

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

1. Weddings in the Houghton Wesleyan Church are primarily intended for members of the church, the Houghton community, and the Houghton College/Houghton Academy community. The officiating minister must be a member of the pastoral staff or of the community unless other arrangements are made with the Senior Pastor.
2. It is expected that the couples being married under the auspices of the local church will participate in the program of marriage preparation. This includes:
  - a. An engaged couples' retreat in the winter/spring; and/or
  - b. Private counseling sessions with the officiating minister. When circumstances make these requirements impossible, other premarital preparation may be arranged with the officiating minister.

## THE SERVICE

The marriage service is to be planned with the officiating pastor. Meaningful creativity in the elements of the service is encouraged, but the service is subject to the pastor's approval. Since we believe that Holy Communion is a public event, if it is included in the service, it must be made available to all who are believers, not just the bride and groom.

## THE MUSIC & SOUND

The music of the service should primarily point toward God and offer praise to Him or offer prayer for the couple. It will be the responsibility of the bride and groom to arrange for the musicians and to work with them in selecting appropriate music, and to convey information to the church Music and Worship Director at least four weeks before the rehearsal/wedding.

## THE PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography should be done in good taste to avoid disruption in the worshipful atmosphere of the ceremony. Flash photography is not to be used during the ceremony and all video equipment must be in place well in advance and operated as unobtrusively as possible.

## OTHER EXPECTATIONS

1. Arrangements regarding date, musicians, and counseling should be made as early as possible;
2. Wedding programs are the responsibility of the bride and groom. If an announcement is to be placed in the church newsletter please note that the deadline is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month.
3. Minimum appropriate honorarium for the organist is \$150 but the fee may be more depending on the amount of music performed and necessary extra rehearsals (such as with soloists, separate from the regular wedding rehearsal).
4. A similar honorarium is appropriate for the officiating minister.
5. A custodial fee of \$150.00 is required.
6. An honorarium of \$150.00 is required for the sound system operator.

## **BUILDINGS: Policies Governing the Use of the Facilities of Houghton Wesleyan Church for Weddings**

1. [Application for Wedding Use of Church Facilities](#) must be filed with the church office. A deposit of ½ the total fee must accompany the application when it is returned to the church office. Only upon receipt of the application and deposit can the date for use be confirmed.
2. Furniture may be carefully moved as needed and must be returned to its original location. Please pick up—not drag—the furniture.
3. No tape of any kind may be used to hang decorations on the church sanctuary furniture (pews etc.) Masking tape or sticky tack may be used to hang decorations on walls but must be removed after event. Nothing on the Communion table or pulpit should be moved without permission of one of the Houghton Wesleyan Church pastors.
4. Birdseed or bubbles, in lieu of rice or confetti, is preferred for wedding celebrations and then only used outdoors.
5. If candles are used, they must be purchased from the church office at the current cost to the church. Special candles purchased from the church are required for all usage except for Unity candles. Candle holders available are:
  - a) Two 7-candelabra, adjustable for full horizontal, slat, or inverted-V formations;
  - b) Two single-candle holders on the communion table;
  - c) Sixteen single-candle holders for the pews. Note: ceiling fans will accelerate the burning of the aisle candles.
  - d) Two brass candle lighters.
6. Unity candles (if used for the ceremony) may be purchased by the bridal party from non-church sources.
7. It is suggested that the bride and her attendants use one of the rooms below the sanctuary, while the groom and his attendants use one of the rooms in the Christian Educational building.
8. Qualified musicians may play the sanctuary piano and/or the pipe organ. Practice times should be arranged through the church office. It is requested that guest organists please contact the church organist for instructions on use of the instrument. Please name the organist on the application form giving contact information.
9. No floral arrangements or other decorations are to be placed on the piano, organ or organ casework. Floral arrangements may be left for Sunday services if desired. However, all candles, pew decorations, aisle runner, and other decorations must be removed.

Thank you for helping us to be good stewards of our facilities