

**Snellville
United Methodist Church**

Wedding Policies



*For this reason, a man shall leave his
father and mother and be united to his wife...
Genesis 2:24*

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*Trust steadfastly in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly.
And the best of the three is LOVE.*

1 Corinthians: 13:13

The Message

At Snellville United Methodist Church, we are honored that you are considering holding your wedding in our facility. By choosing to have your wedding here, you are choosing to say your wedding vows and covenant with each other before God, as well as your family and friends, in a service of worship. The ceremony of Christian marriage is one of the most significant commitments you will ever make, and we want to do everything possible to ensure that your wedding is a beautiful and unforgettable experience.

In the following pages, you will find policies and procedures to ensure that your wedding ceremony accomplishes these goals while maintaining our church's facility for the ongoing life of the congregation and our ministries in the community. Please read these pages carefully and ask any questions you may have.

When you are ready to set your date, make an appointment with our Wedding Coordinator. Bring your registration form and deposit to your appointment so that your date for the wedding can be secured.

We ask that you be responsible for communicating to all members of your wedding party that they respect and adhere to the church's policies.

We are very excited for you and hope if you choose Snellville UMC as the site for your wedding, that it will bring you joy and happiness, not just for one day, but for the rest of your life. If there are ways we can assist you as you begin your planning, please contact us.

Dr. Jim Cantrell
Senior Pastor

Wedding Policies

Introduction

A wedding is a sacred service of worship which joins two lives, thus establishing a new Christian Home. A Christian wedding is one of the happiest and holiest moments in the lives of two people. Snellville UMC welcomes your inquiry about a wedding at our church. In keeping with the mission of Snellville United Methodist Church, we believe that a wedding ceremony is a worship service and our policies reflect that belief. The Clergy and staff at our church wish to extend our assistance to your wedding so that it will be a memorable and meaningful experience. Please read this guidebook carefully to be certain that all aspects of the wedding you envision are compatible with our policies.

Note: For the purpose of this document, members of Snellville UMC are referred to as “member” and non-members of Snellville UMC are referred to as “guest”.

Reserving the Church

Once you have read the policies and agree that these are compatible with your wedding plans, you will need to do the following:

- Schedule an appointment with our Wedding Coordinator Donna Walts (678 430-6038) or dwalts@snellvilleumc.org to reserve your date. Availability of the church for the date you have chosen will be confirmed at that time.
- Prior to your appointment, Donna will email you the required forms to be completed, along with the church’s fee schedule. Or, you can stop by the church office to pick them up.
- At your appointment, bring your completed and signed Wedding Request (Form A) with the Security Deposit to hold your date.
- Schedule a date to attend a Wedding Planning Sessions within the next 2 months.

NOTE: The date for your wedding will be held for no longer than three (3) months from your scheduling appointment and is not considered secured until all the above items have been completed.

Additional information related to scheduling includes:

- Seven o’clock pm is the latest time of the day that a wedding may be scheduled.
- If your reception is held in our facility, the wedding cannot be scheduled after 6:00pm
- Two weddings may be held on the same day provided four hours are allowed between each wedding.
- Weddings cannot be scheduled during the month of December, Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday), New Year’s Eve or Day.
- Thanksgiving weekend, Independence Day, Memorial Day, and Labor Day will only be available if there are no activities at the church and a wedding director is available.
- Security Deposits are returned by mail approximately two to three weeks following the wedding, if there were no damages to the facilities and/or policy issues.

Types of Weddings

The following is a list of the types of weddings, and definitions of each, that we provide at Snellville UMC:

Walk-In Wedding

- Arrival at the minister's office on the day of the wedding.
- Walk together into the Sanctuary/Chapel.
- No floral decorations.
- No rehearsal.
- No sound system.
- Guests limited to 10.
- All policies and forms must be adhered to where applicable.

Small Wedding

- Can be held in either the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- Allotted time is 1 ½ hours.
- No floral decorations or candles.
- No rehearsal.
- No sound system.
- Guest limited to 20 to 30.
- Wedding Director provided.
- All policies and forms must be adhered to where applicable.

Chapel Wedding

- Can accommodate 175 guests.
- Wedding Directors provided.
- Sound Tech provided.
- Floral decorations and candles permitted.
- Rehearsal required.
- All policies and forms must be adhered to that are contained in this guidebook.

Sanctuary Wedding

- Can accommodate 400+ guests.
- Wedding Directors provided.
- Sound Tech provided.
- Floral decorations and candles permitted.
- Rehearsal required.
- All policies and forms must be adhered to that are contained in this guidebook.

Clergy/Pre-Marital Counseling

Snellville United Methodist pastors are willing to officiate at your wedding ceremony. You must contact the pastor you would like to use to determine their availability.

Guest ministers are welcome to officiate at your wedding ceremony upon the approval of our Senior Pastor; please understand that our Pastor will not be able to approve any ordination which is granted for the purpose of wedding chaplaincy, even if they hold a valid license from the State of Georgia. If the bride and groom have any questions or concerns about this issue, please let Mrs. Donna Walts know early in your planning so that a clear decision can be reached quickly.

The following information must be received no later than three months prior to your wedding date in order to receive approval. Again, this needs to be early in your planning in case our Pastor is not able to approve.

- Name and contact information of the minister.
- Documentation of ordination and/or affiliation with his or her denomination.
- A copy of the Christian service to be used at the ceremony.

All couples, member or guest, who wish to be married at Snellville UMC are required to participate in pre-marital counseling sessions.

Typically, Pre-Marital Counseling is performed by the officiating minister. When the Counseling is completed the couple will be issued a certificate of completion to take to Court when obtaining marriage license. A copy of this certificate of completion must be given to the Wedding Coordinator at SUMC. Should you require assistance in obtaining premarital counseling, please let the Wedding Coordinator know as soon as possible.

Wedding Guild Ministry/Wedding Directors

Our Wedding Guild is a group of well trained, dedicated church members. Their purpose is to work closely with the bride, groom and minister to make sure that the ceremony is conducted appropriately, and all runs as smoothly as possible. Our Wedding Guild Director is the official director for your wedding. If you have a wedding planner present, they can assist you, but the facility and actual wedding are under the direction of the Snellville UMC Wedding Director. We ask that the guild members are treated with upmost courtesy and respect by everyone in the bridal party. Please keep in mind that our directors are only responsible for the wedding rehearsal and ceremony and are not wedding planners.

Approximately 3 weeks prior to the wedding, the bride will be contacted by the Wedding Guild Director responsible for the wedding to set up a consultation to work out the final details of your ceremony. You may contact her at any time prior to the rehearsal with questions or needs.

The wedding director and the pastor will conduct the rehearsal and implement the details you and your wedding director agreed upon. No changes will be made in the ceremony following the rehearsal.

On the day of your wedding, the wedding directors arrive at the church three (3) hours before the ceremony to check details and to be of assistance to you in any way. They will help all members of the wedding party. This is your special day and you do not need to worry about details or aspects of the ceremony.

Wedding Planning Sessions

Attendance at one of the Wedding Planning sessions led by our Wedding Guild is required. We encourage parents and/or other significant decision-making person(s) involved with the wedding plans to attend this session. These meetings are held every other month (Jan, Mar, May, etc). Planning sessions are an excellent opportunity to review the policies, ask questions, and familiarize yourself with the facilities. Schedule your attendance at a wedding planning session as soon as you confirm your wedding date. Discuss with the Wedding Coordinator dates and times of upcoming sessions.

General Guidelines

- Absolutely no smoking, alcoholic beverages, or drugs are to be used anywhere on church property. This is strictly enforced. At the discretion of the wedding director and/or the officiating pastor, any member of the wedding party who disregards this policy will be excluded from the wedding ceremony.
- The Bride's Room is located in the main hall near the sanctuary. An additional room with bathrooms is available for larger wedding parties.
- A separate room is available for the groom and his attendants.
- The church and church staff are not responsible for the safety of gifts or personal belongings.
- For safety reasons, no rice or fresh rose petals are to be thrown in or outside of the church facility. Artificial rose petals may be used in and outside the church. Birdseed and bubbles can be used but must be distributed outside of the facility.
- Designate areas are available to set up food for the wedding party (i.e. Wesley Hall, Chapel Hall). The Wedding Coordinator can reserve these area(s) for you. Please keep all food and beverages in these areas.
- It is expected that the wedding party leave all areas (Sanctuary, Chapel, Bride's Room, grooms area) neat and clean.
- Candelabras and a Unity candle are available for use in the Sanctuary and Chapel upon request. There is a fee for candles.
- Wesley Hall and Heritage Hall are available areas for Receptions and Rehearsal Dinners. Consult with the Wedding Coordinator for details.
- The Marriage license must be secured and in the hands of the pastor before the wedding.
- Fees and honorariums to the Minister(s), musicians and vocalists are the responsibility of the bride and groom and handled personally by you. Suggestion for fees can be discussed with the Wedding Coordinator.

Decorations/Furnishings/Flowers

All decorations should direct attention to the altar and cross and should not detract in any way from the sanctity of the Sanctuary or Chapel. Decorations related to the church year cannot be removed (banners, etc). The furnishings (pulpit, lectern, communion table etc.) cannot be moved or rearranged.

Flower arrangements may be placed on the altar table, on candelabras, and on flower stands. Make arrangements with your florist to have the flowers delivered after 9 o'clock am on the day of the wedding. The florist is responsible for removing all decorations from the facility within two hours after the ceremony. Any decorations not removed will be disposed of by the housekeeping crew.

Additional guidelines include the following:

- The paraments on the pulpit, lectern and altar table will be white.
- Candelabras and a Unity Candle are available for the Sanctuary/Chapel upon request.
- For reasons of safety, no aisle cloths are allowed.
- Dripless candles are required, with protective covers underneath the candles to protect the carpet and furnishings.
- Plants and flowers must also have protective covers underneath.
- Candles other than candelabras must have protective globes.
- Nail, tacks, tape, or glue may not be used to secure decorations to pews or church furnishings.
- Ribbons and/or flowers may be used on the pews to designate family seating. They must be secured with a florist's hook over the pews or tied around the top of the pews with ribbon.
- Live greenery cannot be used on the altar rail.
- Many brides choose to leave their altar flowers for services on Sunday at Snellville UMC. The flowers will be placed in the Gathering Room and acknowledgement of your flowers will be made in the Sunday worship bulletin.

Policies regarding flowers, decorations, and furnishings must be read carefully by you and your florist or those that are decorating for you.

Music/Sound

A wedding is a sacred service and music should be selected accordingly to be appropriate for a Christian worship service.

You are welcome to use the organist/pianist here at Snellville UMC. Contact information can be obtained from the Wedding Coordinator.

A guest organist must contact the church organist for instructions specific to using the organ and music selections. Practice on the organ can be scheduled by contacting the church office between 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Soloists need to arrange to practice with the organist before or after the rehearsal unless another time is mutually agreed upon.

A Sound Tech will be arranged for you. Sound checks for soloists will be 30 minutes before the rehearsal.

If you are using recorded music, song titles and a copy of the lyrics must be submitted to the Wedding Coordinator one month prior to the wedding for approval.

You will need to burn a CD (CD-R **not** CD-RW) with the music selections – recorded in the order they will be played at the ceremony. This CD, together with a list of titles and track numbers, should be turned into the Wedding Coordinator three weeks prior to the wedding to insure it works properly in our system.

If you will need a Video/Slide Technician, arrangements can be made with the Wedding Coordinator for this service. There is an additional fee for this technician.

Photography/Video Photography

Photographs and videos are important remembrance of your wedding. Because the wedding ceremony is a worship service, you, your photographer and/or video photographer must follow our policies regarding photography in the sanctuary and chapel.

- All wedding photography in the Sanctuary/Chapel should be completed one hour before the wedding service.
- All pre-wedding pictures are to be completed 30 minutes before the ceremony.
- Flash photography is not permitted in the Sanctuary/Chapel until the recessional begins at the conclusion of the wedding ceremony.
- A photographer may not precede the bride down the aisle to take pictures as she enters.
- A photographer may not move around the sanctuary during the service. Pictures taken from different areas in the church are very disruptive to the worship service and therefore not permitted.
- During the ceremony, pictures may be taken from the balcony, using only existing light.
- As the Bride and Groom exit the Sanctuary/Chapel the photographer may take a few steps down the aisle for flash shots.
- Video taping with a manned camera is only permitted from the balcony using existing lighting.
- An unlighted and unmanned video camera may be used in a designated location in the choir loft and/or front of the chapel.
- No videoing is allowed from any other location in the Sanctuary.
- Pictures, poses, groupings should be discussed with your photographer at your consultation and a list compiled. This will make the process of taking pictures run more smoothly.
- Please notify the family and wedding party the specific times and places photos will be taken.
- You will have up to one (1) hour to take pictures following the wedding.
- Please inform your photographer, family and friends of these policies.

Policies regarding photography and video photography must be read carefully by you and your photographers. A signed copy of the policies must be returned to the Wedding Coordinator one month prior to the wedding stating the photographer/videographer have read and agree to our guidelines.

Rehearsal

The rehearsal is an integral part of the wedding preparation and should proceed in a reverent manner.

The Wedding Director and officiating minister will conduct the rehearsal. Rehearsals may begin at 6 o'clock or 6:30. Please ask your family and wedding party to arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled time. Most rehearsals can be completed in an hour if all members of the wedding party arrive on time.

Seating of parents, placement of the wedding party for the ceremony, instructions to the ushers and bridesmaids will be covered at this time. The minister or Wedding Director will conduct a brief run through of the ceremony. All those who are participating in the wedding ceremony, as well as those who are to be formally seated, should be present at the rehearsal.

Once the rehearsal is completed and all details finalized, no changes to the ceremony will be made on the day of the wedding.

The wedding license must be in the hands of the minister before the wedding can be performed. Bring it to the rehearsal (or before) to give to the minister.

Day of the Wedding

Arrival at the church of the wedding party can be up to three hours prior to the service.

All members of the wedding party must be present at least one hour before the ceremony.

The Wedding Directors are here to assist you in any way. Please let them deal with any issues so that you may enjoy this special day.

In the Bride's Room, contain the use of makeup, hair spray and water to the adjoining restrooms to prevent soiling anyone's attire for the wedding.

All food and drink should remain in the designate areas.

To help with the confusion as everyone leaves the wedding ceremony, even if you have your reception here, remove all unnecessary items from the Bride's Room as soon as you are finished with them. This lessens the chance they will be forgotten and many times, this room is shared by other brides and/or ministries later the same day.

Release of Liability

As a consideration for the use of the Church facilities, you understand and agree that Snellville UMC will not be responsible for any loss, damage or injury which may occur or be suffered while you are on our premises or as a result of the use of our facility. This includes, but is not limited to, any loss, damage or injury relating to such things as theft (wedding gifts or personal valuables) or vehicle accidents. Valuables should never be left unattended. Snellville UMC cannot be responsible for any facility damage due to weather or any other unpredicted circumstances. Signatures on the "Couples Agreement" (Form B) will signify acceptance and understanding of the release of liability and all wedding and associated policies.

Fees

A fee schedule that includes the cost of our facilities for Weddings, Rehearsal Dinners and Receptions is available from the Wedding Coordinator. **NOTE:** Failure to abide by the Wedding Policies of Snellville United Methodist Church will result in the forfeiture of your security deposit (*the Security Deposit is a separate fee from your wedding fees*). Any damages to the facility will result in the forfeiture of your security deposit. If the cost to repair the damages exceeds the amount of the security deposit, the balance will be the responsibility of the Bride and Groom.

Checklist for Bride and Groom

Reserving the Church:

- _____ Set date to meet with the Wedding Coordinator.
- _____ Completely review the wedding policies of Snellville UMC.
- _____ Request Fee Schedule.
- _____ Fill out Wedding Request Form A to secure wedding and/or reception date and return with security deposit and signed form agreeing to wedding policies.
- _____ Following the scheduling of your wedding and/or reception, schedule a date to attend a Wedding Planning Session (if you have not already attended a session).
- _____ Plans for officiating minister (Snellville UMC or guest minister) have been arranged.
- _____ Schedule pre-marital counseling session.
- _____ Musicians and vocalist contacted and scheduled.

As Soon as Possible:

- _____ Select a florist. Give them a copy of the Policies for Florists/Decorators. This form needs to be signed with the understanding they will comply with our policies.
- _____ Select a photographer and/or videographer. Give them a copy of the Policies for Photography/Video Photography. This form needs to be signed with the understanding they will comply with our policies.
- _____ If your reception and/or rehearsal dinner will be in our facility, pick up a copy of the Kitchen Policies.
- _____ If your reception and/or rehearsal dinner will be in our facility, contact your caterer and give them a copy of the Caterer's Liability Insurance Declaration and Snellville UMC Kitchen Policies.

Two Months Before the Wedding:

- _____ If you are using recorded music, list of selections and lyrics turned in to the Wedding Coordinator for approval.

One Month Before the Wedding:

- _____ Wedding Information (Form B) completed and returned to the Wedding Coordinator. **NOTE:** You will not be contacted by a Wedding Director until this form is completed.
- _____ If your reception and/or rehearsal dinner will be in our facility, Room Set-Up Forms completed and returned to the Wedding Coordinator.
- _____ If you are using recorded music, music burned on CD and list of selections, with track numbers, completed and turned in to the Wedding Coordinator.
- _____ Fees paid to the church.
- _____ Meeting scheduled with Wedding Guild Director assigned to your wedding.
- _____ All members of the wedding party notified of the times of rehearsal, photographs and ceremony.
- _____ Marriage license has been secured and ready to turn into the minister at the rehearsal, if not before.