



FIRST MERIDIAN HEIGHTS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Planning Your Wedding Booklet and FAQs

We want you to have a beautiful wedding at First Meridian Heights!

Your wedding will be one of the most important days of your life. Your friends and family will gather with you as you stand before God and ask His blessing on your marriage. We want to help you make your wedding the incredibly special day you want it to be.

Our experience in performing weddings has helped us develop procedures to make your wedding ceremony very special and memorable. Most of all, we want to make sure your marriage begins on the solid spiritual ground that will help it flourish through the upcoming years.

We perform weddings for both members and non-members alike.

FIRST STEPS IN ARRANGING YOUR WEDDING:

1. Come to church! Attend a few of our services and meet our minister to see if we're a right fit for the two of you. See how FMH feels to you both as a church home. Our hope is that engaged couples and newlyweds will want to make this their church home for many years to come.
2. Read through this booklet carefully so you will know what to expect and to enjoy.
3. Contact the church's administrative assistant to see about placing your wedding date tentatively on the church's calendar.
4. Provide the administrator your contact information (phone numbers and email) so we can get you the materials you will need to move forward.
5. Schedule a meeting with the wedding coordinator to plan your ceremony details and start all other necessary logistics.
6. Schedule with the minister to discuss some of the issues you will face as a couple. The minister will help you be sure there is a faith basis for what you are doing.

Our information is as follows:

First Meridian Heights Presbyterian Church

4701 N. Central Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46205

PH: (317) 283-1305 | Fax: (317) 921-2266

Email: fmhpc@live.com | Web: fmhpc.org

Wedding Coordinator

Mara Hoberty

Cell: (317) 403-8886 | mhoberty0221@gmail.com

WEDDING FEE

Members: \$750 | Non-Members: \$1000

This fee includes the normal fee for the minister, the services of an organist for the ceremony itself, the services of the church's wedding coordinator and the custodian staff. During the actual ceremony and rehearsal, the use of the sanctuary and all rooms in which the wedding party can prepare are included as well.

WEDDING FAQs (FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)

I am not a church member. Can I still have my wedding at First Meridian Heights?

Yes you may. If you do not have a church home, we invite you to you attend worship at FMH and eventually consider going through the process to become a formal member. If you are an active member of another local congregation we ask you to be married at that location. We do not lend out the sanctuary to other churches and their pastors.

My fiancé and I come from different church backgrounds. Can we still have our wedding at your church?

Many couples face this issue today. We do many weddings in which the bride and groom come from different church backgrounds, even different faiths. Our minister will discuss this with you.

Do both my fiancé and I have to speak to the minister?

Yes, you do and you must do so together.

What kinds of questions might the minister ask us?

The minister who performs your wedding will meet with you as a couple. Do not get nervous about this meeting. The minister seeks to make sure that you, as a couple, have considered your feelings about the major issues confronting two people in a married relationship. There is no right or wrong answer.

Here are some issues to discuss together before meeting with the minister:

- 1) Have you discussed whether or not to have children, and if the answer is yes, who is going to be the primary care giver?
- 2) Do you have a clear idea of each other's financial obligations and goals, and do your ideas about spending and saving mesh?
- 3) Have you discussed your expectations for how the household will be maintained, and are you in agreement on who will manage the chores?
- 4) Have you fully disclosed your health histories, both physical and mental?
- 5) Is your partner affectionate to the degree that you expect?
- 6) Can you comfortably and openly discuss your sexual needs, preferences and fears?
- 8) Do you truly listen to each other and fairly consider one another's ideas and complaints?
- 9) Have you reached a clear understanding of each other's spiritual beliefs and needs, and have you discussed when and how your children will be exposed to religious/moral education?
- 10) Do you like and respect each other's friends?

- 11) Do you value and respect each other's parents, and is either of you concerned about whether the parents will interfere with the relationship?
- 12) What does your family do that annoys you?
- 13) Are there some things that you are NOT prepared to give up in the marriage?
- 14) If one of you were to be offered a career opportunity in a location far from the other's family, are you prepared to move?
- 15) Does each of you feel fully confident in the other's commitment to the marriage and believe that the bond can survive whatever challenges you may face?
- 16) What are your expectations for the ceremony itself?

Please note, our church does not offer a formal couples counseling prior to marriage. If you feel that you both would benefit from couples counseling, there are many resources here in town that can be researched and discussed.

What makes a Christian marriage?

Legal marriage contracts do not require a minister's blessing. By choosing to be married in a Christian church, specifically at First Meridian Heights, you are acknowledging that Jesus Christ plays a role in your relationship. Services of marriage are an important part of the Christian ministry of this congregation. Appreciating how faith affects your marriage takes a lifetime.

Can a minister from a former home church assist in the service?

On limited occasions, other ministers are a part of the ceremony, such as a giving a reading, or scripture. Our minister will play the lead role in your nuptials. If you have a clergy member that you would like to include in the ceremony, you can discuss this more with the minister during your time together

What guidelines exist for the photographer and the videographer? What kinds of decorations are allowed in the church?

Our wedding coordinator will help with these questions and many others you will ask as you plan for your big day.

What about the rehearsal?

The church wedding coordinator will conduct the rehearsal of the service. Usually, the rehearsal is held on the evening before the wedding.

Can I bring my own organist in for the wedding?

FMH does employ its own organist, who also plays piano. In the event our organist is not available for your day, then you may bring in your own organist. The wedding coordinator will connect you to our

organist who will discuss music, including any special music you might be considering, and will explain all procedures, deadlines, and extra costs, if any.

Can we use the tv monitors in the sanctuary as part of the ceremony?

Yes, you may. Previous couples have used the monitors to show slide shows of the couple growing up and dating. This is totally acceptable, and mostly used while guests are arriving prior to the ceremony. Please speak with the wedding coordinator if you have an interest in using the equipment. A flash drive will need to be brought a week prior to the ceremony to make sure it will work on our equipment.

WEDDING MUSIC GUIDELINES

The wedding coordinator will confirm availability with an organist as soon as your wedding date is confirmed by our church office. The organist can also contract with additional singers and/or instrumentalists from our church, if you wish. You may also bring in your own singers and/or instrumentalists, so please make sure your wedding coordinator is aware. You will want to give as much lead time as possible in hiring out the other musicians. Please note the below guidelines you will need to provide our organist:

- A copy of the selections of organ music. You may make a selection from the suggestions provided below or choose other music. There are also many wedding websites that can offer suggestions to your liking.
- A request for the organist to contract for any additional singers and/or instrumentalists you might wish to include.
- The names and contact information of any outside singers or instrumentalists you plan to bring in.
- The repertoire to be performed by any outside musicians.
- Notice of additional music to be played during the lighting of the unity candle, if you wish the organist to do this.
- Any other additional music you might wish the organist to play.

The organist does not attend the wedding rehearsal, which is primarily a time for you and your wedding coordinator to go over logistics and to rehearse the choreography of the ceremony.

The organist will begin the prelude 30 minutes before the wedding begins. Please make every effort to be finished with pictures in the Sanctuary at least 40 minutes before the wedding start time.

The organist will play postlude music until your guests have all exited the Sanctuary. If you wish to use recorded music for the postlude (or for any other portion of your wedding) please notify the organist, who will give you further instructions.

If extensive consultation time with the couple or rehearsal time with your singers or instrumentalists is required, or the organist is required to be present at the rehearsal, an additional fee may be assessed. If the musicians are contracted through the church, there may be extra fees associated with their time and possible rehearsal. Please work out those details with the musicians themselves.

Music Selection Form

Prelude - Selection is left to the discretion of the organist, who will play pieces from the standard wedding repertoire, as well as other appropriate music. If there is something you would like played, please notify the organist and every effort will be made to meet your request.

Entrance of the parents/mothers and the bridal party: Please choose one or two of the following selections. If only one selection is indicated, everyone but the bride will process to the same music.

Below are some common selections, but not all-inclusive. You are more than welcome to make other selections. Please speak with the organist regarding your selections.

Bridesmaid Entrance

- Ave Maria (C Gounod/J.S. Bach)
- Canon in D (J Pachelbel)
- Largo, from Serses (G.F. Handel)
- Panis Angelicus (C. Franck)
- Autumn, from The Four Seasons (A. Vivaldi)
- Spring, from The Four Seasons (A. Vivaldi)

Entrance of the Bride:

- Rondeau (J. Moure)
- Prelude from Te Deum (M.A. Charpentier)
- Trumpet Voluntary (J. Clarke)
- Trumpet Tune (H. Purcell)
- Trumpet Voluntary, Opus 6, No. 5 (J. Stanley)
- Festive Trumpet Tune D (D. German)

Recessional:

- Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream (F. Mendelssohn)
- Autumn, from The Four Seasons (A. Vivaldi)
- Spring, from The Four Seasons (A. Vivaldi)
- Ode to Joy, from Symphony No. 9 (L. Van Beethoven)
- Trumpet Tune (H. Purcell)
- Trumpet Voluntary

The Basic Wedding Ceremony

What follows is the ceremony most commonly used at First Meridian Heights. Couples are welcome to discuss changes to this ceremony with the ministers during their meetings prior to the wedding day.

Welcome

My friends, we are gathered here in the presence of God to join together (Bride and Groom's first names) in marriage. Marriage is not to be entered into lightly but with certainty, and mutual respect, and with a sense of awe, and joy.

Declaration of Intent

Marriage is established by God. In marriage a man and woman join themselves together in love. And love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or conceited or proud; love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

Eternal God, by your providence, two people have met and a relationship has grown; we thank you for your love that enables them to grow closer together. Be with us now, Lord that (names of bride and groom) may be joined together in a relationship of love and caring. Give them a new attitude appropriate for this new relationship; and enrich them with your grace so they can enjoy each other's company, undergo the cares, endure the trials and express to each other the love you have shown them in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Addressed to the couple:

A good marriage just doesn't happen. It must be created - be built with thoughtfulness, consideration, respect and kindness. It takes a willingness for you each to be sensitive to the other's needs -- and a willingness to put the other's needs ahead of your own.

The vows:

(Groom's name), will you take (Bride's name) to be your friend and your wife. Will you dedicate your life and love to her, to live with her and care for her in this new relationship of marriage?

I WILL.

(Bride's name), will you take (Groom's name) to be your friend and your husband? Will you commit your life and your love to him, to live with him and care for him in this new relationship of marriage?

I WILL.

Presentation of the bride:

Who presents the bride? (Person or persons step forward, then are seated.)

Scripture Reading (Choice discussed)

Homily (If requested by the couple.)

Vows Continue: I, (Groom says his name), promise with God's help to be your faithful husband; to love and care for you, in affluence and in need, in joy and in despair, in sickness and in health, as long as we live.

I, (Bride says her name) promise with God's help to be your loving and caring wife, in those times we cry, and those times we laugh, the times we work, and the times we play. I will be yours for all time.

The Rings

The rings are symbols of enduring that (name the groom and bride) will give to each other.

These rings are their personal gifts and represent the priceless quality of their relationship. They give them as signs of commitment to love, to cherish and to care for each other.

As a sign of my promise of constant faith and never ending love, I give you this ring and join my life with yours. (Said by member of couple giving ring to the other.)

Unity Candle Lighting or Sand candle (Optional)

Prayer

Eternal God, without whose grace no promise is sure, we praise you for all the ways your love comes into our lives and for the joy of this special day. Today, we thank for you (Bride and Groom) as they begin their life together. Give them the endurance and the strength to fulfill the promises they have made to each other. May their lives continue to grow together and their honesty toward each other strengthen their relationship. Help them to enjoy each other in the hard times and sad times, in the good times and the glad times. Fill them with such love and joy that they may build a home where no one is a stranger, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Minister to couple:

You are now husband and wife according to the witness of the church and the law of the State. Become one; fulfill your promises. Love and serve the Lord. Let no person ever separate you.

May the Lord bless you; may He grant you a gracious life, a life of love and kindness; may you together know the peace that surpasses our understanding. Amen.

You may kiss the Bride.

Ladies and Gentlemen, may I be the first to present to you (names of bride and groom as a couple.)

WEDDING NOTES – DETAILS ON THE BIG DAY

The license: The bride and groom will need to obtain an Indiana marriage license. State law determines the requirements which the couple must fulfill. For details, contact the county clerk in Marion County or in the county in which either the bride or groom resides. The license MUST be available on or before the day of the wedding. We recommend researching the process for obtaining a marriage license well in advance. Please bring the license with you to the rehearsal.

The church wedding coordinator will see that the wedding license is complete. Our church administrative office will mail and file it with the clerk of the county that issued the license. A souvenir license will be returned to the bride and groom by the wedding coordinator after the ceremony.

Items available through your fees: Several items are available for use from the church. There is no additional charge for these items and all are optional:

- Brass Candelabra (2) – Each has seven (7) candles with glass chimneys.
- Base for unity candle – This base holds a unity candle and two side candles. We have both a silver and gold base for use as well as unity candles.
- Hurricane vases and candles - can be used on the front altar or along the registers on the sides of the sanctuary.
- Pew candles – Pew candle holders have glass chimneys and stand approximately 6 ft. tall. 16 candles holders are generally spaced every fourth pew along the center aisle.
- A floor podium, which may be used for the guest register, typically situated in the narthex

Please note, our custodian will take care of lighting and extinguishing any/all candles used for your ceremony.

Photography/videography: Because the exchange of vows and minister's blessings are central to the promises a couple make before God and the assembled witnesses, absolutely no flash photography is allowed during the wedding ceremony. Photographers may take pictures of the wedding party about one-third of the way down the aisle as they begin the processional, and when the bride and groom kiss. Photographers and videographers may also use the balcony in the back of the sanctuary.

Decorating: A specific time for opening the church building on the day of your wedding will be established by the church wedding coordinator. The church cannot be opened more than three hours prior to the service. Plan accordingly when making decorating plans, dressing, and taking photos.

Your church wedding coordinator will advise both wedding parties in the rare event that there are two weddings scheduled on a given day.

There must be a minimum of four hours between weddings to allow our custodian time to complete his duties. Unless specific arrangements have been made with the wedding coordinator, the custodian will dispose of any decorations not taken after the service.

Where to dress: The bride and her attendants generally use the room located at the end of the main corridor in the bridal room. An ironing board, hanging closet and full-length mirrors are available. If extra space is needed, the bridal party can also extend into the library, next door to the bridal room.

Personal items and valuables may be left in this room during the service. Please ask for it to be locked if it makes you feel more comfortable. Otherwise, place these valuables safely with someone else, or in your vehicles, before the ceremony begins.

The groom and his attendants can dress in an available room as designated by the wedding coordinator. This room is not locked so personal items should be secured by someone in the wedding party.

Family members and guests of the wedding party who arrive early are welcome to use the large parlor on the main floor. Couples may have informal wedding pictures or “studio” shots taken in this room prior to the ceremony if they desire. The parlor also holds a small kitchenette with a dining table. You are encouraged to bring colorless drinks and small snack foods for everyone in the wedding party prior to the ceremony, especially the bride and groom. .

Please note: Bottled water, colorless soda, and other drinks of this nature are less likely to be visible if spilled on bridal or groom wear. All snacks or beverages must be provided by the wedding party and should have non-staining properties. No alcohol is allowed anywhere on church property.

Parking: Ample free parking is available on the south side of the church, accessible from 47th St., and along Central Avenue directly in front. In the unlikely event that School 70 is in session, or an event is being held at the school, guests may have to park on the streets east and west of the church as well.

- NO RICE, BIRDSEED, OR OTHER HARD ITEMS ARE ALLOWED TO BE THROWN FOLLOWING THE CEREMONY. (We do not wish for anyone to get hurt, or slip from rice or birdseed on our stairs on the front of our property.)
- WE RECOMMEND THAT “NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY” BE WRITTEN ON THE PROGRAM.
- PLACING CHILDREN UNDER AGE FIVE (5) IN THE WEDDING MUST BE PRE-APPROVED.
- NO DRINKING OR SMOKING WITHIN THE CHURCH, INCLUDING THE RESTROOMS. Smoking canisters are located on the south side of the building underneath the blue awning.

The church is handicapped accessible and includes a ramp and elevator. Please let your wedding coordinator know of any special needs for you or your guests.

HAVE WE MADE ALL THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS WITH FIRST MERIDIAN HEIGHTS?

- Tentative date checked through church office – 317-283-1305 or fmhpc@live.com.
- Initial \$200 deposit paid to the church (credit card use is available.)
- Counseling session scheduled with the minister.
- Meeting scheduled with wedding coordinator.
- Rehearsal date and time finalized with pastor, coordinator.
- Ceremony date and time finalized with pastor, coordinator.
- Organist contacted.
- Music selection discussed with organist.
- Marriage license obtained.
- Remainder of fees paid by rehearsal date.



Please fill out this last page and return it to the church office. Your information will not be shared with anyone outside the wedding related staff of the church.

Wedding Of

Bride (first/last name): *Enter Brides Name*

Groom (first/last name): *Enter Grooms Name*

Are you members of the church? Yes No

Wedding Date: Click here to enter a date. Tentative Wedding Time: Click here to enter time.

Bride's Information

Email Click here to enter name.

Contact phone w/area code: Click here to enter text.

Address: Click here to enter name.

City/State: Click here to enter text.

Zip: Click here to enter text.

DOB: Click here to enter text.

Church Affiliation: Click here to enter text.

Occupation: Click here to enter text.

Single: Yes or No Divorced: Yes or No Date finalized: Click here to enter text.

Widowed: Yes or No

Groom's Information

Email Click here to enter name.

Contact phone w/area code: Click here to enter text.

Address: Click here to enter name.

City/State: Click here to enter text.

Zip: Click here to enter text.

DOB: Click here to enter text.

Church Affiliation: Click here to enter text.

Occupation: Click here to enter text.

Single: Yes or No Divorced: Yes or No Date finalized: Click here to enter text.

Widowed: Yes or No