

Wedding Guidelines and Policies

Revised January 2015



Mulberry Street United Methodist Church

*719 Mulberry Street
Macon, Georgia 31201
mulberrymethodist.org*

WEDDINGS AT MULBERRY STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Christian marriage is a sacred worship service in which God blesses the union of husband and wife. We are pleased you have chosen Mulberry Street United Methodist Church for your wedding and look forward to assisting you in this important event in your life.

This booklet is designed to inform you of the wedding guidelines and policies of Mulberry Street UMC and to answer most of the questions asked by our engaged couples. Please feel free to contact any of Mulberry's staff listed in this booklet for assistance.

May God's blessings be upon you both as you plan for your wedding
and your new life together.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE

Sanctuary with seating for 600
Stevens Chapel with seating for 75
Dressing Room for bride and her attendants
Dressing Room for groom and groomsmen
Fellowship Hall - reception venue that accommodates 200 seated, 350 standing
Parlor - reception venue that accommodates 50 seated, 125 standing
Fellowship Hall Kitchen for distribution of food by caterer

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

Couples who wish to be married at Mulberry Street United Methodist Church should first contact the Church Wedding Director who will assist in setting the date and time. The next step is to complete the Wedding Application which is available both online and in the church office. The completed application should be returned as soon as possible to the Administrative Assistant.

Church Wedding Director
Beth Smith
478-719-9041
bethns7972@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant
Linda Parker
478-745-8601 Fax 478-755-1040
lparker@mulberrymethodist.org

Once the completed application is returned to the church, the Administrative Assistant will present the request at the weekly staff meeting. If there is no conflict, the date is tentatively placed on the church calendar. The Wedding Director then notifies the couple that the date and time have been confirmed.

The final step in confirming your wedding on Mulberry's calendar is to contact the senior pastor of Mulberry church. He will discuss the officiating clergy for your wedding, pre-marital counseling, and the prescribed Methodist order of worship for the ceremony. Once this has taken place, the wedding will officially be placed on the church calendar.

To summarize, the following steps must be done in order to officially have
your wedding confirmed on the Mulberry calendar:

- Contact church Wedding Director to set date and time
- Complete Wedding Application and return to the church Administrative Assistant
- Contact Senior Pastor of Mulberry Street UMC for consultation

DATES AND TIMES

Wedding dates are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. While a reservation may be made up to a year in advance, official confirmation is contingent upon receipt of the completed Wedding Application followed by staff approval and the prescribed consultation with Mulberry's senior minister. No formal announcement of a wedding venue should be made prior to this confirmation.

Weddings are primarily held on Saturdays, with exceptions for holidays and holy days. No weddings may be scheduled on New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Holy Week, Easter, Fourth of July weekend, Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. In addition, the sanctuary is unavailable on the Saturday before World Communion (first weekend in October) and the Saturday before All Saints Sunday (first weekend in November), weekends when the choir is presenting special music or the Sunday prior to Christmas (annual Children's Nativity rehearsal.).

Weddings are held at various times, primarily depending upon the reception venue. If no reception is involved, the wedding may be scheduled as late as 7:00 PM for members and 6:00 PM for non-members. In order to allow ample clean-up time for Sunday worship, weddings with church receptions can be scheduled no later than 5:00 PM.

Non-member weddings (neither the bride, groom, or their parents or grandparents are contributing MSUMC members) may be scheduled as the church calendar permits and with staff approval. In addition to the dates given above, non-members may not schedule weddings on any Saturday prior to a communion Sunday (first Sunday of each month). Receptions for non-members must be scheduled at a venue other than MSUMC.

THE CHURCH WEDDING DIRECTOR

The Church Wedding Director is the staff liaison who will assist you with any questions you might have regarding your wedding plans at Mulberry. One of the first things she will do is discuss Mulberry's wedding procedures and policies with you so that you have early access to the guidelines that must be shared with your florist, photographer, videographer, and other contracted personnel.

The Wedding Director is responsible for directing both the rehearsal and wedding. This includes seating of guests and families, processions, recessions, and placement of the wedding party in the chancel.

An outside bridal consultant is welcome to assist the bride and her attendants in their dressing room. Once the bridal party leaves the dressing area, Mulberry's Wedding Director will coordinate the activities of the wedding party.

If Mulberry's Wedding Director is unavailable for your wedding, she will assist you in securing a qualified director who is familiar with Mulberry's facility and weddings and approved by the ministerial staff.

SELECTION OF OFFICIATING CLERGY

The choice of the minister who will officiate at your wedding must be done in consultation with Mulberry's senior pastor. Couples may choose from the ministers on Mulberry's staff or another United Methodist Church minister, who will be invited to participate in the wedding by the senior pastor. All clergy participating in wedding ceremonies at Mulberry must be approved by the senior pastor.

COUNSELING AND MARRIAGE LICENSE

All couples who choose to be married at Mulberry Street UMC are required to have premarital counseling. Appointments for counseling must be scheduled by the bride and groom well in advance of the wedding with the minister who will be officiating.

As part of the counseling sessions, the minister will discuss with the couple the order of worship to be used in the ceremony. This order is prescribed by the United Methodist Book of Worship: A Service of Christian Marriage. Any changes to the service must be approved by Mulberry's senior minister.

It is the responsibility of the couple to obtain a marriage license prior to the wedding since no wedding can be performed without this legal document. The marriage license should be given to the officiating minister at the rehearsal.

THE REHEARSAL

Rehearsals are scheduled the day prior to the wedding. Available rehearsal times are 5:00-6:00 PM, 5:30-6:30 PM, and 6:00-7:00 PM. Staff members present include the wedding director, officiating minister, organist, and church custodian.

MSUMC allows one hour for a rehearsal. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to encourage members of their wedding party to be on time so that the rehearsal can begin on time with everyone in place. We strongly recommend that members of the wedding party arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Your rehearsal will begin promptly at the time indicated on the Wedding Application.

MUSIC AT YOUR WEDDING

Arrangements for your wedding music should be made with Mulberry's Organist. He will assist all couples who are being married at Mulberry in selecting appropriate music for the occasion and will also serve as the organist for all weddings as his availability permits.

Couples should contact Pat Crowe, Organist, as soon as they receive confirmation of their date on the church calendar. Pat will set up a meeting to guide you through the process of choosing your music and securing other professional instrumentalists and vocalists if desired.

Because a wedding is a service of worship, all music will be sacred in nature. Secular texts and taped accompaniments are not used. Musicians will be allowed a 30 minute rehearsal with the organist and must provide their own score to the music in the proper key. All music selections must be approved by Mulberry's Organist.

FLOWERS, CANDLES AND ALTAR SPACES

Mulberry's Sanctuary and Stevens Chapel are beautiful worship spaces where few decorations are needed. Simplicity is best.

Flowers used at the church should be contracted through the florist of your choice. Only fresh flowers may be used; artificial flowers and greenery are not allowed. Flower arrangements placed on the altar in Stevens Chapel should not obscure the cross.

The church requires the use of drip-less candles. The church's altar candles in both sanctuary and chapel may not be replaced by other types of candles. Unity candles are not permitted. No nails, tacks, or gummed tape are allowed on church furnishings and walls.

The church will be unlocked 3 hours before the ceremony for wedding preparations. All decorations must be removed by the florist within an hour of the conclusion of the wedding. Any exceptions to these allotted times should be discussed with the Wedding Director prior to the wedding weekend.

Please indicate on the Wedding Application if it is your intention to leave altar flowers in the church the Sunday following your wedding. Please know that they will be placed in a visible spot in the church building along with an announcement in the church worship bulletin. If flowers are left at the church, please remember that it is still the responsibility of your florist to move the flowers from the sanctuary to the designated place.

Church seasons dictate certain things in Mulberry's chancel areas that cannot be removed or changed. The Advent wreath and Chrismon tree are an annual part of Mulberry's Advent and Christmas seasons. During Lent, the cross above the altar is draped in purple and may not be removed. The wedding director can tell you if your wedding date is in this particular season of the church year.

White paraments are used at weddings. A wedding kneeler with a beautiful needle-point wedding cushion is available upon request.

PHOTOGRAPHY

A wedding is a service of worship that should reflect an attitude of reverence by all who are in attendance, whether invited guests or contracted professionals. For this reason, MSUMC does not allow photography during a ceremony.

This policy is strictly enforced and includes professional photographers, family, friends and guests. Please be sure that they are all informed so that the sacredness and reverence of the ceremony and Mulberry's worship space will be honored. To assist you in this, the following statement must be included in the printed program.

"A wedding ceremony is a service of worship. Because of the sacred nature of the occasion, photography on any professional or personal device is not allowed during the ceremony. Thank you for honoring this request."

Photographs may be taken in the sanctuary both preceding and following the ceremony. Professional photography must be completed 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.

The hired wedding photographer may capture pictures of the wedding party's entrance from the narthex and of their exit from the center double doors at the back of the church. A special dispensation for taking pictures from the balcony is granted only to the hired wedding photographer and his or her assistants. The photographer(s) must be in a stationary position with no movement in the balcony during the ceremony. Camera sounds must not be audible and flash photography is strictly prohibited.

VIDEOGRAPHY

Videographers may film the wedding ceremony from a fixed position in the balcony of the sanctuary. In addition, a small video camera will be allowed in one designated spot in the chancel area. It is necessary for the videographer to ask the Wedding Director to show him/her this specific chancel location before setting up any equipment. The videographers will be asked to remove any camera equipment that is set up in an unapproved location.

The chancel camera may only operate if unattended during the ceremony. The videographer is not allowed in the chancel area once the prelude music begins (30 minutes prior to the service) and must wait to remove the camera until pictures are completed following the ceremony.

Videos in the chapel should be made as unobtrusively as possible from the back pew. The videographer should discuss the specific camera arrangement with the Wedding Director before setting up any equipment.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS, VIDEOGRAPHERS AND THEIR ASSISTANTS

All hired personnel are expected to wear appropriate attire for the wedding. Photographers, videographers and their assistants are asked to respect the sacredness of the wedding space and ceremony by observing all preceding guidelines. Anyone who violates these church regulations will be asked to leave the ceremony by the wedding director and will not be permitted to take pictures or videos at future weddings at Mulberry Street United Methodist Church.

A copy of Mulberry's photography guidelines is available from the wedding director and must be given by the bride to all contracted photographers and videographers who will be at the wedding.

RECEPTIONS AT THE CHURCH

Only church members or a church member's children or grandchildren may hold receptions at MSUMC. Arrangements for church receptions must be discussed with the Church Hostess who will offer detailed information about the facility resources that are available.

The couple is responsible for contracting their own caterer, musicians, florists, etc. for the reception. It is required that Mulberry's cook be in the kitchen to assist the caterer in operating the kitchen's equipment.

Caterers may have access to the kitchen by the Fellowship Hall for their use. They must furnish all items they use including portable equipment, supplies, food, dishes, crystal, silverware, table cloths, napkins, cutlery, serving pieces, paper goods, foil, plastic wrap, etc.

In addition to serving guests, caterers are also responsible for their own set-up and clean-up. All areas used by the caterer must be returned to their original condition immediately following the end of the reception. Dishes should be washed, floors swept, and all trash bagged and taken to the church dumpster. Questions regarding the reception should be directed to the Church Hostess.

The Fellowship Hall and Parlor will be available for wedding preparations 3 hours prior to the wedding or, with permission, during church office hours. Please call the church hostess to schedule preparations that must be done other than the day of the wedding.

CHURCH FACILITY POLICIES

No alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or tobacco are allowed on church property.

Members of the wedding party may not consume any alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs on the church premises.

Smoking is not permitted on the church premises.

Since the church building is unlocked during a wedding, handbags and other valuables should not be left unattended at any time. Though every effort is made to maintain security, MSUMC cannot be held responsible for personal property left unattended in the church facility.

No rice or confetti may be used on the church premises. Birdseed may be used outdoors only.

The wedding party, guests and all support personnel hired and/or utilized by the wedding party to assist with the service shall indemnify and hold harmless MSUMC, its members, trustees, and employees against any and all claims, liabilities, damages, or actions arising from the wedding party's possession/use of the property.

ADDITIONAL CHURCH GUIDELINES

Because a wedding ceremony is a service of worship, the attire and behavior of the wedding party and guests should reflect an attitude of reverence befitting the occasion.

Members of the wedding party should refrain from loud conversation in the narthex so that seated guests are not disturbed.

Every effort is made to have the bride and groom and the sacred vows they are making be the focal point of the ceremony. For this reason, flower girls and ring bearers 5 years of age and under should be seated with a family member in a pew close to the front immediately following the processional. Experience has shown that a child this age is not quite mature enough to remain in place during the entire ceremony.

Communion may be served at a wedding only if served to the entire congregation. (UMH, page 864)

Mulberry Street United Methodist Church

Wedding Fees

It is required that all fees be paid in separate checks and given to the wedding director no later than the evening of the rehearsal. The check for non-member facility fees should be made out to Mulberry Street UMC. All other checks should be made out to individual staff members.

Facility Fee

Sanctuary	\$1,000
Chapel	\$500

Staff Services

Minister	\$350
Wedding Director	\$350 for wedding \$150 for reception
Organist	\$350
Audio Technician	\$150 for wedding \$125 for reception
Custodian	\$250 for wedding \$150 for reception
Church Cook	\$150 for reception

Non-refundable Security Deposit for Non-members

\$200 due with Wedding Application

Mulberry Street UMC Member

To be considered a contributing member of MSUMC, a person has committed their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness to the church for one year or more.

Non-member fees apply to anyone who is not a contributing member of Mulberry, or anyone who is not a child or grandchild of a contributing Mulberry member.

Revised January 2015

Mulberry Street United Methodist Church

Wedding Staff

Pastoral Staff

Rev. Jimmy Towson, Senior Pastor

jtowson@mulberrymethodist.org

478.745.8601 ext. 226

Rev. Jeff Cook, Associate Pastor

jcook@mulberrymethodist.org

478.745.8601 ext. 229

Administrative Assistant

Linda Parker

lparker@mulberrymethodist.org

478.745.8601 ext 221

478.755.1040 Fax

Wedding Director

Beth Smith

bethns7972@gmail.com

478.719.9041 Cell

Organist

Pat Crowe

704.699.1700 Cell

Audio Technician

Bruce Bishop

bbishop@mulberrymethodist.org

478.745.8601 ext 224

Custodial Staff

Clifton Carswell (Facility)

Jeffrey Smith (Facility)

Doris Andrews (Kitchen)

Church Hostess

Betsy Abbott

babbott@mulberrymethodist.org

478.745.8601 ext 234

Church Office Hours

Monday-Thursday 8 AM-5 PM, Friday 8 AM-12 PM