

SENOIA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

229 Bridge Street, Senoia, GA. 30276

Phone: 770-599-3245. E-Mail: office@senoiaumc.org

PASTOR – Dr. Julie Schendel



WEDDING POLICY

Updated: August 2025

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you
John 15:12.

Dear Nearlyweds,

Congratulations on your engagement! We offer our prayers and blessings as you prepare for your upcoming wedding and marriage together. Senoia UMC is a beautiful church that will make an excellent setting for you to exchange vows and enter into the holy covenant of marriage. The wedding ceremony is a worship service intended to help you dedicate your lives together in the presence of God and your friends and families. We look forward to making it a special day that will be remembered fondly as you start your new lives together. Please take a look at this handbook regarding Senoia UMC's policies and procedures. The information here should help answer most of your questions as we begin the planning process together. We look forward to celebrating with you on this most joyous occasion.

Grace and peace,

Rev. Dr. Julie Schendel
Pastor.



PLANNING YOUR WEDDING:

- 6 months to 1 year before the planned date, the Couple should contact our Office Administrator, Amie Fuller, at office@senoiaumc.org or 770-599-3245 to schedule your wedding. At this time, a 25% non-refundable deposit will be required.
- Once your wedding is scheduled, our Wedding Director, Jean Cotton, will contact you.
- 4-6 months before the scheduled date, the Couple will schedule the first of two counseling sessions with the Pastor at julie@senoiaumc.org.
- 2 months before the scheduled date the final payment is due.
- At this time, the newlyweds will schedule a meeting with the Senoia UMC Director of Music, Nancy Lewis at nancylewisumc@gmail.com and the church Wedding Director, Jean Cotton at jeanhubb50@gmail.com to finalize music and Ceremony arrangements

THE WEDDING:

Officiating Pastor

- Weddings at Senoia UMC are considered a worship service of the United Methodist Church, and therefore the appointed Pastor of Senoia UMC will officiate all wedding ceremonies.
- A different United Methodist Pastor may be used if approved by the current Senoia UMC Pastor. The Senoia UMC Pastor will extend an invitation to your desired Pastor inviting them to conduct the Ceremony.
- If a non-United Methodist Pastor is desired, the Senoia UMC Pastor may give permission for the Guest Pastor to co-officiate the service. They may participate in ways such as the exchange of rings, reading scripture, or a prayer of blessing. Once the couple has discussed their desire with the Senoia UMC Pastor, they will reach out to the Guest Pastor to invite them to co-officiate.

Pre-marital Counseling

- Pre-marital counseling is a requirement for any couple wishing to get married at Senoia UMC. This may be done by the Senoia UMC Pastor or another approved Pastor or Counselor prior to the Ceremony.
- If the couple does not live in town, talk to the Pastor about conducting some of the counseling sessions on Zoom.
- 2-3 sessions of planning/counseling will be scheduled, the first of which will be at least 2 months before the planned wedding date.

Wedding License

- The Couple is responsible for attaining a wedding license before the rehearsal. One of the Newlyweds should present the wedding license to the Pastor before the rehearsal. No ceremony may be performed without the license.
- The Pastor will sign the wedding license **AFTER** the wedding ceremony and **BEFORE** any pictures are to be taken. The Couple will be responsible for submitting the signed license in the mail to make the marriage official.
- The Pastor should make copies of the signed license before returning it to the Couple, but if not, it is suggested that the Couple make copies before mailing the original.

WEDDING DIRECTOR:

- All details concerning Weddings at Senoia UMC will be approved with the church's Wedding Director.
- The role of the Wedding Director is to direct both the wedding rehearsal and the ceremony, assisting the Couple with the many decisions involved in these events. All weddings at SUMC will have a church Wedding Director in attendance.
- If the Couple is planning to have a professional Bridal Consultant or other person assisting them, that person will function under the general guidance of the SUMC Wedding Director.



FEES:

Fees for a Wedding Ceremony at SUMC are structured as follows:

1: Ceremony Fees:

- Contributing SUMC Members = \$ 2,000.
- Non-Members = \$ 2,200.

25% of Fees will be paid at the time of reservation, with the remainder due 60 Days prior to the Ceremony.

These fees include:

- *Use of the Sanctuary.*
- *Pastor presiding. This would include officiating the Ceremony, Pre-Marital Counseling, and the Wedding Rehearsal.*
- *Use of the SUMC Wedding Director for up to 7 Hrs. interaction prior to and during the day of the Ceremony.*
- *Availability of the SUMC Audio/Video Technician to provide sound and video functions for the Ceremony.*
- *Use of the SUMC Custodian on the day of the wedding for Service Preparation and Sanctuary clean-up.*
- *Use of the SUMC Director of Music and the church Organ or Piano.*

Notes:

- *Additional time with the SUMC Wedding Director above 7 Hrs. will be charged at \$50 per Hr.*
- *Use of the Church Garden after the Ceremony for photographs is included, providing no changes to the Garden are required.*
- *If a rehearsal is required for an external Soloist with the SUMC Director of Music, this will be charged at \$ 50 per Hr.*
- *Contributing SUMC Members are defined as SUMC Members or their parents who have been active at SUMC with their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness for at least the previous 12 month prior to wedding being booked.*

2: Use of the Fellowship Hall:

- Contributing SUMC Members = \$ 400.
- Non-Members = \$ 500.

25% of Fees will be paid at the time of reservation, with the remainder due 60 Days prior to the Ceremony.

These fees include:

- *Use of the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen Space for up to 4 Hrs. after the Ceremony has been completed.*

Notes:

- *No cooking in the Kitchen Space.*
- *If use of church outdoor space is desired for the wedding, this will be agreed prior with the SUMC Wedding Director, with a fee of \$ 300.*

- *The Wedding Party are fully responsible for cleaning up and removal of all food from the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen Area and are expected to leave these areas clean.*
- *The use of open flames both inside and outside the Fellowship Hall is not approved.*

RESERVING THE CHURCH:

- No weddings may be scheduled on Sundays, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Holy Week, Memorial Day weekend, July 4 weekend, Labor Day weekend, Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.
- No wedding with a church reception may be scheduled after 6:00 pm.
- A Sanctuary wedding with attendants requires a rehearsal, which will be scheduled for the evening before the wedding. The time will be agreed with the SUMC Wedding Director and the Pastor when you reserve the church for the wedding.



WEDDING REHERSAL:

- One hour is allotted for the rehearsal. Please choose a time that allows your family and attendants adequate time to arrive so the rehearsal may start on time. Start times may be between 4:00 and 6:00 pm. The church will be unlocked 30 minutes before the rehearsal start time.
- If a Guest Pastor is co-officiating, they should also be in attendance.
- Be sure to give clear directions to the church (and *please* note that some GPS maps are not aware that the bridge on Bridge St. is not drivable).

WEDDING CEREMONY:

- The Couple will work with the Pastor to create the order of worship based on the Service of Christian Marriage in the United Methodist Book of Worship.
- The basic outline is listed below.
- If wedding programs are used, they should be approved by the Pastor and Director of Music before being printed. The Couple is responsible for making and printing programs.

HOLY COMMUNION:

- If the Couple would like Holy Communion to be part of the wedding service, please discuss this with the Pastor. The UMC has an "Open Table", which means that all persons present are invited to participate in Holy Communion. Please note, this means that it is not appropriate to only serve the Couple.

ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR WEDDINGS:

The Prelude - **MS**

The Seating of the Grandmothers and Mothers - **MS**

The Procession of the Attendants - **MS**

The Procession of the Engaged - **MS**

The Greeting

The Declaration of Intention

The Scripture Reading

The Homily

The Exchange of Marriage Vows

The Blessing and Exchange of Rings

The Pronouncement of Marriage

- Lighting of the Unity Candle (optional)
- Celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion (optional)

The Prayer of Blessing

The Benediction

The Presentation of the Married Couple

The Retiring Procession – **MS**

Notes: "**MS**" indicates that a musical selection can be made by the newlyweds in discussion with the SUMC Director of Music and approval of the pastor during the planning process.

MUSIC:

- The Director of Music is available to play the organ or piano and will approve all live music selections. If other musicians are to be used, the Director of Music will approve guest musicians. The Pastor has the final say on all music selections.

- Any approved pre-recorded music must be submitted to the Audio/Video Technician 30 days ahead of the ceremony date.
- In the UMC a service of Holy Matrimony is a worship service. In selecting music for the service, it would be appropriate that music chosen should reflect the nature of a UMC worship service.

WEDDING PARTY:

- Flower girls, ring bearers, and attendants should be at least 5 years old. No pets may be part of the ceremony. Service animals (not emotional support animals) are of course permitted.
- If young children are participating in the wedding party, an assigned adult who is *not* in the wedding party will need to be responsible for the children during the rehearsal, pre-wedding, and ceremony.

FLOWERS, CANDLES & OTHER DÉCOR:

- Flower delivery time will be coordinated with the Wedding Director ahead of time. The wedding party is responsible for informing the florist of their delivery window.
- Candles on the altar and the candelabra are allowed, with a cloth underneath to collect the wax. All other candles must be battery operated.
- All candles used inside and outside the Fellowship Hall must also be either electric or battery operated.
- For weddings booked during the Advent and Christmas season, the seasonal décor within the Sanctuary will remain in place.

PHOTOGRAPHY:

- Photographers may take pictures before and after the ceremony. With permission from the SUMC Wedding Director, photographs may be taken during the Ceremony from the Balcony.
- Flash photography of the Couple entering and recessing the sanctuary is permitted from a position agreed upon with the Wedding Director.
- During the ceremony, flash photography by Wedding Guests is not appropriate.
- Any part of the service may be re-enacted afterwards for pictures.
- Please do not sit on the communion rail for photographs.
- Please do not stand on any church furniture to take pictures.
- Photographers should plan to stop taking photographs at least 15 mins before the ceremony is due to commence to allow the Wedding Party to prepare themselves.
- Sound and Videography may be included by our church A/V Technician. Video will be taken from one camera in the balcony and then edited. Live streaming on our Facebook page is also available. If you prefer to use your own Videographer, please discuss with the Wedding Director during the planning process.

DRESSING ROOMS:

- Dressing Room #1 is in the Joy Room and Library (connecting rooms behind the Sanctuary).
- Dressing Room #2 is in an upstairs classroom.
- SUMC cannot ensure the security of your valuables and recommend that if unattended, all personal valuables be locked in your vehicles.

ALCOHOL/SMOKING:

- No alcoholic beverages are permitted on SUMC property.
- SUMC is a tobacco and vape-free facility.

PROCESSIONAL & SEND OFF:

- Silk flower petals may be used inside the sanctuary and should be picked up after the ceremony is completed.
- Sparklers may be used outside the buildings, away from the porch. Buckets of water should be made available to fully extinguish the sparklers after use and the wedding party is responsible for their proper disposal prior to the end of the event.
- No rice, birdseed or any type of confetti may be used, inside or outside the church.
- The use of Bubbles outside the Church is acceptable.

TIME ALLOCATIONS:

- The Wedding Director will open the sanctuary 30 mins. prior to the start of the Rehearsal.
- The SUMC facility will be scheduled for 4 hours usage on the day of the wedding. If the Wedding Party believe they will require additional time, they should arrange this with the Wedding Director.
- The SUMC Wedding Director will be in attendance during all activities at the fee structure described earlier.