator at weddings@hpumc.org.

RECEPTIONS

The Great Hall is available for scheduling wedding receptions after 1 pm weddings ONLY. For information on room setup, please email the Wedding Coordinator at weddings@hpumc.org.

Our in-house caterer is Preston Hollow Catering. All catering needs must be handled through Preston Hollow Catering. No outside caterers are allowed. To discuss catering, please contact **Joan Thompson** at **214-739-3050** or catering@phcatering.net.

BRIDAL PORTRAITS

Bridal portraits may be scheduled at HPUMC based on availability. To schedule a bridal portrait, you must email the HPUMC wedding coordinator at weddings@hpumc.org two weeks in advance to request a date. No bridal portraits can be taken inside the Sanctuary or Cox Chapel as those spaces are reserved for the wedding day ONLY. We ask that brides arrive with hair and makeup completed and, if available, they can reserve Cox Parlor (bridal suite) to get dressed.

For brides getting married at HPUMC, there is no fee to reserve the outdoor space(s) and Cox Parlor (bridal suite). For members not getting married at HPUMC, the fee is \$150.

ESTABLISHED FEES FOR WEDDINGS

Fees for non-members and for those persons who have been members for less than one year at Highland Park United Methodist Church at the time of scheduling are as follows:

- Sanctuary: \$3,000
- Cox Chapel: \$2,800

For those persons who have been members for a year or more at the time of scheduling, the fees are as follows:

- Sanctuary: \$2,250
- Cox Chapel: \$2,100

Fees are to be paid at the time completed arrangements are made for the wedding, and no dates will be confirmed without such payment. These fees include the use of the building, the wedding coordinator, the organist, custodial services, and technical services. The minister's honorarium is not included in the registration fee and should be brought to the rehearsal.

REFUNDING OF FEES

If a couple should have to cancel their wedding, they will receive a refund of 50 percent of fees paid if a letter of cancellation is received by the wedding coordinator, at least 90 days in advance of their scheduled wedding date. This cancellation must be in writing. A verbal cancellation will not be accepted. If wedding is canceled less than 90 days before the wedding, no refund will be given. No refund will be issued for weddings booked in the month of December

OBTAINING THE MARRIAGE LICENSE

How Do I Get A Marriage License?

Marriage licenses are issued and filed at the county level, and marriage registration is primarily a county level function. A couple who intends to be married in Texas must apply in person for a marriage license at a Texas County Clerk's Office. The application for a license must be signed by both the bride and groom in the presence of the county clerk. If this is not possible, any adult or the other applicant may apply on behalf of the absent applicant. (Certain terms must be met. Contact your County Clerk for details.) Applications must be filled out and Social Security Numbers and proof of age and identity must be shown. (Certified Birth Certificate, Driver's License). The filing fee for Dallas County is \$81, payable in cash.

Online Applications

Marriage applications may also be started online. Once the application is submitted, the applicants must go to the County Clerk's office to pay the required filing fee and then obtain their license.

Marriage Education Class Discount

As of September 1, 2008, couples who go through the State of Texas approved Marriage Education Class (House Bill 2685) will not have to pay the \$60 State portion of their marriage license fee. They still pay the smaller county portion, which varies by county. For approved Marriage Education Classes, please visit www.togetherintexas.com or sign up for one of our classes offered at HPUMC. Please contact Laura Beagles at beaglesl@hpumc.org for more information.

NOTE: Marriage license applications associated with the approved Marriage Education Class MUST apply at the County Clerk's Office, Renaissance Tower, 1201 Elm Street, Ste. 2100A, Dallas, TX 75270.

A valid form of photo identification, such as a current driver's license, current passport, certified copy of a birth certificate (issued in the past 10 years), or current military identification is required. Forms of identification cannot be mutilated (for example: torn, taped together or laminated).

Location of Ceremony

Marriage licenses issued in the State of Texas can be used for ceremonies in other states. Please contact your out-of-state officiant before applying for a marriage license. Please keep in mind your license will be recorded only in the county and state in which you applied. It will also be recorded at HPUMC, but no copy will be kept.

How Long Must I Wait Between The Time I Get My License and The Actual Ceremony?

There must be at least 72 hours between the date and time of issuance of a license and the time the ceremony occurs (i.e., the license must be 72 hours old at the time of the wedding) unless one applicant is on active duty in the armed forces, or a waiver is granted. (See County Clerk for more details) A marriage license is valid for 90 days; so with the 72-hour waiting period, there is an 87-day period in which the marriage ceremony can take place.

Whom Do I Contact With Other Questions Regarding Marriages and Divorces?

If you have questions concerning the marriage registration process or if you need a copy of a marriage or divorce decree, you must contact a County Clerk's office for marriage information or a District Clerk's office for divorce decrees.

RESTRICTIONS- SPECIFIC

A. Objectionable Performances

All persons using either the Sanctuary or Cox Chapel are to be mindful that the building has been consecrated for the worship of God and other religious services.

No Civil Ceremonies will be held at HPUMC or Munger Place Church. Only Christian/Methodist Ceremonies will be performed.

B. Objectionable Persons

HPUMC reserves the right through its security personnel to eject any objectionable person or persons from the Sanctuary or Chapel. Upon the exercise of this authority, through HPUMC Security, said person hereby waives any right and all claims for damages against HPUMC.

C. Objectionable Objects

Rice, bird seed, flower petals or confetti may not be thrown after the ceremony.

RIGHT OF REFUSAL

All weddings in the Sanctuary or Cox Chapel take place at the discretion of HPUMC. HPUMC reserves the right to refuse to book either venue for weddings at any time.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

Smoking in Highland Park United Methodist Church is forbidden. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OR DRUGS OF ANY KIND ARE FORBIDDEN ANYWHERE ON THE PREMISES. (This includes but is not limited to chartered or private vehicles on church property, adjacent streets, or dressing rooms. The officiating minister may refuse to perform a wedding at which a member of the wedding party is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or there is evidence that significant drinking occurred off site prior to the arrival of the wedding party before the ceremony.)

HPUMC requires a \$1,000 drug and alcohol deposit check due 30 days in advance of your wedding date. This security deposit will be destroyed after the determination has been made that no policies have been broken. In addition, if the bride, groom, or any of the wedding party appears to be intoxicated, any HPUMC or guest minister reserves the right to refuse to participate in the marriage ceremony and possibly cancel the wedding. If HPUMC cancels a wedding due to this policy, no fees will be returned; and the security deposit will be deposited for the additional \$1,000 fee. It is with regret that it has become necessary to institute this policy. We sincerely hope that you and your wedding party accept and understand this necessity. It is the responsibility of the persons making arrangements for the wedding to see that all members of the wedding party are informed concerning these matters. HPUMC also prohibits the carrying of guns or weapons as defined by Texas State law onto its property. Anyone found in violation of this policy will be escorted off the grounds.

SAFEKEEPING PERSONAL ITEMS

Every possible effort will be made to protect personal items such as wedding dresses, purses, etc. However, **THE CHURCH CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCH ITEMS IF LOST, STOLEN OR DAMAGED.** For security reasons, we cannot accept delivery of dresses here at the church.

It is imperative that money, jewelry and other valuables not be left unattended in the bride or groom's room, but entrusted to a reliable person of the family's choice, or preferably, not be brought into the church at all.

Immediately following the ceremony, all personal items must be removed from dressing rooms.

DELIVERIES

HPUMC assumes no responsibility for gowns, tuxedos, etc., delivered to the Sanctuary/Chapel. HPUMC suggests that, should the bride or groom wish to have a delivery made to the Chapel or Sanctuary, the bride/groom select a person to accept it and keep it in his/her custody until the wedding party arrives. There is no secure space that can be made available.

LOST AND FOUND

Custodians inspect and clean the Sanctuary, Chapel and dressing rooms following each wedding. In the event items are left behind, please call **214-521-3111**. HPUMC is not responsible for damage to or theft of any lost item left in the Sanctuary/Chapel, although it will make reasonable efforts to insure that lost items, if found, be stored in a secure location until returned to their rightful owners.

PARKING

Parking for both the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony is in the North lot, in the Meadows Parking garage and in the surrounding neighborhoods. There is handicap parking in the North lot. See maps of parking locations on page 17 of this handbook.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

Our Wedding Coordinator, **Chelsea Wilderotter** is available for pre-wedding consultation in regard to the details of the rehearsal and of the wedding. Only our Wedding Coordinator or her assistant, in cooperation with the officiating minister, will conduct the rehearsal; she will also assist the minister and the wedding party in the process of the ceremony. She may be contacted by emailing weddings@hpumc.org or calling **214-523-2283**.

OFFICIATING MINISTER

Only a commissioned or ordained Deacon or Elder or Licensed Local Pastor (appointed to HPUMC) in the United Methodist Church may officiate at weddings in this church. The officiating minister may invite another ordained minister to assist. If a couple has not chosen a minister, our Wedding Coordinator will be happy to assist in arranging for one of our staff ministers to officiate at their wedding. Any other person assisting in this service must be approved by the officiating minister.

A wedding is a worship service and must reflect United Methodist theology. It is expected that all elements of the worship service will reflect the wedding liturgy, prayers, and blessings, as set forth in the United Methodist Book of Worship. If the assisting minister is not United Methodist Clergy, the assisting minister's participation is limited to the following: prayer, Scripture reading, and, at the officiating minister's direction, the declaration, blessing and benediction.

WEDDING PROGRAMS

The order of service, scriptures, and all bulletins must be approved by the officiating minister, the organist and the wedding coordinator. It must be carefully proof-read prior to being printed by an outside printer.

CHILDREN

Flower girls and ring bearers should be at least 3 years old. They must be able to walk down the aisle unaccompanied and conduct themselves in an orderly fashion. Flower girls are not permitted to toss flower petals, either real or artificial, in both the Sanctuary or Cox Chapel.



MUSIC

The wedding is a service of worship during which a man and a woman unite their lives in the eyes of God and in the company of those dearest to them. The wedding music should reflect this Christian joy!

All music for weddings must be classical or sacred and must follow the same guidelines as the music for Sunday morning worship: the music must be scriptural by nature and focused primarily on God, God's attributes, and giving thanks and praise to God. Love songs between the couple are appropriate at the reception, not at the wedding, and will not be allowed in the wedding service. Please note that recorded music and pop/love songs are not allowed in the Sanctuary or Cox Chapel at any time.

Our musicians are familiar with a wide variety of literature and will be happy to assist the bride and groom in finding sacred and classical music which reflects the couple's unique feelings and upholds the integrity of the worship service. All musical selections will be discussed with and approved by our wedding coordinator, please contact her at weddings@hpumc.org.

Only HPUMC staff organists are permitted to play the church's organs. We will be happy to arrange for one of our excellent vocal soloists or carillonneurs, if desired. For information on the carillon, please click [here](#). We can also provide names for any additional instrumentalists. The bride and groom will usually be responsible for contracting instrumentalists directly but all outside musicians will need to be approved ahead of time. For suggestions on traditional music choices, please click [here](#).

REHEARSAL

Rehearsals will be conducted exclusively by our staff Wedding Coordinator, in cooperation with the officiating minister, if he or she is present. Members of the wedding party are reminded that throughout the entire rehearsal they are in a holy place dedicated to the worship of God. Wedding parties and guests are expected to dress and act accordingly.

Rehearsals must begin promptly and proceed in a dignified manner. Often there are as many as three rehearsals scheduled in an evening, making punctuality imperative.

If a wedding party is more than 15 minutes late to a rehearsal, it may result in the cancellation of the rehearsal.

Rehearsal times are 4:45, 5:30, or 6:15 pm on the Friday preceding the wedding, with 45 minutes allowed for each. Friday weddings have rehearsals on Thursdays at 6 pm No rehearsals will be scheduled to begin after 6:15 pm

Rehearsals are usually unnecessary if the wedding attendants do not exceed one each for the bride and groom. These plans can be arranged with our Wedding Coordinator and officiating minister.

Staff musicians do not attend rehearsals. Music details are planned at an earlier conference.

Any wedding planners/coordinators/photographers become consultants to and subordinate to our wedding coordinator.

DRESSING AREAS

Dressing rooms for both men and women are provided. The bride's dressing room (and restroom) is provided in Cox Parlor.

The men's dressing room is located in Storm Lounge, Room 241. Arrival times for these dressing areas are scheduled to begin 90 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony. No other rooms are available for arrival at any earlier times.

The wedding party must arrive dressed and ready and the bridal party must have their hair and makeup completed before arriving at the church. Both dressing rooms must be cleared of all personal items immediately following the ceremony. Please

dispose of any trash or unwanted items and return the furniture to its original place. That will give our staff time to clean the rooms for the next wedding party. Failure to comply may result in a \$250 cleaning fee.

VIDEO

Videotaping of wedding ceremonies will be allowed only if the person who will videotape has been approved by our coordinator.

- Any videotaping **MUST** be done from the BALCONY of the Sanctuary or from the REAR of Cox Chapel.
- Aisles must be kept clear.
- The videotaping must be done from a single, stationary position (i.e. the videographer may not move around to various locations), and it must not involve any lighting changes or additional portable lighting in either the Sanctuary or Cox Chapel.
- Remote or directional microphones should be used.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Highland Park United Methodist Church recognizes the value of wedding photographs as a lasting remembrance of this most special occasion, and we expect photographers to respect, honor and abide by the rules and regulations which follow. Please consult with our Wedding Coordinator before a photographer is chosen and a deposit is made. You can benefit greatly from our experiences with various photographic firms.

- Cameras with flash attachments will not be allowed in Cox Chapel or Sanctuary any later than 30 minutes preceding the ceremony or any earlier than the dismissal of the congregation by the minister.
- Photographs may be made in the vestibule, preceding the ceremony, as long as no flashes are aimed toward the interior of Cox Chapel or Sanctuary. The wedding party may return to the altar for photographs after the ceremony if they so desire, following the conclusion of the Recessional. **Please advise your friends and relatives not to take pictures during the ceremony.**
- Ushers should remind wedding guests whom they observe with cameras that no photographs will be allowed.
- Time exposures, with the approval of the officiating minister, may be made during the progress of the sacred ceremony only as follows:
 - There shall be no noise or other distraction, such as walking up and down the aisles, made by the photographers.
 - No photographs may be taken from the organ loft of Cox Chapel.
 1. From the narthex of the Sanctuary/Cox Chapel or just inside the Sanctuary/Cox Chapel doors behind the last pew.
 2. From the Sanctuary balcony

DECORATIONS IN THE SANCTUARY

The Sanctuary may be decorated by a responsible florist who will that the Sanctuary will be properly cleaned following the wedding ceremony. Please consult our Wedding Coordinator before a florist is chosen.

- One arrangement of fresh flowers and/or greenery may be placed on the altar table OR two arrangements may be placed in the urns provided by the church. Our urns are 7 3/4" diameter, 7 1/2" deep. They hold a #6 papier mache pot. You may bring your own pedestals if approved by the wedding coordinator.
- Two candelabras, not to exceed 16 candles each, provided by the florist, may be used with or without the above arrangements. These candles must be votive candles in glass cylinders. Due to past wax damage **WAX TAPERS ARE NOT**



PERMITTED.

- The church will provide a kneeler.
- Bows with or without small greenery and flowers may be hooked (if protective padding is used between the hook and pew) or tied (no tape) on the ends of the pews.
- An aisle runner may not be used.
- A unity candle on its own stand, provided by the florist, may be used in addition to the previously specified number of candles. Protective floor covering **MUST** be used under all candles placed in the Sanctuary, as even the wax from metal cylinders has been known to drip to some extent.
- The florist must remove their non-expendable materials immediately after the wedding.
- No additional greenery or decorations of any kind, including poles down the aisles, may be used in the Sanctuary.
- Cross, altar candles and furniture may not be moved.
- **NO TACKS, PINS, GLUE, NAILS OR TAPE OF ANY KIND MAY BE USED TO FASTEN ANY DECORATION TO THE FURNITURE OR BUILDING.**
- Florists will be held responsible for any damage done to the building and/or furniture and are responsible for cleaning wax from floor and furniture should an accident occur. Failure to do so, as well as failure to remove all non-expendable decorations immediately after the wedding, may result in a fine to pay for damages and the risk of not being allowed to provide services for future weddings at HPUMC.

DECORATIONS IN COX CHAPEL

Please consult our Wedding Coordinator before a florist is chosen. She is in a position to be very helpful to you in this selection.

- Flowers in Cox Chapel are to be limited to one arrangement placed on the altar table or two arrangements placed on the pedestals provided. The pedestals are 4 feet tall, and the tops are 11.5" square.
- The candles and candlesticks provided by the church are to remain on the altar for all services of worship.
- No additional candelabra may be used in Cox Chapel.
- Use of additional palms, ferns and other floral greenery, including poles down the aisles is prohibited.
- Kneeling cushions will be furnished. No kneeler is necessary.
- Bows with or without small greenery and flowers may be hooked (if protective padding is used between the hook and pew) or tied (no tape) on the ends of the pews.
- **NO TACKS, PINS, NAILS, GLUE OR TAPE OF ANY KIND MAY BE USED TO FASTEN ANY DECORATION TO THE FURNITURE OR BUILDING.**
- An aisle cloth may not be used.
- A unity candle on its own stand, provided by a florist, may be used. A sheet of plastic must be placed underneath the candles to protect the floor.
- The florist must remove their non-expendable materials immediately after the wedding.

LIGHTING IN THE SANCTUARY

Our Sanctuary lighting is preset for a variety of functions. It is not an easy or brief process to change the lightboard, and we are unable to make one exception that would expose us to multiple changes later and at the whim of virtually every bride or family. We feel we have labored to make the wedding lighting as optimal as possible, and we are confident that the current “wedding setting” is well tested, applicable to a variety of settings, and, in fact, satisfactory to those who have used the Sanctuary recently. We hope and trust all will understand and accept this policy that makes matters equal for all.

PARKING IS AVAILABLE IN:

- The parking lot north of the church
- The parking lot at the Biggers Building
- The garage of the Meadows Museum (northeast of the church)

