

COUNTING DOWN TO YOUR WEDDING DAY

The following pages contain a timeline/checklist to help you with some key things that you'll want to cover in the six months or so leading up to your wedding day. *(If you're getting started on the wedding process with fewer than six months to go, don't worry – just compress this timetable, to fit your situation.)*

If you have questions about this info, please contact Shari Davis, Wedding Administrator, at weddings@heartlandchurch.org – we're happy to help!

We'd also encourage you to get connected to Heartland's Couples' Ministry – and you can do that either now or after your wedding. Heartland offers many resources for couples – including small groups, Bible studies, and special classes – to help you continue to grow and strengthen your relationship and to help you navigate challenges. *For more info on what's being offered and how to get involved, check out the [Couples' Ministry](#) page or ask at the Welcome Center in the Atrium before or after a service!*

After We Receive Your Request

After you submit your request for premarital counseling/weddings, our Wedding Team will be in touch with you within a week or so. We'll check in with you about any questions we had about the info you submitted, and answer any questions you might have. Then we'll get rolling on your request!

About Six Months before your Wedding

At about the six month mark, we will give you initial confirmation of the pastor's availability and our building's availability (if you've requested a wedding at Heartland). This initial confirmation gets your wedding on the pastor's calendar (and, if applicable, on our facility calendar). The officiating pastor still retains the right to give final approval for your wedding, if he/she has serious concerns and feels it would not be wise for you to be married. Your pastor will address this with you in your premarital sessions.

Once your pastor is initially confirmed, we'll get you set up to complete the 'Prepare' inventory. Details on 'Prepare' can be found in our [Premarital Counseling Guide](#). After you complete 'Prepare', let the Wedding Team know by emailing Shari Davis at weddings@heartlandchurch.org so we can get you set up to start your premarital counseling!

Four or Five Months before your Wedding

- You'll have your premarital counseling sessions with the pastor during the four or so months before your wedding.
- You'll contact the appropriate county government office and get your wedding license. Our pastors can't perform a legal wedding without a valid wedding license, and it must be issued by the county in which the CEREMONY SITE is located. (If you're getting married at Heartland, you'll get your license through Johnson County, Kansas. If you're getting married at another site, be sure you're getting the license through the county in which your site is located.)
- You'll recruit wedding helpers. On the last page of this document, you'll find a list of some of the ways you can ask friends/relatives for their help. Having others handle key details on the day of the ceremony will allow you to relax and enjoy the big day!

One Month before your Wedding

- If your wedding will be at Heartland, your payment for Heartland's wedding is due one month prior to your wedding day. For further details, see the [Wedding Fees Summary](#).

Two Weeks before your Wedding

- Around the two week mark, you'll want to have your ceremony [Order of Service](#) finalized. And if your wedding is at Heartland, a member of our wedding team will meet with you then to talk through ceremony details.

ONE DAY BEFORE YOUR WEDDING: THE REHEARSAL

What happens at the rehearsal?

At the rehearsal, the pastor and Wedding Team will walk you and those involved in your wedding through the key parts of the ceremony. We'll run through everything a couple of times, so everyone will know who stands where, who says what (and when), etc. And we'll answer any questions you or your wedding party may have about the ceremony, so that everyone's ready for the big day!

If you're getting married at Heartland, the rehearsal is also a chance for your decorating team to get a jump on setting out your decorations. Perishable decorations like fresh flowers may be set out on the day of the ceremony, but other decorating should be taken care of during the rehearsal.

When will we have our rehearsal, and how long does a rehearsal last?

Our Wedding Team will help schedule your rehearsal. We'll generally have your rehearsal the evening before your wedding day, assuming that works for your schedules, the pastor's schedule, and (if you're getting married at Heartland) our facility schedule. We allot an hour and 15 minutes for the rehearsal. Please plan on the rehearsal (and any decorating during the rehearsal) starting and ending on time.

Who should (and shouldn't) be at the rehearsal?

Everyone involved in the wedding (including the bridal party, flower girl/ring bearer, ushers, candle lighters, scripture readers, and anyone whom you would like to be seated during the seating of family/special guests) should be at the rehearsal. This will allow us to give instructions and practice the processional and recessional. Vocalists/musicians should be there as well to receive cues, but we will probably not run their songs in full/more than once. They should make other arrangements to rehearse if they need rehearsal time.

If you have key folks who can't be at the rehearsal, please just let the Wedding Team know this and ask those key folks to introduce themselves to the Wedding Team when they arrive at the wedding. We can get them caught up then!

Because the rehearsal will flow most smoothly if there aren't a lot of extra people there, we suggest inviting only those who are participating in the ceremony or are helping decorate. If you'll be having a rehearsal dinner afterward, you may simply invite your other special guests to meet you at the dinner location.

Is there anything we need to bring to the rehearsal?

*If you've not already given the **wedding license** to the pastor who'll be officiating at your wedding, please bring it and give it to him/her at the rehearsal. If you're getting married at Heartland and you'll be using recorded music in the ceremony or during the seating/dismissal of your guests, please bring a **fully-charged iPod (with all of your music in its own wedding playlist)** for our sound tech. Your decorating helpers will also want to bring your **decorations** and any supplies you need.*

THE BIG DAY: YOUR WEDDING DAY

By this point, you'll have covered or delegated the details – so you can just relax and enjoy the day! If you're getting married at Heartland, here's what you can plan on happening here at the church:

*If you're getting married at Heartland and you'll be doing **photos at Heartland before** (or before and after) your ceremony, here's what you can plan on:*

- **2½ hours before the ceremony starts:** We'll have Heartland's building open for your wedding party and photographer/florist (etc) at this time. (Please don't arrive early, unless you've made prior arrangements with us for this.) We'll provide rooms where the men and women of the bridal party may change into their tuxes and dresses; but please arrive with hair and makeup already done. The photographer and florist may do any setup they need to do during the first 30 minutes after the building is opened.
- **By 2 hours before the ceremony:** You'll want to begin taking photos
- **By 45 min before the ceremony:** You'll want to have all pre-wedding photos completed
- **30 min before the ceremony:** Seating of guests begins (the bridal party will relax in the dressing rooms provided until the ceremony begins)
- **After the ceremony:** Any post-ceremony pictures to be taken at Heartland should be done within 1 hour after the ceremony ends. We also ask that all decorations/rentals be removed from the church building and that items brought in to the dressing rooms be removed by this time.

*If you're getting married at Heartland and you'll be doing **photos at Heartland only after your ceremony**, here's what you can plan on:*

- **1½ hours before the ceremony starts:** We'll have Heartland's building open for your wedding party and photographer/florist (etc) at this time. (Please don't arrive early, unless you've made prior arrangements with us for this.) We'll provide rooms where the men and women of the bridal party may change into their tuxes and dresses; but please arrive with hair and makeup already done. The photographer and florist may do any setup they need to do during the first 30 minutes after the building is opened.
- **30 min before the ceremony:** Seating of guests begins (the bridal party will relax in the dressing rooms provided until the ceremony begins)
- **After the ceremony:** Any post-ceremony pictures to be taken at Heartland should be completed within 90 minutes after the ceremony ends. We also ask that all decorations/rentals be removed from the church building and that items brought in to the dressing rooms be removed by this time.

ENLISTING FRIENDS & RELATIVES: YOUR WEDDING HELPERS

- ❑ **Decorating Team** to construct and put up decorations at the wedding/reception site (note that decorating for weddings at Heartland happens during the rehearsal and during the first 30 min that the building is open on the wedding day)
- ❑ **Bride's/Groom's Personal Attendants** to help with the needs of the bride/groom on the day of the ceremony
- ❑ **Lunch/Snack Helper** (if the wedding will be near a mealtime) to bring in food for the wedding party to snack on during the 30 min just prior to the ceremony (we recommend no food or drink that'd stain if spilled on someone's tux or dress!)
- ❑ **Corsage/Boutonniere Attendant(s)** to help distribute and pin on corsages and boutonnieres during the 30 min before photos are taken (if photos will be before the ceremony) or the 30 min before the wedding (if all photos will be taken after the ceremony)
- ❑ **Family Photo Helper(s)** to help the photographer gather the right people for family photos (especially helpful if you have large families and/or you'll do lots of different family group photos, or if you want to get photos done especially quickly!)
- ❑ **Greeters / Host & Hostess** to stand near the entrance(s) and greet/direct wedding guests as they arrive (during the 30 min before the wedding)
- ❑ **Guest Book Attendant** to transport the guest book (and pen/etc) to the wedding site and greet/instruct guests at the guest book during the 30 min before the wedding
- ❑ **Gift Table Attendant(s)** to monitor the gift table during the 30 min before the ceremony and make sure cards are securely taped to gifts (so that cards don't get separated from gifts, leaving the couple to wonder who a gift is from!)
- ❑ **Program Attendant(s)** to distribute your ceremony programs to guests as they arrive (during the 30 min prior to the ceremony)
- ❑ **Ushers** to help seat guests as they arrive (during the 30 min prior to the ceremony) and possibly also help seat family members during the seating of family at the beginning of the ceremony, if that is your preference
- ❑ **Floral Transport** to help get floral arrangements/décor items to the reception site (or wherever they need to go next) after the ceremony – it helps to have someone with a van do this, if you will have large items to move!
- ❑ **Guest Book Transport** to transport the guest book (and pen/etc) to the reception (or wherever they should end up) – this job can be done by your Guest Book Attendant, too
- ❑ **Gift Transport** to transport gifts from wedding/reception site to wherever they should end up – this job can be done by your Gift Table Attendants, too (it helps to have someone with a van for this)
- ❑ **Maps/Directions Attendant(s)** to distribute maps/directions to guests as they head for the reception (if the reception will be at a different site than the wedding)
- ❑ **Dressing Room Clean Up** after the wedding party leaves, to double check the rooms where the wedding party changed clothes and remove any personal items/etc that were left behind by the wedding party
- ❑ **Rental Returns** to get rented items (tuxes, décor items, etc) back to the rental sites on time
- ❑ **Sendoff Coordinator(s)** to distribute birdseed/etc and instruct guests (if needed) on the sendoff of the bride and groom

If your wedding will be at Heartland, please ask your helpers to introduce themselves to our Wedding Team at the rehearsal (if applicable) or when they arrive at the wedding. Our team will give them instructions (if needed) and answer questions they may have about their duties!