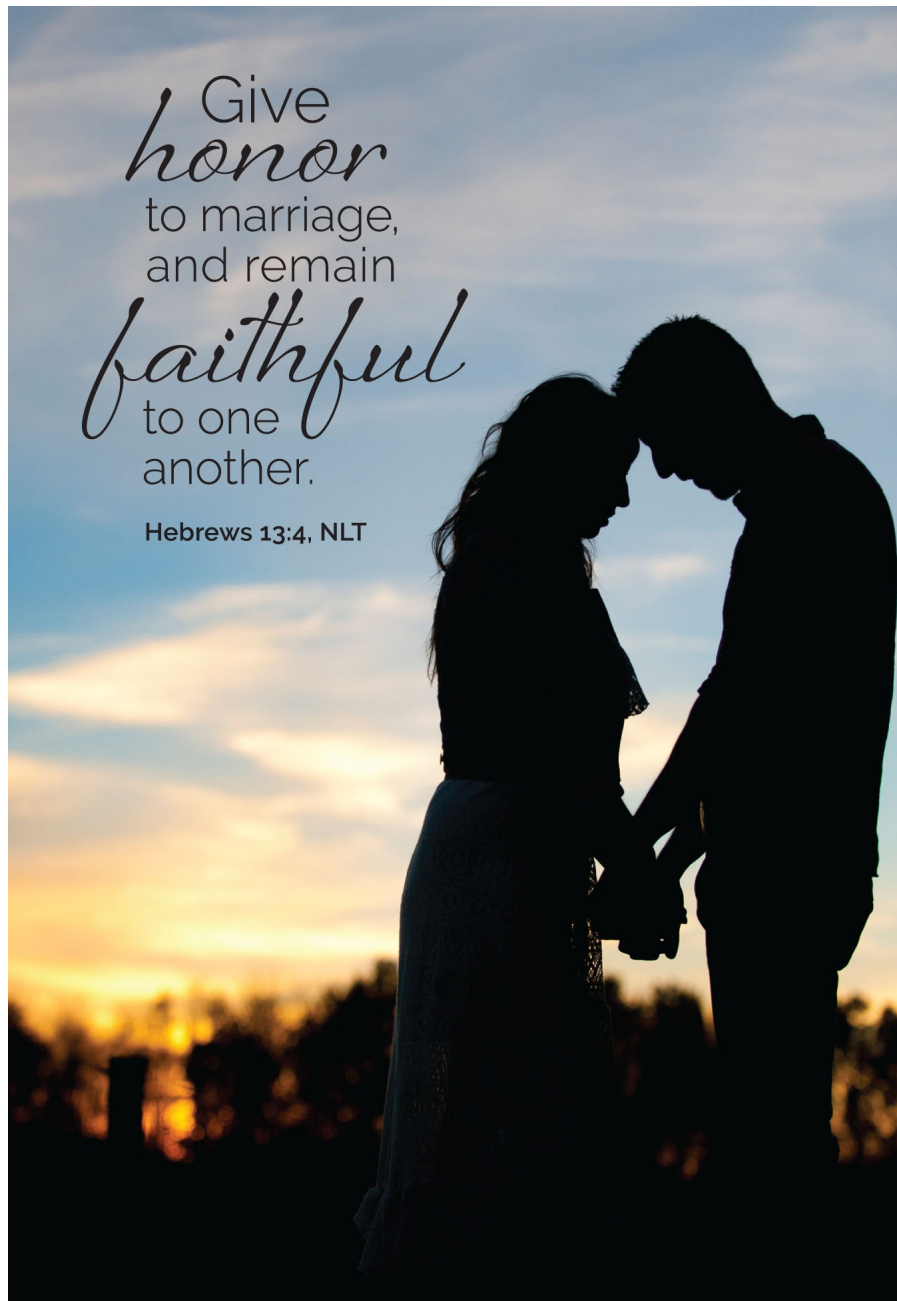


# MCDONOUGH FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



## WEDDING POLICY

(Board of Trustees approved: 11.10.2024)  
(Administrative Council approved: 02.01.2025)

151 Macon Street  
McDonough, Georgia 30253

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*Please read through this booklet before signing  
your wedding reservation form and booking your wedding.*

**To the Bride and Groom:**

Your wedding is and should be one of the happiest moments in your life. We are glad to have the opportunity to share this time with you. We want to do all we can to have each phase, from planning through rehearsal and ceremony, remembered with deep satisfaction. Whether large or small, your wedding's true meaning and beauty will lie in the spirit of those who take part.

In the excitement of planning a church wedding, many questions arise. This booklet is intended as a guide to make certain decisions and create an atmosphere conducive to a harmonious wedding experience.

McDonough First United Methodist Church has established the following policies and procedures regarding weddings which are held in our facilities. We ask your cooperation in these areas. Also enclosed are specific information cards for you to give those who will be providing contracted services in our facilities.

**The Church Wedding Director:**

All details concerning weddings in our facilities must be cleared with the Church Wedding Director.

The Director will direct both the wedding rehearsal and the ceremony, assisting you with the many decisions involved in such an event. All scheduled weddings will have a Church Wedding Director assigned. If you plan to have a professional bridal consultant or other guest person assisting you, that person is to function under the general supervision of the Church Wedding Director.

**Fees:**

These are to be discussed with the Wedding Director in advance of booking your wedding. No wedding date is considered officially reserved on the church calendar until the reservation form is returned, and the deposit paid. ***Once the reservation form & deposit have been received your date will be placed on the church calendar.***

***Member Fees*** apply when the Bride, Groom or one of their parents has been an active member of McDonough First United Methodist Church for at least six months prior to scheduling the wedding.

**Reserving the Church:**

The first step in making plans is deciding on the date and hour for the ceremony. Weddings may not be scheduled on Sundays or during the week of Easter or Thanksgiving weekend.

Please see the enclosed Fee sheet.

A Sanctuary wedding with attendants requires a rehearsal. You should schedule your rehearsal at the same time that you reserve the church. Weddings/rehearsals may not be scheduled later than 7:00 pm.

**The Presiding Pastor:**

***If a Pastor of This Church:*** All aspects of the wedding ceremony are subject to the approval of the Pastor. When the Pastor of our church is conducting the service, the ritual in the United Methodist Hymnal is ordinarily used (page 864). Any variation from or addition to this service may only be made at the discretion and approval of the Pastor.

The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church requires all United Methodist Pastors to hold premarital counseling with both bride and groom present. The Pastor may require several sessions for this purpose. As soon as you have booked the wedding, call and set up an appointment for these conferences with the presiding Pastor. ¶340.2a(3)

***If a Guest Pastor:*** Guest Pastors, either conducting the entire service or participating, may be utilized. This will need the approval of the Pastor of McDonough First UMC. Please have the guest clergy send a letter of request to our Pastor.

***Wedding License:*** The Groom should present the license to the presiding Pastor at the beginning of the rehearsal. No ceremony can be performed without the license.

**The Wedding Rehearsal:**

One hour is allocated for the rehearsal. In fairness to all those participating, please schedule your rehearsal hour in consideration of your attendants' and families' travel schedules and then insist that they arrive at the rehearsal on time. Be sure they receive clear directions to the church.

**Wedding Music:**

The wedding is a worship service; therefore, appropriate music should be selected which glorifies God and emphasizes the sacred nature of the marriage vows. Music desired for the wedding must be approved in advance by the pastor performing the ceremony at least 30 days before the wedding. Sacred music is encouraged for your ceremony. Sacred music is defined as music about God or to God.

Our church Organist is very talented and has experience playing for weddings and is familiar with our church organ. She may be asked to play your wedding. Her fee is negotiated with her and paid directly to her in advance of the wedding.

If musicians outside of the church are used, all instruments must be left as they are found. Use of the church organ requires the approval of our organist.

You should discuss the music for your wedding with the musician as early as possible: i.e. processional, recessional, type of pre-service music, any other requests, etc.

**Flowers, Candles, Etc:**

While decorations are certainly beautiful, it is recommended that they be modest. The Sanctuary has a beauty of its own that does not call for elaborate decoration. The main consideration is that an atmosphere of worship should prevail. The pulpit furnishings should not be moved without the approval of the Pastor and the Wedding Director.

No flowers or ferns may be placed on either the pulpit or altar table.

Due to fire regulations, candles may not be used along the aisles or carried by anyone. Candle lighters are available for use in lighting and extinguishing candles. Drip-less candles are best for candelabra.

Aisle runners may not be used due to safety concerns.

Adequate protection must be placed under vases, pots, candelabra, etc. Take special care to prevent candle wax drippings on the floor. No nails, tacks, tape, or other means may be used to secure flowers, palms, pew bows or other decorations to the church furniture, walls or fixtures. Pew markers may be tied with ribbon to the reserved pews.

Please arrange with your florist to have all decorations removed immediately following the taking of your pictures. Any cost for cleaning carpets and/or repairs of other damage resulting from failure to take proper precautions must be paid by the booking family. This includes damages incurred by persons under contract to you for services.

If your wedding is on Saturday and you wish to leave your altar flowers for use on the following Sunday in honor of your wedding, please notify the church office when you book your wedding.

### **Photography:**

Photographers may take pictures before and after the ceremony, but not during the service itself. Non-flash time exposures from the rear of the Sanctuary are permissible. Flash pictures of the bride entering and recessing are permitted from a position agreed upon with the Wedding Director. Any part of the service may be reenacted afterwards for pictures. When taking photos, please do not sit on the communion rail for pictures. No one should stand on a pew or any church furniture. Photographers should plan to stop at least 30 minutes before the ceremony in order to allow the bride and her party time to relax and prepare themselves.

*During the ceremony flash pictures by family and/or friends are not appropriate.*

Video taping in the Sanctuary is acceptable using a stationary tripod - no moving around. Only available light may be used. Photographic flood lights are not permitted. Check with the Wedding Director regarding the placement of cameras. These decisions have become necessary in order to maintain the worshipful quality of the wedding service.

### **Dressing Rooms - Bride & Groom:**

The Bride and attendants may dress in the Parlor. You may desire to bring a sheet on which to stand so that your wedding gown will not be soiled while you are dressing. Purses and other valuables should be locked in cars. We cannot insure the security of your valuables. ***All personal belongings/decorations must be removed before leaving the Church premises within the allotted time.***

The Groom may dress in the Fellowship Hall, one of the classroom areas or men's restroom. No valuables should be left in these areas.

**Alcohol – Smoking:**

No alcoholic beverages are allowed on church property.

McDonough First United Methodist Church is a tobacco-free/vape free facility.

**Bird Seed:**

No rice, bird seed, or any type of confetti may be used.

Bubbles are acceptable acceptable for use outside.

**Time Allocations:**

The Wedding Director will open the building 30 minutes prior to the Rehearsal. The building will be scheduled for 4 hours usage the day of the Wedding. If you feel more time is needed, please discuss this with the Wedding Director. Additional time/fees can be arranged if the facilities are available.

**Completion of Event:**

The Booking Party shall be responsible for:

- a) Returning all tables, chairs, and any other furnishings that have been moved to their original location.
- b) The area used will be vacuumed and cleaned as necessary.
- c) All consumables (trash, food items, etc.) must be placed in proper waste containers. All trash must be placed in the outdoor trash containers located behind the church