



WEDDINGS

AT

NEW HOPE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

GETTING STARTED

The marriage ceremony in the United Methodist Church is a special form of Christian worship where a couple declares before God and in the presence of family and friends their desire to be united in a new, sacred and lasting relationship.

New Hope United Methodist Church welcomes couples who wish to have a wedding service in keeping with the faith and practices of the church. The pastor and staff who will be involved in your ceremony are pleased to be a part of this important day in your life. It is our desire to assist you in any way that we can to make your wedding beautiful and your marriage enduring and joyful.

The following policies have been established to help make your wedding a joyous and safe occasion in keeping with the spirit of Christian marriage and Christian worship. Please read this information carefully.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Administrative Assistant Kathy Nelsen | 402-466-5238 | newhopeumclincoln@gmail.com

Pastor Helen Paus | helenpaus@gmail.com

Musician Dr. Denis Plutalov | dplutalov@gmail.com

SETTING THE DATE, TIME & LOCATION

- All wedding reservations must be made through the New Hope office.
- No weddings are scheduled on Sunday mornings
- No weddings are scheduled on holidays or the weekends of these holidays: New Year's Day, Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter), Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the week before Christmas, Christmas Eve, Christmas, or any dates that conflict with church activities. Some exceptions may be made at the discretion of the pastor.
- The sanctuary seats 300.
- If your wedding plans change or a cancellation occurs, you must notify the church office as soon as possible so the date may be opened on the church calendar.

PREPARING FOR THE WEDDING

We are happy to help in guiding and advising you on ceremony details.

New Hope UMC will:

- provide confirmation of wedding and rehearsal dates and times;
- consult with the wedding couple to go over guidelines and answer questions;
- collect all fees and forms;
- prepare the marriage license with the proper information and submit it to the county clerk;
- unlock the church on the day of the wedding (you may request a key, if necessary);
- prepare the dressing rooms and the Sanctuary (this does not include decorating);
- instruct the ushers and candle lighters on the procedure for seating guests and lighting candles;
- start the wedding on time;
- prepare attendants for the responsibility of lining up and directing the wedding party for the processional and recessional;
- leave the church in an appropriate condition for Sunday services;
- handle other duties as agreed.

New Hope UMC will not:

- do personal errands for the wedding party.

WORKING WITH THE PASTOR

A wedding at New Hope United Methodist Church is an act of worship, so we expect that a pastor will officiate. The pastor considers participation in your marriage ceremony to be a privilege and honor, and is available to perform wedding services throughout the year.

- Meeting with the pastor will:
 - look at the meaning of the marriage ceremony and the details of the service;
 - allow you and the pastor to get acquainted, to make the wedding more meaningful.
- Schedule an appointment with the pastor prior to your wedding by calling the church office at 402-466-5238 or by emailing newhopeumclincoln@gmail.com.
- Failure to contact the officiating pastor could result in the postponement of your wedding.
- If you would like other clergy to participate in your ceremony or officiate, the visiting pastor must contact New Hope's pastor, who will then grant or deny permission.

SCHEDULING PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING

- Pre-marital counseling is highly encouraged for all couples and may be required at the discretion of the pastor.
- The counseling sessions will:
 - consider readiness and expectations for marriage, communication, and the place of Christian faith in the marriage;

PLANNING THE CEREMONY

- Wedding services at New Hope use "A Service of Christian Marriage" as published in *The United Methodist Book of Worship*.
- Both the words and actions of the service consistently reflect the belief that couples are equal partners in Christian marriage and that they are entering into the marriage of their own volition.
- Those present are understood to be an active congregation, rather than simply passive witnesses. They give their blessing to the bridal couple and to the marriage, and they join in prayer and praise.
- Ethnic and cultural traditions are encouraged and may be incorporated into the service at the discretion of the pastor.

CHOOSING A READING

- You are free to choose a poem, spiritual text, or reading for the ceremony that will reveal your specific personality and consequently sum up and give meaning to your wedding day.

- Once you have an idea, look at books, poems and scriptures that closely resemble what you want your day to represent.

SELECTING THE MUSIC

- Select music that will reflect the Christian joy of the occasion and be appropriate to the spirit of the worship.
- Vocal music should aspire to:
 - praise God for the joy and blessing of marriage, or
 - bring instructive Word from God for the marriage, or
 - pray for God’s blessing upon the marriage.
- If you have questions on appropriate music or need suggestions, contact New Hope’s musician, Dr. Denis Plutalov.
- If needed, copies of music desired in the service should be provided to the keyboardist and pastor (in the proper key) six weeks in advance of the ceremony. Please be aware that the keyboardist cannot play from photocopies of copyrighted music for the wedding service.
- **PRELUDE:** Unless you have a specific request, the keyboardist will select appropriate music to play while the guests are being seated, usually beginning thirty minutes before the wedding is scheduled to start.
- **PROCESSIONAL:** Either one or two pieces of music should be selected for the wedding party’s entry into the church and walk down the aisles, depending on whether a separate selection is desired for the bride.
- **SERVICE MUSIC:** The congregation may join in hymns of praise and prayer (*some suggestions are listed on page 14*), or vocal or instrumental soloists may offer appropriate musical selections. A selection before the processional and one or two during the service is recommended.
- **RECESSIONAL:** You will need to choose one or two selections to be played as the wedding party exits and the parents, grandparents and other special guests are escorted from their seats.

CHOOSING YOUR WEDDING PARTY

- **Attendants** can be a great help in preparing for the wedding and a big support on the day itself. Most weddings have six or less attendants. Only two, usually the persons of honor, are required to sign the marriage license.
- **Ushers** seat the wedding guests and typically escort parents, grandparents, and other special guests in the processional. We recommended having one usher for every 50 guests, with two specifically selected to help line up the processional, seat late-arriving guests, and help with the recessional. The host couple or attendants may also serve as ushers.

- **Flower Children** and **Ring Bearers** seem to understand their role at the age of four or older. If they are too young to stand quietly during the service, make plans for them to be seated with a designated person following the processional. It is important that any children in the wedding party are allowed time to rest and have something to eat prior to the wedding.
- **Candle Lighters** can be the ushers, or a couple of other friends or relatives. If children are selected, they should be old enough for the responsibility and tall enough to reach the wicks on the candles. The church provides two brass snuffers for lighting and extinguishing candles. We will instruct the candle lighters at the wedding rehearsal.

DESIGNING THE PROGRAM

- The program serves as both “table of contents” for your service and a souvenir for your guests to remember your special day.
- The cover may include the names of the couple along with the wedding date and location and a scripture or meaningful quote.
- The inside can be as detailed and personal as you choose. Think about including:
 - Music information to include titles and composers for the processional, hymns/ songs and the recessional;
 - Wedding participants, from the officiant, to the wedding party and musicians;
 - Consider listing how each wedding party member relates to each of you;
 - Thank you notes to those who have made your wedding special;
 - Personal information such as poems, quotes or stories about how you met and memorials to loved ones can be included;
 - Your new address and phone number to let people know how they might contact you.
- We have samples of programs should you like to see some.

COMPLETING THE PLANNING FORM

- The wedding day planning form will be provided to you
- The information you provide on the form is necessary to plan the rehearsal, reserve seating for your family, direct the processional and be informed of any special instructions.
- The form must be completed with all information and returned by the final meeting.
- Your final meeting will be four to six weeks before your wedding.

GETTING YOUR MARRIAGE LICENSE

- Obtain a marriage license in person at the Lancaster County Clerk's Office in the City County Building, 555 South 10th Street, Room 108, in Lincoln.
- You will be responsible for the fee for the license, and you will receive the original with the seal, which is needed to change your name on documents.
- The 24-hour/60 second Marriage License Information Line is 402-441-8448.
- A driver's license, birth certificate or passport is required to verify your birth dates.
- You will have to provide your birthplaces, social security numbers, the end date of any previous marriages, parents' names, mothers' maiden names and parents' birthplaces.
- Both the partners must be present to sign the application.
- Additional information is available at the Lancaster County Clerk's office, 402-441-7484.
- You will receive the "official" marriage license. Please bring license to the wedding rehearsal.
- We will need the names and addresses of your witnesses and, if you are having a guest clergy perform your wedding, their current address.

ATTENDING THE REHEARSAL

- The wedding service is planned with the pastor.
- The rehearsal is usually held the evening prior to the wedding, and lasts 45-minutes to an hour.
- All participants in the wedding service, including parents, attendants, flower girls, ring bearers, candle lighters and ushers should be present and on time. A guest pastor participating in your ceremony is also expected to attend.
- The logistics of the service are covered, such as lighting candles, where your family will sit, the roles of the ushers and other such details.
- We will be in charge of all proceedings.
- Solo music will not be performed during the scheduled rehearsal. Soloists needing microphones may practice either right before or after the rehearsal, or on the wedding day, between pictures being taken and the seating of guests. The sound technician will be available during these times to operate the sound system, if requested in advance.

DECORATING THE CHURCH

- Plants, furniture, seasonal decorations or other items may not be moved without permission.
- Tacks, nails, staples, adhesive or tape are not to be used due to their potential to damage the church.
- Flower arrangements may be placed on the altar, along with the Bible, which is always on the altar.

- Artificial petals must be used by the flower girl if they will be dropped on the floor.
- The candles on the altar may not be decorated.
- All candles must be extinguished after the ceremony.
- Any candles purchased for use in the church need to be dripless.

GETTING DRESSED

- Dressing rooms are available to both the bridal attendants and the groomsmen/ushers. No alcohol or glitter are allowed in the dressing rooms.
- Items must be removed from the dressing rooms before leaving the church.
- We will make every reasonable effort to protect personal items brought to the church.
- New Hope will not be held responsible for personal property lost, stolen or damaged prior to, during or following the wedding.
- Please make sure your wedding party's valuables are secure at all times.

PINNING ON FLOWERS

- We recommend that you have someone familiar with everyone in the wedding party to pin on flowers. This person will need to be at the church early to do this.
- The florist providing corsages and boutonnieres should label each one clearly with their wedding role, not name. Example: Usher vs. John Smith, or Grandmother vs. Betty Brown.

TAKING PICTURES & VIDEOTAPING

- We will provide guidelines to give to your photographer, if needed.
- Photographers must plan their agenda according to the church time parameters.
- We recommend that you have pictures taken before the ceremony. Photographs must be completed one hour prior to the service.
- If it is an important tradition that the wedding couple not see each other before the ceremony, photographs including both the partners may be taken after the service. As a courtesy to wedding guests, you are encouraged to complete such photography within thirty minutes.
- During the service, the photographer must remain out of the worship area. Photos of the processional and recessional are permitted. All other photos must be taken from the balcony or the back of the sanctuary.
- Video cameras are allowed on the floor during the service, as directed by the wedding staff. We will not be responsible for the quality or sound on independent videos.
- We can record your ceremony using our camera system, if you wish.

SERVING SNACKS

- You may provide a light snack for the wedding party prior to the ceremony. Sandwiches, relishes, fruits, cheese/meat trays, chips, crackers and cookies are all appropriate.
- New Hope encourages and will provide ice water for the wedding party.
- Assign someone to be responsible to setup and clean up the food before leaving the church.

SIGNING THE WEDDING BOOK

- A table will be provided for your wedding book. You may want to provide your own tablecloth, flowers or decorations for the table.
- The wedding book will be closed approximately five minutes prior to the service.
- Any late-arriving guests will be asked to sign the wedding book at the reception.

RECEIVING CARDS & GIFTS

- A separate table for gifts will be provided, covered with a white linen tablecloth.
- You may provide your own special receptacle or basket for cards.

SEATING GUESTS

- Ushers will begin seating guests 30 minutes prior to the wedding time.
- Guests may be seated on either the bride's side or the groom's side, or on either side to provide more balanced seating.
- We will instruct the ushers as to proper seating etiquette.

ESCORTING PARENTS & GRANDPARENTS

- We will discuss with you the details of ushering and seating your family.
- Parents, grandparents and other special guests will be asked to wait with the rest of the wedding party prior to the service. They will be ushered in and placed in special seating.
- You will be responsible for providing someone who will line up everyone in order, and direct when to move down the aisle.

JOINING CEREMONIES

- If you will be lighting a unity candle, you will need to provide your own unity candle and two tapers for the side candles. The church will provide the candle holders. Candles must be dripleless.
- If you will be performing a sand ceremony, you will need to provide the vessels (typically three glass vessels) and two colors of sand.

SIGNING THE MARRIAGE LICENSE

- State law requires the validating signatures of two individuals who witnessed the wedding. Ordinarily, the persons of honor are chosen for this purpose.
- The marriage license will be signed immediately following the wedding service.
- We will mail the “official” copy back to the County Clerk in the envelope provided.
- A copy will be mailed the bridal couple the following week.

GREETING YOUR GUESTS

- To greet your guests after the wedding, you may:
 - have a reception line at the church.
 - return down the aisle and greet guests as they leave their seats.
 - greet guests at your reception.
 - visit guests at each table at your reception.
- Blowing bubbles outside, ringing bells, or notes of appreciation are all appropriate for guests to celebrate the wedding.
- The throwing of rice, birdseed, flower petals, confetti, or releasing balloons is not permitted.

REMOVING DECORATIONS

- Decorations must be removed after all of the guests have been dismissed from their seats.
- We recommend that you provide the people selected to remove decorations a list of all the items that they will be collecting.
- Any items left at the church will be kept for one week and then discarded.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OR ILLEGAL DRUGS ARE ALLOWED ON THE CHURCH PREMISES!**

The church reserves the right to ask anyone whose functioning is impaired by the use of these substances to leave the premises. The wedding will be cancelled should the pastor determine the use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs by anyone in the wedding party.

- **NEW HOPE IS A SMOKE-FREE FACILITY**

Please assist us in communicating this to the wedding party and your guests

- **WEDDING RECEPTIONS ARE NOT TO BE HELD AT NEW HOPE.**

The church does not have resources available to host these events.

WEDDING FEES

Facility Usage Donation \$200

Cleaning Fee..... \$75

Pastor Honorarium..... \$200

Musician Honorarium \$150

If you are using a different musician, this fee will not apply

Audio/Visual Tech \$50

Recording of the Ceremony..... \$25

This is only applicable if you want us to make a recording of the ceremony

SAMPLE TIMELINE

6-18 months before your wedding:

- Contact the New Hope UMC to check availability of church;
- Complete the *Information Form*;
- Receive confirmation from New Hope with the date and reservation for wedding, and the date and reservation for rehearsal;
- Meet with the pastor to go over guidelines;

6-12 months before your wedding:

- Give your photographer and florist/decorator copies of the New Hope guidelines for them;
- Contact the New Hope keyboardist.

3 months before your wedding:

- Schedule a meeting with the pastor.

6 weeks before your wedding:

- If needed, provide the keyboardist and pastor the music you wish to use in your service for approval.

2 - 3 weeks before your wedding:

- Meet with the pastor to complete and go over the *Planning Form*, discuss decorations, pay remaining fees.

1 week before your wedding:

- Confirm arrival and delivery time of florist, caterer, photographer and limo service;
- Bring your marriage license to the church office;
- Proofread your wedding program prior to printing;
- Notify the church office if you will be leaving your floral arrangements for the Sunday services.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

Immediately before the rehearsal:

- Vocalist may practice with accompanist and sound system;
- Decorations may be brought to the church with permission from the wedding coordinator.

At the rehearsal:

- Entire wedding party should be in attendance and ON TIME!
- Bring at least five copies of your program for the pastor and New Hope wedding staff.
- Church decoration may start

BE SURE TO ARRANGE YOUR ARRIVAL TIME PRIOR TO THE DAY OF YOUR WEDDING.

Pre-arranged arrival time:

- Church unlocked (or you can use your key to enter);

- Florist may deliver flowers;
- Church may be decorated;
- Photographer may setup;
- Wedding party may get dressed;
- Snacks may be setup in the lower level.

3 hours before your wedding:

- Flowers should be pinned on wedding party;
- Wedding Couple may meet privately to exchange gifts and have first photos;
- Photo session may start. You may also have a photo session after the ceremony.

45 minutes before your wedding:

- Photos must be completed;
- Items should be removed from dressing rooms;
- Snack area must be cleaned up;
- Vocalist may practice with accompanist and sound system;

30 minutes before your wedding:

- Wedding book and gift attendants must be in narthex;
- Ushers will begin seating guests;
- Prelude will begin.

15 minutes before your wedding:

- Wedding party, parents, grandparents, and other special guests should gather in Magee Parlor.

5 minutes before your wedding:

- Attendants will lineup wedding party;
- Wedding book will be closed;
- All other guests will be seated immediately.

Immediately following your wedding:

- Parents, grandparents, and other special guests will be escorted out by ushers;
- Other guests will be ushered out by rows;
- Your witnesses and the pastor will sign the marriage license, and the “commemorative” copy will be given to the person of your choice;

After your guests have left the church:

- If not taken before the ceremony, photos of wedding couple together may be taken;
- Decorations and wedding gifts must be removed from church;
- Dressing rooms must be checked for any remaining items.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READINGS

Genesis 1:26-28, 31a

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon earth." So God created humankind in God's holy image, in the image of God they were created; male and female they were created. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." God saw everything that was made, and indeed, it was very good.

Genesis 2:18-24

And God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air; and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs, and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib, that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken. Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Proverbs 3:3-6

Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in sight of God and man. Trust in God with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7

My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard on our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned.

John 15:9-17

Jesus said, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giv-

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

If I speak in tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and how long and how high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds every thing together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

SUGGESTED HYMNS**From *The United Methodist Hymnal*:**

642	As Man and Woman We Were Made	408	The Gift of Love
451	Be Thou My Vision	138	The King of Love My Shepherd Is
158	Come, Christian, Join to Sing	643	When Love Is Found
164	Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life	549	Where Charity and Love Prevail
695	O Lord, May Church and Home Combine	647	Your Love, O God, Has Called Us Here
645	O Perfect Love		