

Your Wedding

at the

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

Finding the right place is a good place to start planning your wedding!

Guidelines

We honor the love and commitment of all couples, regardless of their religious background or sexual orientation.

You need not be a member of the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany (FUUSA) to celebrate your marriage in our sanctuary or hall.

You are free to write your own vows and observe your own, unique religious traditions.

Any clergy person you choose may officiate at your wedding or commitment ceremony.

Photographers and videographers are welcome in the church.

In addition, you may:

- Provide your own musicians, or you may use our modern, state-of-the-art sound system for recorded music.
- Use our Carlson organ and the baby grand piano (in the Sanctuary) or the Steinway grand piano (in Emerson Community Hall). Permission is needed from the music director if you are bringing in your own musicians.
- Use a caterer of your choice, who may work in our commercial kitchen, or you may bring your own, home-made food. Dishes and glassware may be rented for your reception.

Facilities

FUUSA's facilities are available to rent for weddings and commitment ceremonies, both for members of the congregation and for non-members.

Our sanctuary seats 190 people, and Channing Hall will accommodate 100 people seated or 80 seated at tables. Our breathtaking Emerson Community Hall seats 299 on the ground floor and 42 in the balcony (or 150 at tables.)

Both Emerson Community Hall and Channing Hall are available for your reception, and several classrooms are available should you need a gathering/preparation area for members of the wedding party.

We can provide referrals for Unitarian Universalist ministers, as well as musicians, caterers, and more. You may contract directly with these service providers and pay them separately from the rental fees.

Accessibility: The entire building is wheelchair accessible with entry ramps at both the front (Washington Avenue) and rear (West St.) An elevator provides access to all floors, and a small lift serves the stage in Emerson Community Hall.

Parking: Situated in downtown Albany, parking is on the street. On evenings and weekends, we can request permission to use the two SUNY Albany campus parking lots across the street. Four to six weeks lead time is needed to gain this permission. There is also a municipal lot two blocks east of the church on Washington Avenue.

Insurance: All renters will provide a certificate of insurance for their event. Typically this is provided by your homeowners' or business' insurance company. We can assist you in obtaining this insurance if needed. If you hire a caterer or DJ they will also need to show proof of insurance.

Room Descriptions *(all halls are air conditioned.)*

You can view these rooms on the Web at www.albanyuu.org. Click on home page link to Virtual Tour.

Our **Sanctuary** is known for its excellent acoustics and has a baby grand piano and a Carlson organ. Built in 1925 in the Colonial style, the Sanctuary has a barrel vault ceiling and tall arched windows. The room is light and airy in the day and glows softly at night. Up to 190 can be seated in the cushioned pews, plus another 14 in the choir pews at the front right. It has a Bose sound system for speakers and recorded music. Food and beverages are not permitted in this space.

Entering from the columned portico, one first enters a vestibule, and from there goes into the Sanctuary facing the chancel. The room is 30' wide and 52' long. The chancel is raised 2', and is 16' wide at the front, 11.5' wide at the back, and 8.5' deep, with a moveable pulpit and a door to the sound room. The organ loft is located over the entry vestibule, and has enough space to accommodate several musicians or photographer/videographer. At the front left is the door connecting to the social hall and the rest of the building.

Emerson Community Hall, in the wing opened in September 2007, is a modern contrast to the 1925 Sanctuary. The room is light and soaring, yet intimate because of the warm woods and natural materials. Flexible seating (comfortable, padded wooden chairs!) can be set up to accommodate 299. An additional 40 stationary seats are available in the balcony. The hall has excellent acoustics, a Steinway piano, and an adjacent area for refreshments. It can be used for any combination of wedding ceremony, reception, dinner, or dancing.

Channing Hall, located between the Sanctuary and the Religious Education/Administration wing, is 30'x 45' and has a hardwood floor suitable for dancing. This social space can seat 80 for a meal, or 100 lecture-style in flexible seating. It has a sound system, and connects to the pantry, kitchen, and lobby. One end has a south-facing bay window and comfortable seating; the other has large panels on which are displayed art shows throughout the year.

Mix and Match: You can use one, two, or all three spaces. For example have the ceremony in the Sanctuary, the reception line in Channing Hall, and dinner in Emerson Hall. Or the ceremony in the Sanctuary, the dinner in Channing Hall, and dancing in Emerson Hall. We can work with you to create the perfect package! All wedding packages include free use of the service space for a rehearsal.

Booking Your Wedding

To inquire about available dates and reserve your wedding day, please contact Alyssa Yeager, Office Administrator, at 518-463-7135.

The first step to reserve your date is to submit a rental application. Applications are available at FUUSA or online at www.albanyuu.org/wp/?page_id=176

Here you can also find details about rental pricing and policies.

Once we receive your application, we will confirm all details and provide a rental contract if your date and space are available.

A deposit of \$100, a signed contract, and proof of insurance is required to reserve your date. The balance of fees is not due until 1 week before your wedding date.

The security deposit will be returned to you within two weeks after the wedding, minus any extra costs incurred by you or your guests for cleaning, repair or replacement.

Details

Time limit Your rental for the ceremony is for three hours on the day of the wedding, plus a reasonable amount of time for a rehearsal the day before. All set-up and clean up must be done within the three hours booked. Additional hours may be negotiated.

Throwing of petals, confetti, birdseed, rice, etc inside the church is strictly forbidden: only bio-degradable items like petals and birdseed may be thrown outside.

Flower deliveries must be made during regular office hours unless you pay to have staff here at a different time to receive them. Contact the office for hours and details.

If you plan to use a **unity candle** you will need to bring tapers and candle holders. We can provide a small table: you may want to bring a cloth for it.

Decorations may be fastened to pews or woodwork using pew clips, ribbon, string or rubberbands. Nails, tacks, tape, wire, etc. are strictly forbidden. The wedding runner, if you are using one in the Sanctuary, should be 47 feet long.

Clean-up Your attendants must remove all flowers, decorations and whatever ceremonial items you have brought immediately at the conclusion of your ceremony. We cannot guarantee their safety if you leave them here, and any time spent by us cleaning up will be charged to your security deposit.

Financial responsibility for any damage to church property sustained during the rehearsal, ceremony or reception by anyone involved in the event, guest or participant, is the sole responsibility of the ceremony couple.

Security On your wedding day, our Building Host will be here to open the Sanctuary doors at an appropriate time before your ceremony, direct your guests, and assist with any questions during your event. He/she will lock up the building after you leave.

Directions for your invitations:

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany

405 Washington Avenue, between Robin Street and Lake Avenue

Albany, New York 12206

From the West: Take the NYS Thruway to Exit 24. Continue on I-90 east to Exit 6 (Arbor Hill) onto Henry Johnson Blvd.

From the North: Take the Northway (I-87) south to Exit 1E. Continue on I-90 east to Exit 6 (Arbor Hill) onto Henry Johnson Blvd.

From the South: Take the NYS Thruway to Exit 23. Take I-787 north to I-90, go west on I-90 to Exit 6 (Arbor Hill) onto Henry Johnson Blvd.

From the East: Take the Mass. Pike (I-90) to NYS Thruway Exit B-1, continue west on I-90 to Exit 6 (Arbor Hill) onto Henry Johnson Blvd.

Continue on Henry Johnson Blvd. to a stoplight intersection at Central Ave. Continue straight through the light, and turn right about 20 feet later on Washington Avenue. In one block, take the right fork to continue on Washington Avenue. In about three blocks you will be facing our front door and steeple.

Parking: Parking is available on the street.

Handicapped Access: The building is fully handicap accessible.

Please note—

Special parking permission: If we request, and are granted, permission for your guests to park in the lots belonging to the University at Albany, we will send you information about those lots to be included in your invitations.