

Wedding Guide

for Non-Members of

Madison First United Methodist Church



Madison First United Methodist Church
296 S. Main Street • P.O. Box 350 • Madison, GA 30650
Office: 706.342.3325 • www.madisonfumc.com
Date of Last Revision: 5/9/2017

Table of Contents

I. A Word of Welcome	3
II. The Sanctuary	4
III. Protocol and Policies	4
Behavior Policies	
Furniture Moving	
Time of Use	
Damages	
Candles	
Photography	
The Chancel	
The Organ and Music	
Music and Musicians	
A/V Usage	
Dressing Rooms	
The Wedding Ceremony Itself	
Pastoral Counseling Prior to the Wedding	
I. People You Will or May Need	7
Your Officiating Clergy person*	
Our Wedding Liaison*	
Our A/V Technicians*	
Instrument Musicians**	
Florists**	
Wedding Carriages / Limousine Service	
Local/Area Hotels & Motels	
Local Restaurants	
II. The Agreement Form	9
III. Wedding Information Sheet	10

**Use of church personnel required*

***Non-church personnel may be used*

*Welcome to
Madison First United Methodist Church*

We of Madison First United Methodist Church are delighted that you are considering our facilities for your wedding celebration. The institution of marriage was ordained by God and remains a sacred moment to this day and we believe that there is no better place for a wedding than at the altar of God in His sanctuary.

Having a wedding in a church sanctuary or chapel makes it special and unique. Churches are buildings dedicated to the Glory of God and for use in the service of humankind – for worship, for preaching, for the celebration of the Holy Sacraments, and for other events that honor God and bless His people. It is because of this that a church wedding has a component that is absent from other wedding venues. Your wedding, when held in the church, is a service of worship both celebrating the union of two people and honoring the God who ordained that men and women should give themselves to each other. That is why the rite is known in the church as “holy marriage.” In a church wedding, God is involved. The vows (also known as covenants) that you make are between you, your soon-to-be mate, and God.

This handbook has been created to assist you in planning your wedding here at MFUMC. It is our prayer that this will be a helpful blessing, enabling your wedding day to be carefree and full of joy.

This handbook also provides the following information for your convenience:

- Area florists
- Audio/Visual technicians
- Area wedding coordinators of excellence
- Approved pipe organ musicians (and how to proceed should you wish to have someone else provide organ music)
- Suggested honoraria for these persons and clergy

Our prayer is that the information in this handbook helps you to gain a fuller understanding of the actual items and costs involved in having your wedding. MFUMC’s fees, while minimal in relation to other wedding venues of comparable size and visual quality, are only a part of the actual costs involved in having a wedding. Since such fees and honoraria are common wherever you decide to hold your wedding, we include them in this document as a helpful tool.

Should you choose to allow us to host your special day, please contact the church office at 706.342.3325. The MFUMC secretary will help you begin the process of planning your wedding at MFUMC.

May the Lord bless you as you prayerfully plan your wedding.

The Sanctuary

Our sanctuary can be decorated as beautifully as you wish. We suggest, however, that you be thoughtful as to the appropriateness of all decorations. Sanctuaries truly are most beautiful when the sanctuary is allowed to speak for itself and minimal decoration is used. Decorations that highlight the charm and beauty of the building without making it look festooned in gaudy fashion show the best. Please remember that a church wedding is more than just a wedding, it is a Service of Worship and Consecration – one of the high religious ceremonies of the Church.

Questions are often asked concerning the arrangements of the Church for wedding and other functions. The Senior Pastor and the Church Council have provided the following guidelines as you consider how best to use the sanctuary and the other parts of the church facility to joyfully celebrate your most special of days.

Protocol and Policies

BEHAVIOR PROTOCOL

We thank you in advance for adhering strictly to the following protocol:

- No Alcohol – The general rules of the United Methodist Church state that the service or consumption of alcoholic beverages is not allowed on church property. These rules must be honored at all times and during all events within the church facilities or on church grounds.
- No Smoking – There is to be no smoking while in the buildings or on the church grounds.

FURNITURE MOVING

We require that no furniture or decorative accessories be moved without the permission of the Senior Pastor. This policy is necessary because of:

- The risk of damage or the destruction of antique or fragile and precious furnishings which could only be replaced with the greatest of difficulty, if at all.
- The risk of damaging the sound system and/or creating a fire hazard due to the fact that moving the furnishings can cause damage to unseen electrical material.
- The fact that the relocation or removal of some furnishings is theologically inappropriate.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

TIME OF USE

Many modern weddings involve people gaining access to the building several hours prior to the wedding itself. We understand this need and want to be as helpful as possible with our accommodations. However, because of the many usage demands on our facility, we have the following parameters:

- Please do not plan for anyone to gain access to the building prior to 9:00 a.m. on the day of your rehearsal, or more than five (5) hours prior to the time of your wedding on the wedding day.
- Please complete functions and vacate the facilities by 10:30 p.m. daily.
- No deliveries should be made before 1:00 p.m. on the Friday before the wedding.
- We cannot be held responsible for anything not removed from the facilities prior to Sunday morning.

DAMAGES

The person renting the facility is responsible for all damages to the facilities or grounds. Obviously, normal wear is expected and is not included in the definition of “damages.”

CANDLES

Through the centuries, church theologians have taught that either two or six candles on the Altar Table (the table below and in front of the pulpit) are proper for United Methodist Churches. Elsewhere, candelabras may be used (fake candles filled with special non-flammable oil). **NO WAX CANDLES ARE ALLOWED.** Candelabras can be placed at your discretion, so long as they are not placed inside the chancel area at the levels of the pulpit or the Altar Table.

As a precaution, regardless of where candelabras are placed or what kind of candles are used, please be certain to place adequate protective material under each candelabra. This will help to alleviate the danger of your having to pay for damages.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Pictures and videos can provide a wealth of memories. Yet, experience has proven that picture taking and video recording can detract from the sacredness of the marriage ceremony and distract attention from the bride and groom.

Therefore, we require that video cameras must be tripod-mounted, stationary, positioned outside the chancel area (see definition below), and unattended during the ceremony itself. Because the wedding is a service of worship, no wedding guests should take pictures in the sanctuary prior to or during the ceremony.

- “During the ceremony” is defined as the time from when the musician(s) begin playing until the couple reaches the back of the sanctuary at the close of the service.

Rules for the official photographer differ slightly from those stated above. Your photographer is welcome to use flash photography and to unobtrusively remain near the front of the sanctuary (though not near the altar) until the bride reaches the altar. Once the bride is at the altar, only available light pictures may be taken, and only from the back of the sanctuary. Photographs should never be taken during a time of prayer. Flash photography may be resumed as the couple walks up the aisle to exit the sanctuary. Informing your photographer of these rules is your responsibility. If a photographer or videographer breaches these rules, you will forfeit your deposit.

THE CHANCEL

Many people do not know what “the chancel” means. This knowledge is important for wedding preparation and for all other services or worship held in any sanctuary anywhere.

The chancel area is the area which begins at the altar railing and continues to the wall which is behind where the choir sits on Sunday morning in most churches. The area is theologically understood as the sacred area of the sanctuary (as opposed to the common area where the pews for the people are located).

Within this sacred area lies the altar table (often used as the communion table), the pulpit and pulpit chairs, musical instruments and seating for those who provide leadership during worship, and all of the other furnishings and liturgical materials found behind the altar railing from the perspective of the congregation in the pews. For the most part, the key theological images of the Christian Church reside here.

As some of these key theological images, the altar table should not be moved and only the cross, the altar table candles, the altar Bible, and the liturgical paraments (cloths of various colors which adorn the altar table and pulpit) should be on that table. The candlesticks, cross, Bible and other furnishings may be removed from the table for certain reasons (when communion is to be served to the congregation during the wedding ceremony), but only with permission from the Senior Pastor.

Finally, please see to it that no nails, tacks, or other similarly destructive items are used during the decoration of the sanctuary. Our Wedding Liaison will be on hand to assist you in these areas should you need any clarification.

THE ORGAN AND MUSIC

Use of our pipe organ by any person other than the Church Organist, or persons on the preapproved list, must be approved by our Senior Pastor and our organist. Should you have your own organist, please help them to expect that a meeting with our Church Organist (or his/her designee) will be required prior to using our pipe organ.

We pray that you will choose music that honors God regardless of the style of music you choose. You will need to work with the Church Wedding Liaison early in the process to coordinate the music, the pianist/organist, and A/V Tech. Of necessity, we reserve the right to disallow music deemed inappropriate by our Senior Pastor.

More than anything else in the wedding service, the vocal music you choose speaks volumes as to who you really are and what your wedding is about. Please allow us to make a few strong suggestions. First, all music should be religious in nature. Second, experience has proven that music performed live, by trained musicians, is always received better than recorded music. If you would like a list of local vocalists who have a proven track record of excellence, our Church Wedding Liaison can provide one.

A/V TECHNICIANS

Should you desire the use of our sound system, microphones, visual equipment, etc., you will be required to hire one of our approved A/V technicians. Please work with our Church Wedding Liaison early in the process to ensure that one of our technicians can be scheduled for your wedding.

The technician will be available one hour prior to both the wedding rehearsal and the wedding, and will be responsible to handle your sound needs. Unauthorized use of the sound system is fraught with too much potential danger to be permitted.

DRESSING ROOMS

A bride's room will be provided for the bridal party. Groomsmen, please feel free to use either of the classrooms in the sanctuary building. The Church Liaison can direct you to these areas.

THE WEDDING CEREMONY ITSELF

Other than facilities usage, the wedding ceremony itself is the one area which is not overseen, managed or controlled by your wedding coordinator or Church Wedding Liaison. The wedding ceremony is a product of planning by you and the Senior Pastor.

It is vitally important that you arrange a meeting with MFUMC's Senior Pastor as soon as possible, certainly no later than one month before the wedding. This meeting is designed to help you develop the order of your wedding ceremony. Following that, you will need to meet with the organist and/or other key musical personnel to coordinate the use of the organ and/or piano and appropriate music.

PASTORAL COUNSELING PRIOR TO THE WEDDING

All persons planning to be married need to receive the information and support which pastoral counseling provides. It is typical for the Senior Pastor, as clergyperson performing the ceremony, to be the counselor.

People You May Need

The following is a list of the names of people who can help you make your day special. The list also outlines information regarding typical honoraria in appreciation for services rendered. Because we are often asked what is appropriate in terms of honoraria, these figures are here as a guide to aid you in your planning.

Church Based Resources

These honoraria are not paid to the church. Rather, the honoraria are gifted by you to the person performing the service involved. Etiquette dictates that such honoraria should be distributed *prior* to the beginning of the wedding event.

Also, please understand that the only services you are required to use among this list are those of our Church Liaison and the Senior Pastor. The remainder of this list can be considered an “a la carte” menu of approved personnel for various services. The predominant honoraria range is listed only for your convenience.

- Senior Pastor: Honorarium = \$150 - \$300 (mileage dependent - add lodging if necessary)
- Our Church Wedding Liaison (required): \$150 Included in Church Fee
- Approved A/V Technician (required): \$75 Included in Church Fee
- Approved Instrument Musicians:
 - Organists – \$150 - \$300 (dependent upon responsibilities and time requirements)
 - Pianists – \$150 - \$300 (dependent upon responsibilities and time requirements)

Non-Church Resources

The follow information is not connected to the wedding expenses related to your agreement with MFUMC. Rather, it is provided in an effort to help inform you about community businesses whose services you may wish to use as you plan your special day.

- Florists:
 - Laurie Lewis – 706-342-7108
 - Gussie’s Flowers – 706-342-0476
 - Madison Flower Basket – 706-342-0558
 - Lepetite Jardin – 706-342-0776
- Horse Drawn Wedding Carriages:
 - Double C Carriages – 706-742-7972
- Local/Area Hotels/Motels:
 - The James Madison Hotel
 - 200 yds. from the church at 240 West Washington. Phone: 706-342-8100. A new, beautiful hotel in Madison.
 - For other lodging information, from budget motels to the Ritz-Carlton, please refer to the resources available at www.madisonga.org.
- Local/Area Restaurants: (not including the local fast food places)
 - Amici Italian Café (On the square – great Italian food – not in a hurry)
 - 706-342-0000
 - Cracker Barrel Old Country Store (at I-20 exit 114 – 2 miles away)
 - 706-343-9963
 - Happy China (about a mile from church toward I-20 exit 114)
 - 706-342-7679
 - Madison Chop House Grill (75 yards from church Applebee’s style – great filet & specials)
 - 706-342-9009
 - Ricardo’s (Fine dining - across the street from the James Madison Hotel on W. Washington St.)
 - 706-342-0729
 - Town 220 Bistro (upscale – available meeting/reception facilities)
 - 706-752-1445
 - For information on area restaurants, check out www.madisonga.org.

Madison First United Methodist Church
Non-Member Wedding Agreement

This AGREEMENT is entered into this ____ day of _____, 20____, between MADISON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (hereinafter referred to as CHURCH) and _____ (hereinafter referred to as SECOND PARTY).

Whereas the CHURCH allows use of the Church facilities from time to time on a fee basis; and Whereas, the SECOND PARTY wishes to use those certain facilities of the CHURCH hereinafter defined: Now, therefore, for mutual CONSIDERATION received, the parties agree as follows.

SECOND PARTY Desires to use the following facilities:

FOR THE WEDDING CEREMONY:

_____ Asbury Building _____ Wesley Building _____ Epworth Building

FOR THE RECEPTION:

_____ Asbury Building _____ Wesley Building _____ Epworth Building

FOR THE REHEARSAL:

_____ Asbury Building _____ Wesley Building _____ Epworth Building

SECOND PARTY wishes to reserve the above said building(s) for the following dates:

Wedding Rehearsal Date & Time: _____

Wedding Ceremony Date & Time: _____

Fee Schedule: Two separate deposit checks must be turned in to the church office with this agreement. Unless damage or breach of contract arises, the \$300 check will be returned after the wedding.
\$300 damage/contract breach deposit (refundable as outlined above)
\$500 non-refundable deposit (applied toward total amount due)

Building for Wedding - \$2,500 (non-refundable \$500 deposit applied here)
Rehearsal Dinner/Reception - \$1,000 (one event) OR \$1,500 (both events)
Church Liaison - \$150

Fee payment must be completed no later than two weeks prior to wedding date; otherwise reservation is removed from the church's calendar.

The information included in this document is incorporated into and made a part of this agreement. The SECOND PARTY shall be responsible for all financial remuneration necessary due to damages to CHURCH property (normal wear and tear excluded) as stated in these Guidelines.

Agreed to on the above-mentioned date by:

MADISON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SECOND PARTY

By: _____

By: _____

Printed Name: _____

Printed Name: _____

Wedding Information Sheet

Bride: _____
Telephone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____

Bride's Parents: _____
Telephone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____

Groom: _____
Telephone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____

Groom's Parents: _____
Telephone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____

Minister: _____
Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Organist: _____
Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Florist: _____
Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Church Wedding Liaison: _____
Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Rehearsal: Date: _____
Time: _____

Wedding: Date: _____
Time: _____

NEWLYWEDS' ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBER:

