

Christian Marriage  
at  
St. John's United  
Methodist Church

5300 Alameda Road  
Corpus Christi, Texas  
361/991-4342

Welcome to St. John's United Methodist Church

We are pleased that God has brought you to St. John's to share your vows of holy matrimony. We pray that your wedding day will glorify God and be a witness to God's everlasting glory.

At St. John's, we believe that your wedding day is an act of worship as well as a union between man and woman. We feel sure that your wedding day will be a joyful and solemn event and we look forward to assisting you in the planning of this momentous event.

## Your Wedding at St. John's

The marriage ceremony is one of the most sacred of all rituals in the church. A wedding is a celebration: the outward & visible sign of God's grace at work in a man and a woman's life. It is by God's miraculous work that we are united in marriage.

St. John's is pleased to make our facilities and services available for your wedding. We want to assist each bride and groom in making their wedding a memorable event. Because of the importance of this event, any couple being wed at St. John's must: 1) be a baptized Christian and desire a Christian wedding; 2) attend pre-marital preparation; 3) promise to be active in a church community before and after the wedding.

The information in this book is designed to help you as you prepare for your special day!

## The Pastor

St. John's pastors will officiate all wedding ceremonies. Any request for a pastor not on staff at St. John's must be pre-approved by the senior minister. The Senior Minister will extend the invitation to visiting clergy. Pending approval of the Senior Minister, United Methodist clergy may officiate services at St. John's. Pastors of other denominations may be allowed to assist in the service.

Your pastor will place a hold on their calendar for your wedding date, but will not agree to perform your wedding ceremony until you have successfully completed marriage preparation to their satisfaction. The pastor always retains the right to choose whether or not they will perform a wedding.

The pastor will be in charge of the rehearsal and the wedding. Additional responsibilities may preclude the pastor from being able to attend wedding receptions.

## The Wedding Coordinator

All weddings at St. John's will have a wedding coordinator assigned by St. John's. If you have a wedding coordinator/consultant, he/she will work under the supervision of the St. John's coordinator.

St. John's wedding coordinator will be your main source of contact and information regarding your wedding. He/she will serve as the liaison with the church staff, soloists, sound technician, custodian, and others as needed. The coordinator will be responsible for your wedding party's time on our campus.

St. John's wedding coordinators are knowledgeable and helpful. They will assist in every way to make your wedding run smoothly. They will make all final decisions regarding scheduling, photography, special requests, etc.

## Marriage Preparation

Your wedding is one day, but your marriage is for a lifetime. That is why we require all our couples to complete marriage preparation before you can get married.

Even the strongest couples will face difficulties in their married life. Marriage preparation can give you the tools to help you successfully communicate through tough times and give you the best chance for success in your life together.

Your St. John's pastor can provide you with marital preparation or can approve an alternative option for you to use. Note: Any alternative to St. John's marital preparation (such as private counseling, weekend retreats, etc.) must be pre-approved by your pastor.

All couples must agree to remain celibate until they are married. (Whatever the case has been, beginning today you are agreeing to honor the Lord with your celibacy.)

## Selecting Music

All music must be pre-approved through the church organist (if applicable) or through the pastor in charge of the wedding (if the organ is not being used). You may use family members, friends, or hired musicians to play at your wedding. The church will provide an organist for your use – guest organists are not allowed. Musicians must bring their own instruments, though guest musicians may use the piano.

## Photography

No flash photography during the ceremony with the exception of one picture of the Bride with her father entering the sanctuary and one picture of the Bride and Groom leaving the sanctuary. Time exposures, taken discreetly from the back of the sanctuary are permitted upon the approval of the Pastor. Video taping should be planned in advance by the Pastor and the couple. It is not necessary to include the pastor in your wedding photos, but if you would like one with them, please have it be the first photo(s) taken following the ceremony.

## Set up

Sanctuary furniture, including altar table and chancel rail, may not be moved. Plastic must be used to cover the floor beneath candles unless they are small candles in containers. Bow, greenery, or decorations may be attached to the furniture with string or cord. Tape, thumb tacks and glue may not be used.

Florists and caterers are to clear all decorations and serving plans with the church office.

## The Rehearsal

Bring your marriage license to the rehearsal and give it to the pastor. NOTE: You cannot get married without presenting a valid marriage license to the pastor BEFORE the wedding!

It is important that you and your guest be on-time for the rehearsal. It will begin at the time designated and end no more than 1 hour later. Anyone under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances will be precluded from attending the rehearsal and possibly the wedding.



## Reservations

All dates and time of rehearsals and weddings are to be approved through the church office and the Senior Pastor. Facilities MAY NOT be scheduled more than 18 months in advance.

Rehearsal, wedding and reception dates are not guaranteed until payment is received. A \$200.00 security deposit is required to set a calendar date. The other required fees, outlined on the attached page, are to be paid in advance, in full 30 days prior to the wedding. No refunds of any of the fees will be made if the event is canceled 30 days prior to the event. In the case of a cancellation, within the allotted time period, fees will be returned promptly.

Only one wedding per day will be scheduled.

*Dates which cannot be scheduled include:*

*New Year's Eve*

*New Year's Day*

*Second Weekend of June*

*4<sup>th</sup> of July*

*Thanksgiving Weekend*

*Christmas Eve*

*Christmas Day*

## Respect for the Church

Consumption of alcoholic beverages or the possession of any illegal substances, or any weapon\* are not permitted on the premises. Smoking is not allowed inside any of the church buildings. The pastor will exclude any member of the wedding party who is under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances. The wedding will be canceled if the bride or groom is under the influence.

No rice or birdseed may be thrown inside the buildings. Birdseed may be used in the grassy areas outside of the buildings.

*\*on-duty police officers are permitted to carry their weapons on church grounds.*

## Available Facilities

Sanctuary	
Seating capacity	300
Chapel	
Seating capacity	12
Community Life Building	
Seating/standing capacity	300/400
Fellowship Hall	
Seating/standing capacity	150/200
Scout Hutt	
Seating/standing capacity	175/250

## Fees

Wedding fees are set by St. John's Board of Trustees and are not negotiable. The cost is fixed, regardless of whether all of the included services are utilized by the couple.

Additional services, equipment, and musicians may be contracted by the couple, at a cost stipulated by the church and/or individual being contracted.

For the purposes of this wedding policy, a member of St. John's is as follows: a full or associate member in good standing for the immediate past 6 months, the child of a member in good standing for the immediate past 6 months, or the grandchild of a member in good standing for the immediate past 6 months. There are no exceptions to the membership requirements.

## Wedding Fee Schedule

### Sanctuary Wedding

*Member: \$550*

*Non-member: \$675*

This includes the following:

*Use of the sanctuary (rehearsal & wedding)*

*Use of the choir room for the Bride's room*

*Use of the Chapel for the Groom's room*

*Pastor's Honorarium*

*Marriage Preparation*

*Wedding Coordinator*

*Sound Technician*

*Musician (organist)*

*Custodian set-up and clean-up*

*Administration*

### Chapel Wedding

*Member: \$250*

*Non-member: \$300*

This includes

*Use of the chapel for ceremony*

*Pastor's Honorarium*

*Marriage Preparation*

*Wedding Coordinator*

*Custodian set-up and clean-up*

## Reception Fee Schedule

Community Life Building

*Member: \$150/\$200 with Kitchen*

*Non-Member: \$550/\$600 with Kitchen*

Fellowship Hall

*Member: \$100*

*Non-member: \$350*

This includes the following:

*Use of the room (per 4 hours)*

*Reception Coordinator*

*Janitorial*

*Tables (rounds or long)*

*Chairs*

## Your Service of Holy Matrimony

The following will be your wedding ceremony. There are several optional parts to the wedding service, which have been noted. In addition, you have the ability to select as much or little of the music as you desire for your wedding.

Holy Communion is an optional part of your wedding ceremony. If you choose to include Holy Communion, you will be responsible for bringing the bread and grape juice. If Holy Communion is served, everyone in attendance will be invited to participate – we do not do private communion. It is recommended that servers are selected by the Bride & Groom – but do not include the Bride or Groom.

In your meeting with the pastor, you will go over the ceremony together.

**Service of Christian Marriage  
Containing Holy Communion**

Processional

GREETING

*(Bride stands with Father facing pastor. Pastor  
faces congregation.)*

Friends, we are gathered together in the sight of God to witness and bless the joining together of Full Name and Full Name in Christian marriage.

The covenant of marriage was established by God, who created us male and female for each other. With his presence and power Jesus graced a wedding at Cana of Galilee, and in his sacrificial love gave us the example for the love of husband and wife.

Name and Name come to give themselves to one another in this holy covenant.

DECLARATION OF INTENTION  
DECLARATION BY THE MAN AND THE  
WOMAN

*Pastor to the persons who are to marry:*  
I ask you now, in the presence of God and these people, to declare your intention to enter into union with each other through the grace of Jesus Christ,



who calls you into union with himself as acknowledged in your baptism.

*Pastor to the woman:*

Name, will you have Name to be your husband, to live together in holy marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

**Woman: I will.**

*Pastor to the man:*

Name, will you have Name to be your wife, to live together in holy marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

**Man: I will.**

## RESPONSE OF THE FAMILIES AND THE PEOPLE

*Pastor to father:*

Who presents this woman for marriage?

*Father:* I do (Her mother and I).

*(Bride kisses father, veil is lifted and takes husband's hand. Both face pastor.)*

*Pastor to people:*

The marriage of Name and Name unites their families and creates a new one. They ask for your

blessing. Will all of you, by God's grace, do everything in your power to uphold and care for these two persons in their marriage?

*People:* **We will.**

Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all life, Author of salvation, Giver of all grace: Bless and sanctify with your Holy Spirit Name and Name, who come now to join in marriage. Grant that they may give their vows to each other in the strength of your steadfast love. Enable them to grow in love and peace with you and with one another all their days that they may reach out in concern and service to the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## READING OF SCRIPTURE

## HOMILY

## MUSIC (Optional)

## EXCHANGE OF VOWS

*(Bride and groom join hands and face one another.)*

*Pastor Prompts line by line*

*Man to woman:*

**In the name of God,  
I, Name, take you, Name,  
to be my wife,  
to have and to hold  
from this day forward,**

**for better, for worse,  
for richer, for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love and to cherish,  
until death do us part.**

**This is my solemn vow.**

*Woman to man:*

**In the name of God,  
I, Name, take you, Name,  
to be my husband,  
to have and to hold  
from this day forward,  
for better, for worse,  
for richer, for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love and to cherish,  
until death do us part.**

**This is my solemn vow.**

WITNESS IN SONG (optional)

BLESSING & EXCHANGE OF RINGS

*Pastor asks for rings*

The ring is the traditional symbol of the union between Christ and His Church and the eternal life available in God's love. These rings are the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, signifying to us the union between Jesus Christ and his Church. Even as the rings are endless, we pray

that their love might be endless, as it is built upon the power of the One who loved them first.

Bless, O Lord, the giving of these rings, that they who wear them may live in your peace and continue in your favor all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*(While placing the ring on the third finger of the recipient's left hand)*

*Man to Woman:*

**Name, I give you this ring  
as a sign of my vow,  
and with all that I am,  
and all that I have,  
I honor you.**

**In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.**

*Woman to Man:*

**Name, I give you this ring  
as a sign of my vow,  
and with all that I am,  
and all that I have,  
I honor you.**

**In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.**

DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE

*Pastor to husband and wife:*

You have declared your consent and vows before God and this congregation. May God confirm your covenant and fill you both with grace.

*Pastor to people:*

Now that Name and Name have given themselves to each other by solemn vows, with the joining of hands, and the giving and receiving of rings, I announce to you that they are husband and wife; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together, let no one put asunder. Amen.

LIGHTING THE UNITY CANDLE (Optional)

HOLY COMMUNION (p. 15 UMH) (Optional)

*(Everyone in attendance will be invited to participate if Communion is served. The Bride & Groom may not be Communion servers.)*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image, male and female you created us. You gave us the gift of marriage, that we might fulfill each other.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit, from which flows the covenant love of husband and wife.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for

the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By the same Spirit bless Name and Name, that their love for each other may reflect the love of Christ for us and grow from strength to strength as they faithfully serve you in the world. Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their heads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their lives and in their deaths. Finally, by your grace, bring them and all of us to that table where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit

in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### LORD'S PRAYER

As their first act together as man and wife, Name and Name invite you to join them as they lead us together in the prayer our Lord taught us to pray: **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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

### BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

Eternal God, we give you thanks that you have brought Name and Name together at the table of your family. Help them grow in love and unity, that they may rejoice together all the days of their lives and in the wedding feast of heaven. Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Pastor to Couple:*

God the Eternal keep you in love with each other, so that the peace of Christ may abide in your home. Go to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.



*Pastor to Husband:*

You may now kiss the bride!

*Pastor to All:*

Go now, rejoicing in the love of God and his unending commitment to all his children.

## Reservation Request

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Reception: \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no

(if yes) Building: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Bride's Information*

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Groom's Information*

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

## Agreement

For the sake of Christ and his holy church, we are choosing to be united in Christian marriage. We seek God's blessing for our union and seek to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, we will abide by the wedding policies included in this document; we will make our wedding party, family members, photographers, caterers, musicians, etc. aware of these policies (as applicable); and we will respect the authority the church has vested in the Pastor and wedding coordinator.

Signed:

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_