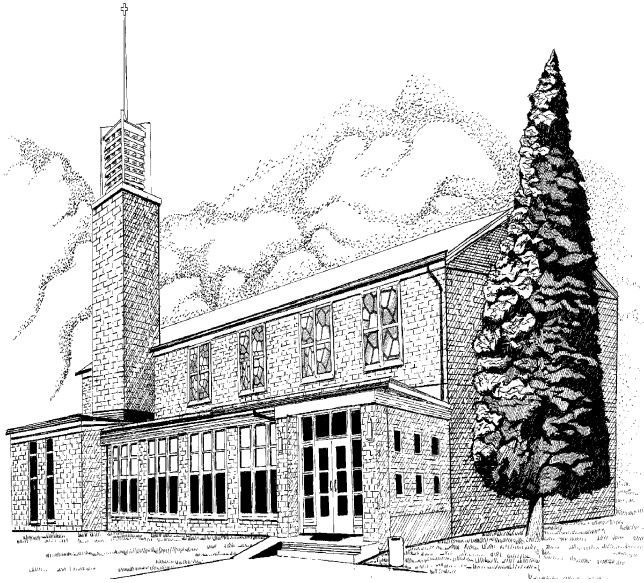
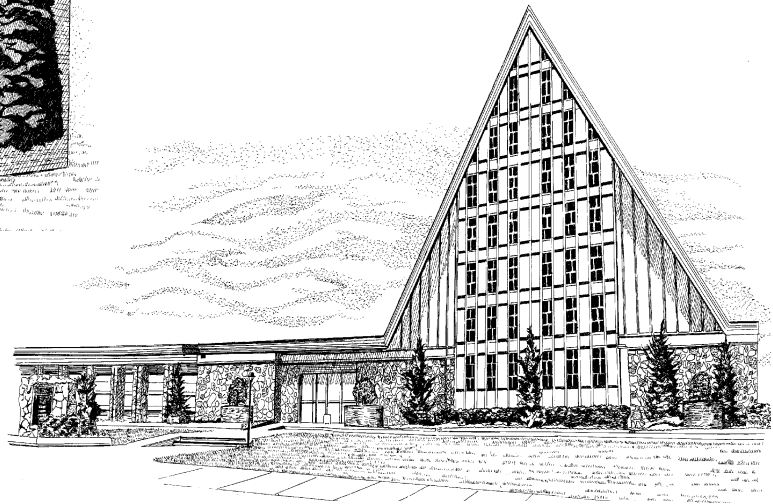


OFFUTT AFB CHAPEL WEDDING ACCOMMODATION GUIDE



**Offutt Air Force Base,
Nebraska**



This guide offers general guidance for your wedding at the SAC Memorial Chapel or Capehart Chapel. Please read carefully and then complete the *Wedding Application and Facility Request* with your chosen wedding coordinator. Reservations for chapel facilities are made on a first come first served basis so please return the application as soon as possible.

~ The Offutt Chapel Staff

Use of the Chapel

Eligibility: Services of the United States Air Force Chaplain Corps are provided for “military members and their families” (AFPD 52-1). Therefore, either *the bride or the groom* **must** be an active duty, reserve, National Guard, military retired or military dependent **ID card-holder on the date of the wedding**. Also—for Catholic weddings, consult additional Archdiocese for Military Service requirements.

- Dependents **must** have a valid military ID card on the day of their wedding.
- The bride or the groom with a valid military ID card must initiate contact with the chapel. Our phone is DSN 271-6244. Our commercial phone is 402-294-6244. E-mail 55WG.HC.CHANNEL@offutt.af.mil.
- The bride or groom with the valid military ID card must fill out the wedding application and facility request in person with the wedding coordinator. This can be accomplished electronically if the bride and groom are away from the immediate area.
- Provide a photo copy of the front side only of your military ID card, with expiration date, at the time of application.

Since only religious services are authorized in military chapels, civil authorities (such as a Justice of Peace) may **not** preside at chapel weddings.

There are two chapels available for weddings at Offutt AFB. The SAC Memorial Chapel is located on the corner of Custer Drive and Lincoln Highway. Seating capacity is approximately 325 with a center aisle 60 feet long. Parking is on the streets next to the chapel and in the parking lot

behind the facility. The Capehart Chapel is on the corner of Capehart Road and 25th Street, across from the Ehrling Berquist Clinic. Seating capacity is approximately 425 with a 45 foot center aisle. A large parking lot is adjacent to the building.

The chapels are reserved on a first come/first served basis. The date and time are established when the properly completed facility request is approved by the sponsoring chaplain or wedding coordinator and entered into the facility schedule by the facility schedule manager.. Be sure to schedule for both the wedding and the rehearsal as far in advance as possible.

Invitations should not be processed until you receive final written approval of a permanent reservation.

Chaplains/Civilian Clergy

Active duty military chaplains are available to officiate at weddings for active duty military members if it meets their denominational, ecclesiastical and ethical standards . The decision on whether a particular chaplain will perform a wedding ceremony rests solely with that chaplain. Therefore, there may be some situations in which chaplains may decline to perform a wedding.

Civilian and auxiliary clergy are welcome to perform your wedding, but they must be approved by the wing chaplain or his designate which in most cases will be the wedding coordinator. It is your responsibility to insure that a civilian clergy is licensed and ordained to legally perform your ceremony.

Catholic Weddings

Those seeking a Roman Catholic wedding must consult with a Catholic chaplain concerning the current Archdiocese for Military Service guidelines. Roman Catholic weddings require a minimum of six (6) months preparation and must be approved by the Catholic chaplain.

Meet with the Catholic chaplain before you make any arrangements. Couples who have their own priest or deacon to witness their marriage *MUST* still meet with the Catholic chaplain first before a facility request can be filled out. When you meet with the chaplain he will explain to you Catholic wedding requirements in full.

General Catholic wedding requirements are to follow this order:

1. Bride or groom with authorized military ID card must initiate contact with the chapel
2. Contact the Catholic chaplain (or deacon) six months prior to the expected wedding date
3. Secure a wedding coordinator...see information below
4. Complete the Wedding Application and Facility Request Form. Return the forms to the wedding coordinator
 - a. The wedding coordinator will secure the facility request with the chapel facility manager
 - b. The wedding coordinator will contact the couple when the Chapel Facility Request has been approved
5. Complete premarital preparation requirements as requested by your chaplain or civilian clergy
6. Must attend the FOCCUS sessions (after it has been scored) with the priest/deacon
7. Meet with the priest/deacon to confirm completion of all requirements and plan the ceremony

Protestant Weddings

Protestant weddings vary according to tradition or denomination. Your officiating chaplain or civilian clergy will advise on the appropriate ceremony. Chaplains are responsible for upholding their own ecclesiastical requirements and personal convictions. The wedding ceremony is a religious rite. Therefore, the chaplain or minister performing the wedding has final authority on any element in the wedding ceremony.

All chaplains require pre-marital counseling. The length, scope and type of counseling is determined by the chaplain.

General Protestant wedding requirements are to follow this order:

1. Bride or groom with authorized military ID card, must initiate contact with the chapel
2. Secure a chaplain or civilian clergy
3. Secure a wedding coordinator. See wedding coordinator information below.
4. Complete the *Wedding Application and Facility Request Form* and return the form to the wedding coordinator
 - a. The wedding coordinator will secure the facility request with the Chapel Facility Manager
 - b. The wedding coordinator will contact the couple when the Chapel Facility Request is approved
5. Complete premarital preparation requirements as requested by your chaplain or civilian clergy
6. Meet with your chaplain or civilian clergy to plan the ceremony

Civil Ceremonies

It may be possible to have your wedding at the gazebo on the parade grounds or other facility on base. Reservations for these weddings are made with the agencies which control the facilities.

Receptions

Chapel facilities are not available for wedding or anniversary receptions. Receptions may be scheduled at other locations in the local area such as the Patriot Club or Community Center. However, all arrangements are your responsibility. Please be careful in your planning to not make any binding agreements until you receive final written approval of your wedding date. Suggested on-base locations are:

- The Patriot Club 294-2268
- The Offutt Community Center 294-6247

Times for Services

Chapel weddings are normally held on Saturdays. Weddings are not normally held on weekday evenings, Sundays, federal holidays, or during holidays. Some special time requests may be approved by the wing chaplain if the facilities are available and mission demands allow.

The chapel time slots for Saturdays are listed below:

SAC Chapel:

Rehearsal (Friday)

1400
1500
1600
1700

Wedding(Saturday)

0930 – 1200 (10:30 wedding)
1230 – 1500 (13:30 wedding)
1600 – 1830 (17:00 wedding)
1900 – 2130 (20:00 wedding)

Capehart Chapel:

Rehearsal (Friday)

1500

1600

1700

Wedding (Saturday)

1230 – 1500 (13:30 wedding)

1600 – 1830 (17:00 wedding)

1900 – 2130 (20:00 wedding)

Since the chapels will be used for other weddings and other activities on Saturday, it is essential that we collaborate and adhere to this time schedule. Weddings are limited to two and a half hours. This maximizes the number of service times available, and gives plenty of time for the ceremony, decorations, pictures, and clean-up. Please remember to allow ample time for preparations before your starting time. Please inform your minister and wedding party of this and ask them to be on time for the rehearsal. Rehearsals are normally scheduled on the evening before the wedding.

Wedding Coordinator

An approved wedding coordinator is normally required for chapel weddings. For some very small and informal weddings, with no rehearsal and no music, no sound system requirements and presided by an active duty chaplain, the wing chaplain may waive the wedding coordinator requirements upon recommendation of the presiding chaplain.

Our senior wedding coordinator is listed below. She will help you secure a chapel approved wedding coordinator:

Name

Email:

Phone:

* Gwen Mueller

gwen.karyl.mueller@cox.net

402-292-2827

(c) 402-630-2522

What Our Wedding Coordinators Do For You

- Orchestrate professional attention to your wedding
- Take initial phone call(s) to arrange reservation of the Chapel facility
- Set up appointment to fill out application and explain benefits of director
- Meet with bride/groom/parent to initialize services
- Explain their services in detail
- Explain to couple what is available at the chapel for their use
- Give information (but do not contact vendors) concerning floral, music, cakes, photos, etc...
- Make self available for **any questions at anytime**, until the wedding day
- Begin application paperwork
- Turn in completed application to the chapel
- Make sure request is put “on the books” for the date requested
- Notify couple of their wedding date
- Make any necessary changes to the application if they arise
- Fill out personalized work sheet with the bride & groom before rehearsal to determine rehearsal & wedding procedures
- Conduct procedural aspects of rehearsal and wedding
- Open/secure facilities for rehearsal and wedding ceremonies
- Turn on/off lights and operates sound system
- Ensure decorations are arranged properly (nothing is set on the alter unless approved by the chaplain)
- Ensure all decorations are removed after ceremony is complete
- Ensure wedding party follows chapel rules and policies
- Ensure the chapel carpet, alter, and all religious accoutrements are not damaged
- Makes sure things are running on time and people vacate chapel at the scheduled time
- Appropriately attired and well groomed and demonstrate conduct in a professional manner
- Ensure the chapel facility is neat and clean after rehearsals and weddings
- Secure/store all chapel equipment used for rehearsals and weddings

- Conduct inside security check of facility and make sure everything is put back in its proper place
- Make sure all doors and windows are locked, sound system is returned to normal and turned off, all lights are turned off, and make sure the stove and coffee machine are turned off
- Arrange for alternate wedding coordinator to handle things in case of absence

Fees

There are no fees for the use of the chapel or for the services of an active duty chaplain. Wedding coordinators as well as other civilian officiating clergy, singers, musicians and photographers do charge fees which are your responsibility. These arrangements should be made at the beginning of your wedding planning.

Music and Sound

Only our chapel musicians are authorized to play our organ. Others may sing and play the piano. We do however; recommend using our regular chapel musicians:

- Mamie Bryan (organ/piano) 292-0662
- Nancy Buennemeyer (piano) 292-8311
- MaryAnne Girard (organ/vocals) 298-8557
- Laura Petry (flute/vocals) 682-9320
- Gayle Plyler (organ/piano) 292-1142



If you elect to use your own prerecorded music you **must** consult with your wedding coordinator before the rehearsal. Only our chapel staff and wedding coordinators are allowed to operate the chapel sound system.

General Chapel Etiquette

A chapel wedding is a service of worship. The rehearsal and ceremony should be planned, conducted, and attended with dignity. In questions of propriety, the chaplain's preference will be observed. The chaplain may choose to cease his/her participation if the dignity of the service is violated. Please coordinate the selection of music, video and photography with the chaplain or clergy officiating.

General rules for all to follow:

- **No rice, birdseed, confetti or similar items may be thrown inside or outside the chapel grounds. This is a safety issue.**
- **The use of alcoholic beverages (except for sacramental use) is forbidden in the chapel or on the chapel grounds. Chaplains will not officiate any wedding where anyone in the wedding party is clearly intoxicated or under the influence of illicit drugs. If a civilian minister is performing the ceremony, the coordinator has full discretion to contact Security Forces and stop the ceremony.**
- **Smoking is not permitted inside any Air Force facility.**

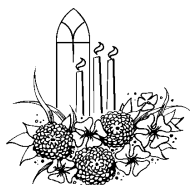
Base Honor Guard

If you desire services of an Honor Guard in your wedding, it is your responsibility to make arrangements. Regarding presence of ceremonial sabers and weapons, consult clergy presiding at your wedding.

Flowers and Decorations

Chapel seasonal decorations shall remain in place and not altered, changed or disturbed, for weddings. For example, weddings conducted during Easter or Christmas seasons are accomplished without altering the seasonal or liturgical decorations.

You may provide whatever flowers, ribbons, and other decorations you like. Check with your wedding coordinator first. No tape or tack may be used on the woodwork in either chapel. Also, no glitter or confetti are allowed in either chapel. Many local florists are familiar with the chapel and will help you in making your selection. Please remove your flowers after the wedding.



No one is permitted, without the supervision of chapel personnel or the wedding coordinator to rearrange or decorate the chapel. You may be held liable for repair, marks or other damage left when the items are removed. When in doubt, consult your wedding coordinator. Use of candles outside the altar area is prohibited. The chapel provides white candles for the altar. Unity candles are the responsibility of the wedding party.

Cleanup

The wedding party assumes all responsibility of clean-up. You must ensure that the facilities are clean and all items are removed that you, your guests or those you hire bring to the wedding or rehearsal.

Wedding Guests

It is necessary that you contact the Security Forces Visitor's Center well in advanced of your wedding in order for your non-military guests to enter the base for your wedding and rehearsal. You can reach them at 294-7551. Also, please remember that the bride and groom are responsible for the behavior of wedding guests and the care of chapel facilities. Be especially aware that security personnel may identify, apprehend or turn away those with criminal records and pending legal warrants.

Force Protection Conditions

Increased security measures at Offutt AFB could affect your wedding plans. In the unfortunate event that command directed security conditions change, there may be additional restrictions upon access and activities at DoD facilities. It is your responsibility to secure an alternate location off base for your wedding and rehearsal. If you have any questions during heightened security conditions please contact the base chapel at 294-6244.

Marriage License

Please contact the County Clerk's office at (402) 593-2351 well before your wedding so that all requirements are met and a license is issued for the marriage. Bring the **unsigned** license to the rehearsal and wedding. If you are already legally married, please bring a copy of the completed license to the rehearsal.

Cancellations

If you cancel your wedding plans, call your wedding coordinator as soon as possible so that the chapel can be made available to others.

Application and Facility Request

The *Wedding Application and Facility Request Form* provided to you by your wedding coordinator is used for all weddings at SAC Chapel and Capehart Chapel, as well as any weddings requiring the assistance of a military chaplain. Please complete the form and return it to your wedding coordinator as soon as possible.

Additional Requests

Your Chaplain Corps provides for free exercise of religion opportunities. If you have additional faith group and religious diversity needs not addressed in this operating instruction, please contact the wing chaplain.

Compliance to Guidelines

By filling out and signing the Wedding Application you are agreeing to all guidelines set forth in this Operating Instruction. Consult the wing chaplain if you have additional requests or questions. Failure to comply with these rules may result in the cancellation of your wedding.

//SIGNED//

VICTOR J. TONEY, Ch, Lt Col, USAF
Wing Chaplain

