
Wedding Guidelines

Young Harris Memorial UMC

Revised 02.02.18



Introduction for the Bride and Groom

On behalf of the members of Young Harris Memorial United Methodist Church (YHMUMC), we thank God for you and seek to begin in ministry with you through your journey toward Holy Matrimony. One of the loveliest occasions in the lives of two people is their wedding, and it is our desire to join you in making your wedding as beautiful as you have dreamed and an experience that will always live in your memory. The purpose of this booklet is to help answer your initial questions regarding weddings. Because this is a ministry of the church, we seek to offer consistency of ministry to the community in a way that is holy and edifying to God as well as empowering to the bride and groom. As part of the Church Universal, we seek to serve you and your families fully in the Truth and Grace of Jesus Christ. Please take a few moments to read this document before you meet with our Minister(s), our Director of Music, and/or our Wedding Coordinators.

What is Christian Marriage?

Christian marriage, simply put, is the joining of one man and one woman, who are committing to spend their lives side-by-side until death they do part. We believe that Holy Matrimony is at the foundation of how God calls some of us to live our lives for Him. It often becomes the foundation of family. In the Christian context, marriage is a joining of husband and wife, while placing with intentionality God at the very center of it all. Marriage is not to be entered into lightly; it is a calling. It is a blessing. It is also a responsibility and service to God and one's spouse.

The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church states that the minister shall provide premarital counseling and discuss and plan your wedding with you.

Church Guidelines

YHMUMC Pastor: The Pastor is responsible for all weddings held in this church. All arrangements pertaining to the Worship Service of Marriage shall be made in full consultation with the YHMUMC Pastor. The traditional ceremony will be used unless other arrangements are made. YHMUMC requires an ordained minister to perform all weddings held at the church. Should you request a minister to perform the wedding other than the minister(s) serving here, he or she shall be approved by our pastor-in-charge. YHMUMC requires that our church lay-coordinators be available to direct all weddings to insure that the will of the body be adhered to and to be certain that we are serving you correctly.

We encourage strongly that couples being wedded at YHMUMC receive at least three sessions of counseling from either the officiating minister or an approved counselor or minister well in advance of the wedding date. If this cannot happen prior to marriage, it should be followed upon by the couple as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of the couple to take this season of preparation seriously. These sessions of introspection and examination shall be for the well-being of the bride and groom.

Guidelines. The Church Sanctuary is available for weddings and can be made festive and beautiful while maintaining an atmosphere that is appropriate. We hold a deep sense as a congregation that this is holy ground and that this space is set apart for the exclusive worship of our God - God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

The United Methodist Church's *Book of Discipline* affirms that a church wedding is a worship service reflecting a joyful, reverent, and dignified celebration. The United Methodist Church observes an open Communion Table. If the Sacrament of Holy Communion is served during a wedding, the entire congregation must be given the opportunity to be served (i.e., the sacrament shall not be given exclusively to the bride and groom).

In keeping with *Book of Discipline, paragraph 304.6* which states that "Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches," marriages performed at Young Harris Memorial United Methodist Church shall be officiated exclusively between one man and one woman.

Reservations, Time and Date

Wedding reservations are initially arranged with the YHMUMC Pastor through our church office (706-543-2612) and reserved by submission of application and booking fee deposit. Weddings and receptions must be scheduled at times that will not conflict with regular church services and that allow time for installation and removal of decorations. Weddings shall not be scheduled during Holy Week, including Palm Sunday weekend. When weddings are scheduled during holidays (specifically Advent and Christmas seasons), you must incorporate the seasonal decorations into the wedding décor. Decorations for the holiday seasons in the church may not be moved or removed. Please contact the YHMUMC Wedding Coordinator with questions.

The Pastor performing the wedding will attend the rehearsal (one hour maximum) with the YHMUMC Wedding Coordinator and your wedding coordinator, if you have one. The church will be open three hours before and one hour after the wedding, and the YHMUMC Wedding Coordinator will be present to assist you during this time. Any change made in the time of the ceremony or rehearsal should be discussed with the YHMUMC wedding coordinator and your wedding coordinator, should you have one. All weddings shall be scheduled to accommodate any regularly scheduled worship services being offered at the church.

Responsibilities

It is your responsibility to adhere to the policies and standards stated in this pamphlet. This includes making sure that your photographer, videographer, and caterer understand the policies pertinent to them.

Before any wedding date is guaranteed, the wedding application form must be completed with a \$150 deposit and returned to the church office before the wedding date will be secured on the church calendar. The YHMUMC Pastor and the Wedding Coordinator are to be contacted to verify their availability to perform the wedding service. The deposit is refundable after the wedding, provided no damage has occurred and all the policies are respected.

The YHMUMC Wedding Coordinator's main responsibility will be to assist and supervise the details of the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony and to be YHMUMC's representative. The coordinator shall schedule a preliminary meeting with you to review these policies, answer any questions, offer suggestions, and discuss your wedding details. A second meeting should be scheduled to confirm details and discuss a timeline for the wedding day. At the rehearsal and on the day of the wedding, the coordinator will be there to assist and supervise so that things go according to schedule (see addendum for Coordinator activities).

Christian marriage is considered a privilege and not a right. Therefore, the decision to perform a marriage ceremony is the right and responsibility of the officiating minister.

Specifics

"A Service of Christian Marriage" is a worship service and a part of the liturgy of The United Methodist Church. It is the responsibility of our Pastor and Director of Music to oversee all musical portions of the wedding service and to see that all music is appropriate for Christian Worship. The Pastor and Director of Music should be consulted early in the planning of all weddings at Young Harris Memorial United Methodist Church.

Music. Our Pastor or Director of Music shall assist you in all decisions related to musicians and music selection. If you wish an organist/pianist not on our staff to play for your wedding, our Pastor or Director of Music must approve the guest musicians and organ operation. Contact with the YHMUMC Pastor or Director of Music (706-543-2612) should be made at least 3 months prior to the wedding. The church sound system is also available upon request. If there is a reader or singer during the service, the sound system may be necessary. Refer to the fee schedule for additional information.

The Church Organist/Pianist fee usually includes a one-hour consultation with the bride, a one-hour rehearsal, and the wedding itself. If additional rehearsing with soloists, instrumentalists, etc. is required of the Church musician, additional fees will be negotiated. If the Church musician is not available, the Director of Music or Church Organist will provide you with a list of approved local musicians. Their involvement would be negotiated by the bride.

Only live music will be permitted during the wedding service unless otherwise prearranged. If a vocalist wishes to use tracked recording, the YHMUMC Pastor or Director of Music shall have discretion to decide if it will be appropriate for the occasion.

Sanctuary Use.

All furnishings, including Altar, Baptismal Font, and the Service (Communion) Table, are to remain in place and are not to be moved for rehearsal or service.

Our church is beautiful, so decorations for weddings must be kept within the bounds of simplicity and good taste. In the Sanctuary, flowers must be arranged in locales other than the Table. The Cross shall remain on the Table during the wedding ceremony. Only live flowers may be used in the Sanctuary unless silk flowers are approved by the Wedding Coordinator. The florist should make arrangements with the Wedding Coordinator to enter the Church early to decorate for the wedding and reception. Decorations should be completed one hour prior to the service and removed from the Sanctuary as soon as the wedding party has completed pictures following the service. Floral arrangements prepared at the church must be made in the Old Kitchen, adjacent to the Fellowship Hall.

All candles used must be dripleless; if a Unity candle is used, a drop cloth must be placed to protect the carpet and cushions. All candles must have sleeves or drip dishes on them.

Tacks, staples, screws, nor tape shall be used to affix decorations to the walls, woodwork, or furniture inside or outside the church buildings, including the pulpit furniture. Pew ribbons should be clamped and not taped to the pews. Rose petals are allowed to be dropped by the flower girl if an aisle cloth is used.

No rice, confetti, birdseed, or flower petals may be used or thrown in the church buildings or entrances. Bubbles are suggested to be used and are allowed outside only.

Other Guidelines. Any damage or breakage to the facilities (especially the Sanctuary) will be the responsibility of the bride and groom. The entire YHMUMC grounds are tobacco and alcohol free. No smoking or alcohol use is permitted on church grounds. Please do not leave money or valuables unattended on the church property.

Please do not move any furniture or fixtures in any areas on Young Harris UMC without prior approval by the Wedding Coordination.

No animals or pets are allowed inside any of the Young Harris UMC buildings or Sanctuary.

The maximum capacity of the Sanctuary is 325.

Dressing Rooms

The groom and his groomsmen will be allowed to use Room 1 (the entryway room in the Family Life Center, Franklin St. side). The bride and her bridesmaids will be allowed to use the Church Parlor, located in the Whittemore Building (adjacent to the Fellowship Hall).

Both the bride and groom should designate someone to remove all of the party's possessions within one hour of the ceremony's end.

Under no circumstances will food and drink be permitted in the Sanctuary, or the Narthex; however, food and clear beverages are permitted in both dressing rooms prior to the wedding. Any costs incurred for damage, spills or stains shall be the responsibility of the bride and groom. **Smoking and alcohol are absolutely NOT PERMITTED on the church premises, including the church parking lot.**

Photography and Videography

Your wedding is a worship service in the United Methodist Church tradition. It is a sacred time that is set apart as holy and therefore, a time that will be specifically set apart for the worship of God. As such, we ask that the service be reverent to God. We ask that there be **no flash photography during the entirety of the ceremony.**

Photographs may be made during the Wedding Service only from the balcony using available light. A picture may be made from behind with a flash as the bride and her attendant go down the aisle. The first flash after the end of the ceremony may be of the bride and groom kissing, and also recessing up the aisle. This should be made from behind the last row of seated guests.

Photographs involving the Minister should be taken first so he/she may leave for other responsibilities.

Pictures may be taken in the Sanctuary one hour before and after the service. If your service is to be videoed, it should be done from the balcony or from behind the last row of guests.

Receptions

The YHMUMC Fellowship Hall or Family Life Center (FLC) may be used, if available, for receptions for a nominal fee (check with the church office for availability). Your catering service will be responsible for all clean-up following the reception. All equipment (glassware, silverware, etc.) must be provided by your catering company. Tables and chairs are available for a nominal fee at your request to the YHMUMC church office.

Fees for Non-Members

Booking Fee Deposit (Sanctuary)	\$150
Booking Fee Deposit for Family Life Center (FLC/3 hours)	\$150 (if used)
Wedding and Rehearsal	\$600
YHMUMC Pastor	\$300
Pianist/Organist (plus music consultation)	contact YHMUMC musician*
Sound System operator	\$100 (if used)
Custodial Service-Sanctuary	\$125
Fellowship Hall	\$150 (if used)
Family Life Center	\$250 (if used)
Custodial Service-FLC	\$150 (if FLC is used)
(set-up and take-down, tables, chairs)	negotiable
YHMUMC Wedding Coordinator	\$250

Reservation of your wedding date is contingent upon receipt of a deposit (booking fee) of \$150 and a completed and signed copy of the "Wedding Application and Agreement Form". The deposit will be refunded if no damage is incurred but will be forfeited if the wedding is cancelled after booking. **The total fees for the wedding and services are due 30 days prior to the wedding date.**

*contact the YHMUMC Church office (706-543-2612)

Fees for Members

Member weddings held in the YHNUMC Sanctuary with no rehearsal, decorations, or music included require minimal fees. However, the following fees apply if plans are to expand.

Booking Fee Deposit (Sanctuary)	\$150*
YHMUMC Pastor (planning, pre-marital counseling)	no charge
Pastor (rehearsal and wedding)	\$100
Pianist/Organist (and music consultation)	contact YHMUMC office*
(set-up and take-down, tables, chairs)	negotiable
Custodial Service (Sanctuary)	\$125
Wedding Coordinator	\$150
Sound System operator	\$50

*Booking fee will be applied to total bill, due 2 weeks prior to wedding

This benefit shall be extended to children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of members of Young Harris Memorial United Methodist Church. Reservation of your wedding date is contingent upon receipt of a deposit of \$150 and a completed and signed copy of the "Wedding Application and Agreement Form".

*contact the YHMUMC Church office (706-543-2612)

Church Staff

Rev. David Wofford - Pastor-in-charge	dwofford@yhmumc.com
Jenn LaRue - Music Director	Jlarue@yhmumc.com
Daniel Self - Accompanist/Organist	dself@yhmumc.com
Patti Simpson – Administrator	psimpson@yhmumc.com (706-543-2612)

Wedding Coordinator

Contact the YHMUMC church office (706-543-2612)

Wedding Coordinator Duties:

1. Consult with bride and groom to review YHMUMC guidelines
2. Collect all deposits, fees, and forms
3. Unlock the church on the day of the wedding and rehearsal
4. Assist the wedding party at the rehearsal and wedding
5. Coordinate a sound system operator and lighting coordinator during the wedding service
6. Schedule custodial duties after the ceremony; secure sanctuary and facilities

Application

Date of Application: _____

Date and Time of Wedding: _____

Name of Bride: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Church Membership (if applicable): _____

Name of Groom: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Church Membership (if applicable): _____

Will you be reserving the Fellowship Hall or Family Life Center for your reception? _____

Will you be using a minister other than the pastor at YHMUMC ? _____ If so, please provide the name of the minister and phone number _____.

Would you like to use the YHMUMC pianist/organist? _____

Will you have a wedding director? _____ If so, please provide their name and phone #. _____

Notes:

Booking Fees/Deposit (Sanctuary/Family Life Center):

Amount _____

Receipt (name) _____

Date _____