

# First United Methodist Church Wedding Policy



**115 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Gadsden, AL 35901  
256-543-8200**

## **A Message to the Bride and Groom**

The family at First United Methodist Church wants to congratulate you on your upcoming wedding. The marriage ceremony is a sacred and beautiful service in which two people pledge themselves to each other under the blessings of God. It should be considered a holy time of worship and reverence as well as excitement. We consider it an honor and privilege that you are considering this holy and beautiful place of worship for your ceremony.

These policies are designed to promote the sanctity of the ceremony while providing a logistical understanding of your special day. We want to make your wedding day go as smoothly as possible. Please review these policies and fill out the appropriate forms to turn into the church.

May the Lord bless you as you plan your wedding and begin your Christian marriage.

## **Scheduling**

To view the church, please call the church office, 256-543-8200 to set an appointment.

Once you have decided to use First United Methodist Church for your wedding, fill out the **Wedding Application** and turn it into the church secretary along with your \$100.00 deposit.

At that time, your date can be put on the church calendar. The church wedding coordinator, will then contact you to confirm date, pastor, and other details.

The Rehearsal date and time will be scheduled with the wedding date.

Please keep in mind, that church program events will have priority in the scheduling of dates.

## **Facilities**

**Sanctuary-** Seats approximately 400 guests

**Chapel-** Seats approximately 60 guests

**Parlor-**Used for a small reception for up to 50 guests

**Gathering Room-**Can seat 75 for a reception, or 100 standing

**Activity Center-** Accommodates 400+ guests

**Brides Room-** The Bride and her party may dress in this room. The Groom and his party are to dress in the Jr. High Room.

## **Pastor**

After a date has been scheduled with one of our ministers, the bride and groom are to make an appointment with that minister for premarital counseling.

If a pastor on our staff is not conducting your wedding, please fill out the Pastor information on the application form. A letter will be sent from our pastor extending an invitation to the visiting minister.

## **Wedding Director**

The Wedding Director serves as a liaison between the bride and the church. Therefore, the services of a church appointed Wedding Director is required. She will assist the Bride in planning her wedding service and is directly responsible to the Bride within the confines of church policies. She works closely with the ministers and organist, and is available to answer any questions that you may have concerning your wedding. She will acquaint you with the rules of the church and with the facilities available. The Wedding Director is vitally important. She works with the minister and the wedding party both at the rehearsal and at the wedding and is responsible for attending to the details of the wedding to assure that the entire event takes place in as reverent and gracious manner as possible. Please contact the church office at 256-543-8200 and you will be given contact information for the Wedding Director.

## **Music**

Due to her familiarity with the pipe organ, we suggest the church organist/pianist be requested to play for the ceremony. Upon approval of the organist, a guest organist may be invited to perform at your ceremony.

The wedding ceremony is a sacred service as well as an act of worship. Therefore, only music, which conforms to standards of dignity and is theologically appropriate, may be used. Taped music may not be used. The church organist will offer you suggestions of appropriate music, if you wish. All music to be used in the wedding ceremony must be approved by the church organist.

You can bring in outside vocalist and instruments such as a trumpet or violin. However, all music must still be approved through the church organist.

The bride and/or groom are responsible for contacting the church organist to plan the music for wedding ceremony.

## **Sound**

The church will provide a trained sound technician for your wedding. The sound technician will be available for the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

## **Photography**

Pictures may be made before and after the service. Photographers may stand in the back of the church to take non-flash pictures during the ceremony. Flash pictures may only be taken as the couple leaves the church. Photographers are not to stand on the church furniture.

It is recommended that as many pictures as possible be taken PRIOR to the wedding ceremony.

## **Videography**

Videotaping of the service is permitted from the narthex or the back of the sanctuary. One unattended video camera may also be placed behind the organ or piano on the stage. This camera must be discrete and in place at least 45 minutes before the wedding ceremony begins.

## **Flowers and Decorating**

The sanctuary is designed to reflect the simple beauty of things holy. All of the appointments have symbolic meaning and should be recognized as such. Weddings in the sanctuary will be performed in the United Methodist tradition. The pulpit chairs may be removed from the sanctuary, but no other furniture shall be moved. The Altar will remain in place along with the cross and candlesticks. Floral arrangements are to be no higher than the cross bar of the cross. Needlepoint altar cushions cannot be removed. If the wedding takes place during the Advent season, the Advent decorations may not be altered. The bride is responsible for discussing flower and decoration plans with wedding coordinator for approval.

Candles, candelabra, and unity candles are to be furnished by the bride. Suitable material (non-flammable) must be used to protect floors and carpets from candle drippings, even though dripless candles must be used. No candles can be used outside the chancel area because of the fire code.

Pews may be marked with flowers; bows or ribbons tied to the pews. **POSITIVELY** no tacks, glue, tape or nails may be used on any furniture or elsewhere in the church. Access from the pews to the aisles must remain open. Potted palms and plants placed on the floor or furniture should be placed in containers to prevent damage from moisture.

Flowers, decorations, and equipment must be removed immediately following the wedding ceremony.

## **Caterer**

Wedding receptions may be held in the Gathering Room, Activity Center, or the Parlor, which may be opened up to six hours prior to the wedding. The kitchen may be used and must be left in the order in which it was found.

One month prior to the wedding, the caterer or bride must submit the custodian's information sheet to the church office. All requirements for the reception (location of tables, chairs, etc) should be clearly indicated on this sheet.

The caterer and/or the Bride must furnish all equipment (cake stands, punch bowls, plates, serving pieces, table linens, etc). The church will provide tables and chairs if requested.

Smoking is not permitted in or around any of our buildings. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the premises at any time.

## **Rehearsal**

The rehearsal date and time are scheduled at the same time as the wedding date. The rehearsal is a time of careful preparation for a worship service. The standing arrangements of the bridal party will be determined first so that each knows his/her position during the service. Then the entire service is rehearsed in proper order.

It is extremely important that all members of the wedding party be on time for the rehearsal! It should begin promptly at the time you have requested. Forty-five minutes to an hour will be needed for the rehearsal.

## **General Rules**

- No smoking within the building or near the entrances.
- No alcoholic beverages are allowed on church premises (building and grounds).
- No pets are allowed inside the church buildings other than those necessary for physically challenged persons.
- No rice is to be thrown inside or outside the church building
- It is the bride's responsibility to notify friends and relatives attending the wedding that no photography is allowed during the service.
- Breakage of and/or damage to any church equipment/facilities must be reimbursed at replacement price.
- The church is not responsible for lost or stolen articles or equipment.

## **Nursery Policy**

A reservation for use of the church nursery and nursery staff must be requested at least four weeks in advance of the wedding. The nursery rooms may only be used with church staff caregivers at the church facility during a wedding and/or reception that is taking place onsite. There is a minimum of a two-hour time frame for the nursery and the cost is \$20 per hour and is the responsibility of the family. Additional nursery caregivers may be required based on the number of children that will be cared for. If you wish to have the nursery available, please discuss with wedding coordinator to have it arranged through the church staff.

## Financial Costs

Refundable Deposit.....\$100.00

The deposit is to be turned into church secretary with the wedding application.

The deposit will be refunded provided there is no damage to the facilities or equipment.

**\*\*All fees must be paid one month prior to wedding date.**

### **Use of Facilities**

#### Non-Member

Sanctuary.....\$500.00

Gathering Room.....\$150.00

Chapel.....\$100.00

Parlor.....\$100.00

Activity Center.....\$150.00

### Members

There is no charge to members for the use of facilities. You must have been a member of Gadsden First United Methodist Church for 12 months prior to this application to receive the "member" rate. Member status will be credited to either the bride or groom if a parent is a member of the church.

### Fees\* for Members and Non-Members

Pastor.....\$200.00

Wedding Director.....\$200.00

Organist.....\$200.00

**Sound Technician** (required for sanctuary wedding).....\$75.00

Nursery Caregiver(s) (must be church staff-2 hour minimum).....\$20.00 per hour

\*Additional honorariums are at your discretion.

### **Maintenance Fees**

Sanctuary.....\$150.00

Gathering Room.....\$100.00

Chapel.....\$75.00

Parlor.....\$50.00

Activity Center.....\$200.00

\*A fee of \$50.00 per hour will be added to rental charges to cover the cost of the kitchen.