



UNITARIAN CHURCH
IN CHARLESTON

Est. 1772

Weddings and Commitment Ceremonies



Congratulations!

You are about to begin a process that will lead to one of the best days of your life! It's time to start planning your wedding! We at the Unitarian Church in Charleston intend to make this a very special day for you and your loved ones. In order to help with your planning, we have created this booklet to help answer any questions that you might have. We are pleased that you have chosen us to accompany you on this wonderful journey and will do all we can to help with the process.

Our on-site wedding coordinator, Susan Findlay, is available to offer assistance, guidance or information. Her contact info is:

Susan Findlay
On-site Wedding Coordinator
weddings@charlestonuu.org
843-469-5485



Contact information for the rest of the staff at the Unitarian Church in Charleston:

Sandra Selvitelli, Executive Director
Minister

office@charlestonuu.org
minister@charlestonuu.org

Telephone number for above: 843-723-4617

Wedding Fees

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sanctuary rental• On-site Wedding Coordinator• Use of grounds• Use of Gage Hall• Sexton services	\$2500
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minister	\$500
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organist/pianist <p>(If you choose to use our pianist/organist)</p>	\$400

A deposit of \$450 is required in order to reserve the sanctuary for your ceremony. It is refundable (minus a \$100 cancellation fee) up to 60 days before the event and applicable to the rental balance thereafter.

To pay your deposit online go to:

<https://www.charlestonuu.org/wedding-payments>

or send a check made out to **Unitarian Church in Charleston** with your completed application to:

Susan Findlay
1165 Landsdowne Dr
Charleston, SC 29412

The remainder of the rental fee is due no later than 1 month before the ceremony. This check will be made out to The Unitarian Church in Charleston or paid online. Checks for the minister and church organist/pianist are due on the night of the rehearsal and can be given to the wedding coordinator.

Religious Considerations



It is not necessary to be a member of the Unitarian Church in order to be married in our sanctuary. We wish your wedding to be an occasion of deep meaning that gives expression to your faith and spiritual values.

Contact our minister, minister@charlestonuu.org in order to schedule a time to meet either in person or by email and plan your ceremony.

The Church Building and Grounds

Accessibility: Our sanctuary is fully accessible.

Aisle Bows: Bows can only be attached using pew clips. NO tape, tacks or nails may be used. All bows must be removed after the ceremony.

Aisle Dimensions: The aisle is 55 feet long and 4 feet, 8 inches wide.

Alcoholic Beverages: Alcoholic beverages may be served in Gage Hall but not in the sanctuary and not sold.

Altar Rail: The altar rail is 10 feet, 10 inches in length, 5 inches wide.

Attendants: No more than six (6) bridal attendants and groomsmen on either side should be used in any wedding due to limited space in the Sanctuary.



Bird Seed, Rice, Confetti, and Flower Petals: These items are NOT allowed inside or outside of the church.

CDs and Pre-recorded music: Because they interrupt the flow of a ceremony which uses live music, we discourage the use of Pre-recorded music.

Churchyard Gates: If you wish to have the Churchyard gates along the Gateway Walk left open for your guests to pass through to King Street to access the reception venue after the ceremony, please advise the wedding coordinator.

Clergy or Officiant: The Unitarian Church in Charleston requires the use of their acting minister as the officiant. Contact information for our minister is minister@charlestonuu.org.

Decorations: It is permissible to decorate the gates in front of the church as long as materials used do not damage the gates in any way. If flowers are to be delivered for the ceremony, please coordinate this with the wedding coordinator to allow for someone to be there to receive them.

Dressing for Your Wedding: If you so choose, upstairs Gage Hall is available for you to use to dress for the wedding within the parameters of the three hour rental. Arrangements for the time you will be arriving should be made with the wedding coordinator during the rehearsal so the doors can be unlocked before you arrive. Please be sure the rooms are emptied of all belongings and clean when you leave. This is our office area on weekdays and classroom/meeting room area on Sundays.

Florist: Let the wedding coordinator know when the flowers will be delivered. All flowers should be removed after the ceremony. If you would like to leave the flowers for the service the next day, please inform the wedding coordinator. Arrangements need to be made in advance for the flowers to be picked up if you are taking them. There are seasonal decorations in our sanctuary twice a year for the winter holidays and Easter which must remain in place. You are welcome to

add to them if you like. Guests typically begin arriving about 30- 45 minutes prior to the ceremony. All decorating should be finished by this time.

HVAC: The church is climate-controlled year round with a HVAC system.

Instrumentalists: If you want to add other instruments to your ceremony, you will need to make the arrangements with them and pay the instrumentalists yourself.

Lecterns: The lecterns may not be moved for weddings.

Luminaries in Churchyard: Luminaries are permitted to light the way through the Churchyard but must be extinguished and taken away after your guests have passed through.

Marriage License: Please bring your marriage license to the rehearsal so it can be signed with our minister in attendance.

Parking: Parking is a challenge in Charleston. There are city parking garages at King and Queen Streets and on Market Street about a block and a half on either side of the church.

[Parking Garages near the Unitarian Church in Charleston](#)

Pews: There are 60 pews: 15 rows x 4 across. Pews are 34 inches high. Five people fit comfortably in each pew.

Photography and Videotaping: Photography and videotaping are acceptable but no flash may be used during the ceremony.

Piano and Organ: Because of their age and value, the piano and organ may only be used by our organist or his/her designated substitute. Any questions regarding the piano or organ should be referred to the Director of Music,
musicdirector@charlestonuu.org

Restrooms: Restrooms are in Gage Hall next door but there are no restrooms in the sanctuary.

Saturday Weddings: Our church is open for docent tours on Saturday mornings until 1:00 pm, therefore, no wedding can be held until 3:00 pm unless by special arrangement with the wedding coordinator.

Seating Capacity: The seating capacity of the church is 250. There are 60 pews that are 34 inches in height.

Selection of Music: You are welcome to use any musicians that you choose. If you decide to use our pianist/organist, once you have signed your contract, you can contact Sue Findlay, wedding coordinator, for contact information for our pianist/organist. You will need to plan your wedding music. This should be done no later than one month before your wedding. If you wish to use a piece of music you have heard on a recording and liked, consult with the organist as you plan the music together. If the pianist/organist does not have the sheet music, you will need to purchase it and send it to them at least one month before the wedding.

Smoking: Smoking is NOT permitted in the church or in Gage Hall.

Sunday Weddings: A Sunday wedding can be no earlier than 3:00 pm.

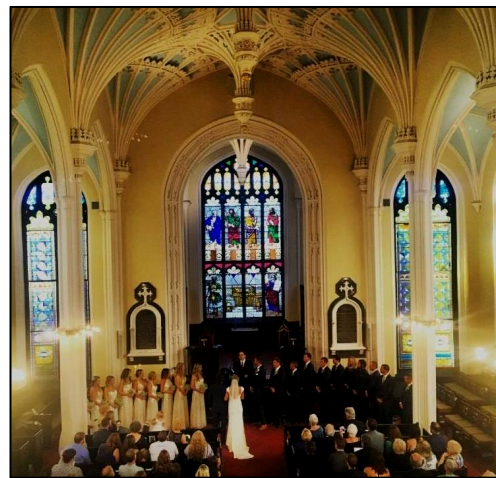
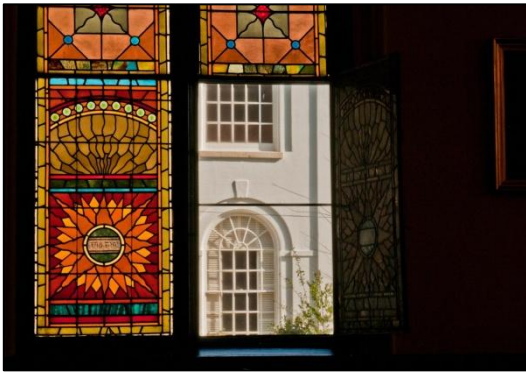
Tours: The Church is open Friday and Saturday 10:00 am to 1:00 pm from September through mid June. If you wish to see the church at any other time, please arrange this with the wedding coordinator.

Wedding Coordinator: The on-site wedding coordinators duties are booking the wedding, directing the rehearsal and overseeing the success of the ceremony on the wedding day at the church. The wedding coordinator does not schedule meetings with the minister, secure musicians, florists, photographers, or transportation, etc. These items are the responsibility of the couple although the coordinator is available to make recommendations.

Timeline and Checklist

Rehearsals are typically scheduled for the night before the ceremony and allotted one hour of time. The on-site wedding coordinator will direct the rehearsals. Please bring a program to the rehearsal if you have not already emailed it to the wedding coordinator. Also, please bring your marriage license to the rehearsal.

Weddings are allotted three hours. The ceremony itself usually takes approximately 20 – 30 minutes. For example, if your ceremony is at 4:00, the sanctuary should be reserved from 2:00 – 5:00.



- Confirm your date and time with the coordinator.
weddings@charlestonuu.org or 843-469-5485
- Fill out the application which you can access on the Unitarian Church in Charleston website and send it along with a \$450 (made out to the Unitarian Church in Charleston) deposit check to:

*Susan Findlay
1165 Landsdowne Dr
Charleston, SC 29412*

- You may pay your deposit online at this link.
<https://www.charlestonuu.org/wedding-payments>
- Contact our minister to set up an appointment to plan your ceremony.
minister@charlestonuu.org
- Contact the pianist/organist in order to make arrangements if necessary,
Bill Gesin - steinway1280@gmail.com
- Keep wedding coordinator informed of any changes in time or details that affect the ceremony or the church.
- Obtain your marriage license and bring it to the rehearsal.g
- Send a check for the balance of the rental fee to the Unitarian Church in Charleston no later than one month prior to the ceremony or pay your balance online at: <https://www.charlestonuu.org/wedding-payments>

The Unitarian Church in Charleston
4 Archdale St
Charleston, SC 29401
Attn: Sandra

- Bring checks for the minister and organist/pianist to the rehearsal.
- Bring a program to the rehearsal and Unity Candle to the rehearsal.

Directions to the Unitarian Church in Charleston

[Click here for map](#)