



Wedding Policy

“...and the two shall become one flesh.
So they are no longer two, but one flesh.
Therefore what God has joined together,
let no one separate.”

Matthew 19:5

God instituted marriage and you have His promise that He will bless all who enter this holy estate according to His will and purpose. Follow His direction in all things as you plan your wedding, and your married life will be filled with the joy only God can give.

Avondale United Methodist Church is delighted that you have chosen our church for your wedding ceremony. The pastor and church staff are here to help you make this a joyful celebration and a true worship experience. Feel assured that the Avondale staff will also work to see that the service is as beautiful and personally meaningful to both of you as possible.

While the church recognizes the social and legal aspects of the marriage vows, we see our primary responsibilities in the light of our commitment to God, who ordained and blessed marriage as an institution. Therefore, all wedding services at Avondale United Methodist Church will be services of worship at which vows are made, prayers are offered to God, and God’s blessings are given.

The following policies of operation and suggested procedures relating to weddings and wedding receptions have been established by a lay committee, members of which are familiar with procedures and with the problems which may occur. We hope you find these policies helpful in making your wedding one of the happiest and holiest moments of your lives.

Policies and Guidelines

for Weddings at Avondale United Methodist Church

General Information:

- The sanctuary of Avondale United Methodist Church is available to both **members** and **non-members** for wedding ceremonies and wedding receptions. The church requires payment of fees to offset the costs involved.¹
- Avondale United Methodist Church has adopted the following fees.

Fees for Use of Church Facilities:

Use of the Sanctuary	\$ 1,000.00
Fellowship Hall & Kitchen (reception)	\$ 500.00
Fellowship Hall & Kitchen (After-Rehearsal dinner)	\$ 500.00

Sanctuary Fee includes the costs of:

- Use of the specified room(s)
- Wedding Liaison
- Sound system technician
- Janitorial services

- A deposit of \$500 is required to schedule the date. If a cancellation is made six months or more prior to the date reserved, a full refund will be made unless the deposit was paid online via PayPal. If the deposit was paid via PayPal, it will be refunded minus the PayPal processing fees. If a cancellation is made less than six months prior to the date reserved, no refund will be made. The remaining balance must be paid by cash, money order, or cashier's check no later than one week before the day of the ceremony.
- **Members of Avondale United Methodist Church** are exempt from the facility fees, but they are expected to pay fees associated with specific costs of the ceremony – Wedding Liaison [\$200 to \$375 varies with areas to be used], Sound Technician [\$125], and Janitorial fee [sanctuary \$75, Fellowship Hall \$75 per event].

[To be considered a member of Avondale United Methodist Church for the purpose of determining the fee schedule for a wedding, the bride-elect, groom-elect, or the parent(s)/grandparent(s) of the bride or groom must be current members of Avondale UMC having joined the church by profession of faith or transfer at least six months prior to scheduling the facility. Please see "Membership" on our church web site: www.avonumc.net.]

- All payments must be paid in full ... cash, money order, or cashier's check ... no later than two weeks before the scheduled ceremony. No personal checks will be accepted.

This includes:

Fee for use of the sanctuary	\$ 1,000
Fee for use of the Fellowship Hall per event	\$ 500
Fee for additional hours on wedding day (\$100/hour)	\$ _____
Fee for Avondale UMC pastor (if applicable)	\$ 350
Fee for Avondale UMC organist/pianist (if applicable)	\$ 300
Fee for nursery (if applicable) ²	\$ 50 per attendant
Any other fees	\$ _____

¹ Avondale United Methodist Church does not discriminate against any applicant by reason of race, color, national origin, marital status, sex, age, or disability.

Marriage equality is now legal in Alabama. Unfortunately, the official position of the United Methodist Church is still condemning of same-sex marriage; and, while there are efforts to change our position, these efforts may take some time. In the meantime, our denominational rules prohibit churches from hosting same-sex marriage services and our clergy from performing them. Therefore, we offer our congratulations, extend our excitement and prayers to the couple; and our pastor will share the contacts of some trusted sister churches in our community whose clergy can do an excellent job at guiding same-sex couples as they commit to one another through this sacred covenant.

² 3-hour minimum ... additional time \$15 per hour per attendant. Five children or less = one attendant; six children or more = two attendants

Pastor:

Rev. Malinda Weaver | Avondale UMC Pastor | malinda@avonumc.net

The pastor of Avondale is available to all families of the church for weddings and ordinarily will officiate at, or participate in, the wedding ceremony. Our pastor is also available to conduct wedding ceremonies for non-members. Pastors from other United Methodist churches or other Christian denominations may be invited to share in or conduct the wedding service at the invitation of the Avondale UMC pastor. The order of the service must be approved by our pastor.

Organist/Pianist:

Richard Byrd | Avondale UMC Director of Music Ministry/Organist | rbyrd@avonumc.net

- Fee: Ceremony and Rehearsal - \$300.
- Musical selections should be decided upon no later than four to six weeks prior to the ceremony.
- The bride or her bridal representative must meet with the organist and liaison (suggested 4 months) before the scheduled date to discuss the musical requirements/expectations and to sign a service contract. The wedding liaison will provide contact info for both the organist and the bridal representative.
- Working with Vocalists/Instrumentalists
 - a) \$50 for first rehearsal, and \$25 for any additional rehearsals required thereafter.
 - b) At least one rehearsal is mandatory prior to performance. Additional rehearsals should not be necessary unless the music is exceptionally difficult or the vocalist/instrumentalist is unprepared. The organist will not be responsible for teaching parts.
 - c) Accompaniment music must be submitted to the organist at least two weeks prior to the wedding. The organist will not be responsible for acquiring music that is not in his personal library.
 - d) In the event that a rehearsal time is scheduled and the vocalist/instrumentalist cancels without at least two hours notice, all applicable fees will still be assessed.
 - e) In the event that a rehearsal is scheduled and the vocalist/instrumentalist is more than 20 minutes late without sufficient notice, the rehearsal will be rescheduled and all applicable fees will be assessed.

Facilities:

Weddings are traditionally held in the sanctuary

- The sanctuary has three sections of pews (no 'center aisle'), a balcony, a pulpit area, and a choir loft. The downstairs seating area has two outside sections of 13 pews each (26 pews @ 11' each) and a middle section of 13 pews (13 pews @ 15 1/2' each) seating a total of approximately 300 people. The sanctuary balcony has 21 more pews seating approximately 150 - 200.

Wedding Receptions and/or After Rehearsal Receptions or Dinners

- Receptions are traditionally held in the fellowship hall (seating capacity approximately 150 - 200). The Fellowship Hall has a stage and is equipped with a sound system/microphone(s). A fully operational commercial kitchen adjoins the Fellowship Hall.

Preparations:

We understand that a great deal of preparation is necessary on the day of your wedding. These guidelines are designed to provide you and your wedding party a stress-free day.

- On the day of your wedding, the building will be available to you and your wedding party **four (4) hours** prior to ceremony. If your circumstances require more time, you may add additional hours (\$100 per hour) at the discretion of your wedding liaison.
- Ladies are invited to use the Church Parlor and the Ladies Room (2nd floor) for dressing and pre-wedding activities.
- Men traditionally use the conference room (1st floor) adjacent to the church kitchen and convenient to the Men's restroom facilities for dressing and pre-wedding activities.
- Members of the wedding party are invited to use the church kitchen to store and prepare simple snacks. The ice machine is available for your convenience. Please do not use any of the appliances to cook. We ask that you clean up and remove any leftovers before the wedding ceremony.
- The use of intoxicants is prohibited on church property. Please be aware that this includes receptions, after-rehearsal celebrations, and all pre-wedding activities at our facility. All of the Avondale United Methodist Church buildings and grounds are designated a non-smoking facility.

Decorations:

The director, florist or persons responsible for decorations, and caterer or persons preparing food must meet with the AUMC wedding liaison, bride (or her designated representative), and/or the pastor a minimum of two times – once before plans for flowers and decorations are made and again approximately 2 weeks preceding the wedding. Vendors may be required to sign a separate contract with the church ensuring compliance with church policies and procedures. Florists who are on our 'preferred vendor' list are exempt from the initial meeting.

The Avondale United Methodist Church sanctuary is designed to reflect the simple beauty of things holy. These areas do not need elaborate additional display. All of the appointments have symbolic meaning and should be recognized as such. Therefore it is understood that:

- Weddings at Avondale United Methodist Church will be performed in the Christian tradition.
- The Lord's Table with the cross, candlesticks, and liturgical colors (white for weddings) will remain in place.
- Any repositioning of the sanctuary furniture must be done in consultation with the wedding liaison.
- All floral arrangements or greenery must be self-supporting. No scotch tape, masking tape, thumbtacks, or nails of any size will be used anywhere on any part of the building or furniture of the church.
- Flowers cannot be taller than the cross.
- The church requires that tube candles be used to avoid the possibility of damage to the carpet by dripping wax. **No wax candles** are permitted in the sanctuary. Two 7-candle adjustable candelabras (black wrought iron with tube candles) are available for rental [\$25.00 each].
- All arrangements of candles must be independently supported and not attached to any item of furniture.
- All floral displays, candles, decorative items, programs, the aisle cloth, and other accumulated debris **must be removed from the sanctuary immediately following the service** to allow custodial service to be completed.
- The tradition of throwing rice, confetti, birdseed, and other material as the bride and groom depart is not permitted in the buildings or on the grounds.

Tip: When planning the use of candles, consider the length of the ceremony and time required for pictures. Tube candles burn for approximately 4 hours.

Music

Music is an integral part of the wedding ceremony. It creates an atmosphere of reverence as the guests arrive and contributes to the worship experience of the participants. The following policies and guidelines have been adopted:

- Due to the age and complexity of our pipe organ, the AUMC organist must be engaged for all services at an additional fee. [See ORGANIST section above for fees]. The wedding party should contact the organist to discuss the music well in advance of the service. (Suggested 4 months). (Organists' contact information is available from the wedding liaison.) A grand piano is located in the sanctuary and can be used by the bridal party at no additional fee. If our church organist is engaged, the fee schedule is the same as for the organist.
- You are encouraged to make a decision concerning the music as soon as you begin planning your wedding. If your decision to use our organist/pianist is made 4 weeks or less before the ceremony, the organist/pianist will choose the selections to be played.
- Vocal music may be sung at appropriate times before or during the ceremony. **Since the wedding is a religious service, sacred music - hymns, songs with biblical texts, prayers, etc. - is encouraged.** The wedding liaison in consultation with the Director of Music Ministry and the AUMC pastor must approve other types music.
- **Secular music and popular music should be reserved for the reception.**

Sound

Our trained sound technician will operate the P.A. system during the wedding ceremony. He/she will ensure that the various microphones – head-set or lapel mic for the pastor, hand-held or stand mic for soloists and readers, and other amplifiers are available and operational. To ensure continuity throughout the ceremony, we strongly recommend the use of live music such as organ, piano, or other instruments. However, if necessary, the sound technician can play pre-recorded music through the church sound system. Any pre-recorded music that is to be played through the church's sound system must be provided on a CD at least one week prior to the wedding. We will not accept or play any pre-recorded music through an iPod, iPhone, or other electronic device. (Sound system techs' contact information is available from the wedding liaison.)

Photography:

- It is strongly recommended that pictures be taken prior to the wedding ceremony.
- No flash pictures should be made inside the sanctuary from the beginning of the musical prelude until the conclusion of the ceremony.
- No flash photography from the balcony is permitted.

Parking:

The church parking lot is located beside the family life center (gym) facing 5th Avenue. Street parking is allowed on 5th Avenue [parallel to the curb] and on 40th Street [angle parking] in front of the sanctuary. Please do not block the alley or neighbors' drives and accesses. The parking area on the south side of the alley beside the sanctuary is for residents of the apartment facing 6th Avenue. Please do not park there or block their access. We do not provide security for parked cars.

Accessibility for the Handicapped:

The church has a wheel chair lift to provide access to the sanctuary at the south/east entrance. You may turn from 40th street into the alley on the south side of the sanctuary to disembark and gain access to the entrance with the wheel chair lit. Please contact the wedding liaison if this entrance will be used. Access to the Fellowship hall is via

the 40th street entrance [see the built-in sidewalk ramp]. Access to other areas of the education building is through the double glass doors opening into the parking lot.

Wedding Reception and/or After Rehearsal Reception/Dinner

The Facility Fee for the Fellowship Hall includes the use of the church kitchen.

- The caterer/food preparer must meet well in advance with a representative of the Kitchen Committee for instruction on proper use of the appliances, equipment, and cooking/serving ware.
- Dishwashing and general cleaning of the kitchen area are the responsibility of the caterer or designated wedding party representative.
- The use of alcoholic beverages is not allowed and smoking is not allowed in any of the church facilities.
- Twelve 6' x 2.5' white tables are available for use at your reception in the Fellowship Hall. Setting up and taking down are the responsibility of the wedding party. Consult with your Wedding Liaison concerning set up, placement, and storage of the tables.
- The church has approximately 70 brown padded chairs and 100+ metal folding chairs for use at your reception. Setting up and taking down the tables and/or chairs is the responsibility of the wedding party. Consult with your wedding liaison concerning set up, placement, and storage of the chairs.



APPLICATION FOR WEDDING CEREMONY/RECEPTION

Wedding Party Primary Contact person: _____

Relationship: (Bride/Parent/Professional Planner/Etc.) _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Wedding Date: _____

Time of ceremony: _____ Wedding Reception Fellowship Hall
 Off-site
 Undecided

Date of rehearsal: _____ After-Rehearsal Fellowship Hall
 Off-site
 Undecided
Time of rehearsal: _____

BRIDE

Full Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____
Street City / State / Zip

Church Affiliation: _____

GROOM

Full Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____
Street City / State / Zip

Church Affiliation: _____

Our address after the marriage will be: _____
Street City / State / Zip

Pastor/officiant: _____ Church Affiliation: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Avondale UMC Senior Pastor: Rev. Malinda Weaver | malinda@avonumc.net | 205-592-3739

Table with 2 columns: Item and Price. Includes Wedding Ceremony & Rehearsal, Rehearsal dinner/reception, Wedding reception, and AUMC services.

Musicians:

Organist/Pianist: _____ Phone: _____
Avondale UMC Director of Music Ministry & Organist: Richard Byrd (rbyrd@avonumc.net)
Vocalists: _____ Phone: _____
Others: _____ Phone: _____

Florist/decorator: _____ Phone: _____

Caterer (if applicable) _____ Phone: _____

I have read the policies and guidelines of Avondale United Methodist Church regarding weddings and agree to abide by them. Please return this signed application with deposit to reserve facilities of AUMC.

Signature: _____