

WEDDING *Ceremony* GUIDELINES



Dear Friends,

As the clergy of Dunwoody United Methodist Church, we are thrilled that you have said “Yes” to one another and are honored that you would invite us to walk with you up to and beyond your wedding day. We believe that a wedding is a joyful union of people and families. We see this pre-marriage period as important in laying a foundation for your new life together.

Our belief is that Christian marriage carries with it the willingness to humble oneself to God and one another – to center Christ in your lives so that as you two grow, so does your faith. As a clergy team, we are pleased to perform weddings for couples whose hearts and readiness align with this conviction.

We are also deeply committed to pastoring this diverse congregation and community. We strive to create an intentional environment where our love and service to Christ is what unites us, even while we hold differing opinions on many topics. In recognition of these differences, we have chosen to only consider performing same-gender weddings off-site at this time.

Our “Yes” is to welcome all who seek to be married and to value the diversity of perspectives that our congregation holds. Our “Yes” to you is to honor God, to honor you, your families, and our faith, as we prepare for your wedding day and for your married life. This booklet outlines your next steps and seeks to answer many common questions as you move forward on this journey.



Rev. Dr. Phil Schroeder
Senior Pastor



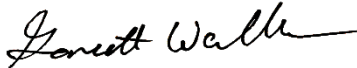
Rev. David Melton
Associate Pastor



Rev. Kathy Brockman
Associate Pastor



Rev. Calissa Dauterman
Associate Pastor



Rev. Garrett Wallace
Associate Pastor



Rev. Eric Burton-Krieger
Associate Pastor

FIRST STEP – to confirm your wedding date’s availability (whether off-site or at the Church) contact:

Jill Brunelle, Administrative Assistant to the Senior Pastor
770-394-0675 ext. 120 or jill.brunelle@dunwoodyumc.org.

Note that weddings may not be scheduled during Holy Week (the week before Easter), on Christmas Eve or Day, Independence Day, during the week of VBS (in June), Thanksgiving Day weekend, New Year’s Eve or Day, or on Sundays. Jill will inform you of any other dates that are unavailable on the church calendar.

DUMC members are permitted to schedule weddings 18 months in advance of their preferred wedding date. Non-members are permitted to schedule 12 months in advance of their preferred date.

Once Jill has confirmed availability, off-site weddings are coordinated directly with the officiating pastor.

SECOND STEP – to book your wedding (for weddings at the Church) Jill will put you in touch with Bette Whitley, our Wedding Coordinator, to complete our registration form, secure your deposit, and answer any additional questions.

Updated May 2025

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

We thank God for the gift of love and especially for the love you and your partner feel for each other. Our prayer is that your love, your relationship, your faith and your commitment grow deeper as time goes by. Marriage is one of the most important commitments made in a lifetime, and in Christian marriage, one that invites God's presence and guidance from the very start.

We understand marriage as a covenant – for the commitment you're making is to God and to one another – one that with God's help, we hope will endure as long as you both shall live. To that covenant we offer the support of our community of faith.

Our clergy would be glad to discuss any questions you may have. Below you'll find information on our pre-marriage process all the way through planning your wedding day.

CLERGY

- Once a date is set for your wedding (whether off-site or at the Church), Jill Brunelle will contact the clergy to schedule your wedding and will confirm with you who will officiate. Any of the clergy on staff at DUMC may officiate your wedding ceremony, subject to their availability. It is appropriate to request a particular pastor with whom you have a special relationship, and if you do not have a preference, our Senior Pastor will work with you to find the right pastor.
- Members of DUMC may request any of our pastors or another clergyperson to officiate. All visiting clergy must be approved by the Senior Pastor and must abide by the wedding policies of DUMC. Our Senior Pastor will extend a formal invitation to the visiting clergy.
- Non-member ceremonies will be conducted by one of the DUMC clergy. If a guest minister is also requested and approved, then the two clergy will coordinate their roles in the service, with the DUMC clergy generally taking the lead role in the ceremony. All clergy will attend the rehearsal. Please remember that the wedding fees (listed below) do not include any fees associated with having a guest pastor. If one is approved, compensation for them is your responsibility.

PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE

- Each pastor requires two or more appointments with you as a part of our pre-marriage process. This provides time to get to know you as a couple, to help you identify areas to invest in for a healthy marriage, and to plan the ceremony itself. These meetings generally take place in the 3 months prior to your wedding day.

OFF-SITE WEDDINGS

- Once Jill Brunelle has confirmed your date and the clergy officiant, further coordination on your wedding happens directly with the officiating pastor.
- The only fee is a recommendation of \$400 for the DUMC Clergy Officiant.

WALK-IN WEDDINGS & VOW RENEWALS

- These are very simple ceremonies for 30 people or fewer, with no wedding rehearsal, no wedding director, no special decorations or need for spaces to get dressed.
- The only fee is a recommendation of \$400 for the DUMC Clergy Officiant. There is an additional fee for any special music that might be requested to compensate the musician. A discretionary payment (suggested amount \$100-200 or more) to the Church for use of the space is appreciated.

ON-SITE WEDDINGS AT THE CHURCH

- Sanctuary Weddings: Can accommodate up to 900 guests.
- Chapel Weddings: Can accommodate up to 100 guests.
 - Both spaces include use of the Bride's Room and space for the groomsmen to gather.
- Parking is available in surface lots around the Church building.
- Both the Sanctuary and Chapel are handicapped accessible through the front entrances.
- A wedding rehearsal (generally 1 hour the night before) is provided for, with the clergy and a wedding director present.
- You are scheduled for 3 hours at the Church the day of your wedding. This 3-hour period allows time for dressing, floral decorating, photography, the ceremony and the greeting of guests.

WEDDING FEES

- Your non-refundable deposit of the facility rental fee secures your wedding rehearsal and wedding day on the Church calendar. After completing our online registration form, you may submit this payment electronically (+3% processing fee), by cash, or by check payable to Dunwoody UMC with your wedding date in the memo line.
- The remaining fee for your wedding is due at least one month prior to your wedding day. The total cost of your wedding will vary based on the size of your wedding, which worship space the ceremony will be held in, and the number of clergy, musicians, etc. involved.
- Typically, members can expect a fee range from \$1,600 for the Chapel to \$2,000 for the Sanctuary, while non-members can expect a range from \$1,800 for the Chapel to \$2,200 for the Sanctuary. Again, payment may be made electronically (+3% processing fee), by cash, or by check payable to Dunwoody UMC with your wedding date in the memo line.
- A detailed cost breakdown is as follows:
 - Clergy – a recommendation of \$400 for a DUMC pastor to officiate, regardless of location.
 - Organist – \$400 for music, pre-, post- and during your ceremony. If our Church organist is not available, she will help arrange for a substitute.
 - Wedding Directors – \$400 for 2 directors. One will be present for the rehearsal, and both will assist on the day of the wedding.
 - Facility Rental – (this is the amount of the non-refundable deposit)
 - Sanctuary – \$800 for members; \$1,000 for non-members
 - Chapel – \$400 for members; \$600 for non-members

- Additional Services – Additional fees will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Examples include additional sound or AV needs, traffic control, nursery, and special set ups, etc. Fees for vocalists or additional musicians should be negotiated directly with them.

WEDDING DIRECTORS (for all weddings with 30 or more people)

- Our Wedding Coordinator will contact you by telephone approximately one week prior to the ceremony to discuss the details of the rehearsal and wedding day.
- The Church provides two on-site wedding directors to support your wedding. They, along with the officiating pastor, carry the full authority of the Church to make final decisions on all areas related to conducting a wedding. Having two directors allows for one to be present in the worship space, while the other is attending to the wedding party and helping them move around our large campus.
- A director will lead the rehearsal along with the officiating pastor.
- The directors will coordinate arrangements with the photographer, florist, videographer etc. on the day of the wedding and oversee bridal party arrangement, ushering details, the timing of seating, the bridal procession, and the seating of family.
- Should you employ a commercial wedding planner, they are welcome to accompany the bride or couple to assist with dressing, photography, and other preparations. With regards to the rehearsal and the wedding itself, our DUMC wedding directors will oversee all activities.

CHURCH GUIDELINES

- The wedding service is an act of worship and should be approached as such. The ceremony itself, the music, the readings, and all other aspects should fit within the sacred concept of a marriage ceremony. The clergy officiating your wedding will help maintain this spirit.
- Alcohol is not permitted on the Church premises (including the parking lot). If alcohol is found in the building and/or members of the wedding party appear intoxicated (including those to be married), the clergy and/or wedding directors may refuse to officiate your ceremony and/or validate your marriage. Please honor the importance of this day.
- Smoking is not permitted on the DUMC campus.
- No food or drink is allowed in the Sanctuary or the Chapel.
- For safety reasons, no rice or birdseed may be thrown or used inside or outside the building.
- Pets will be allowed in pictures but not as participants in the ceremony.
- All furniture remains in its original place.
- Additional cleaning fees may be assessed if necessary.

COMMUNION

- If you desire to include communion in your wedding, we encourage you to discuss this with your officiant. Where communion will be served, it must be offered to the entire congregation, and the clergy person must be United Methodist.
- It is the couple's responsibility to provide the elements (bread & juice) but the pastor and wedding directors will prepare the elements so that everyone may partake in this Holy Sacrament.

MUSICIANS/MUSIC

- The DUMC organist will be expected to play for weddings held here. If the Church organist is not available, she must approve the use of another organist. Guest organists must confine their practice to the hours the Church is open. The same fees apply.
- Music fitting a worship service should be selected. Often this music is classical or of a sacred or religious nature. Appropriate contemporary sacred music will be considered. There is a significant body of musical work from which to choose, and the Church organist or officiating clergy can help make recommendations.
- The couple is responsible for contacting the organist 3 months in advance of the ceremony to ensure her availability and to schedule a discussion of the wedding music. The organist's fee covers this meeting and the day of the ceremony. Musicians do not attend wedding rehearsals.
- Additional vocal or instrumental music can be included prior to and/or during the ceremony. The organist is glad to make recommendations related to singers and musicians. Additional fees for special music apply.
- If the music requested is not in the organist's library, the couple will need to provide or purchase it.
- If any of the DUMC choirs are to participate in the ceremony, there will be an additional fee. Please contact the Minister of Music to discuss arrangements. Advance notice of not less than 30 days is required to ensure the choir's availability.
- Weddings typically use a simple AV system, for which there is no charge, and a technician is not required. AV needs beyond this simple system carries an additional fee.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY

- Please advise your photographer and/or videographer of the location of your wedding (Chapel or Sanctuary) and that you have reserved the Church for 3 hours the day of your wedding. They may arrive 2 hours prior to your ceremony to set up and take pre-ceremony photos or video.
 - Photos may be taken on the Church grounds, in the Brides Room and in other public areas of the building. Please be mindful that other events may also be taking place on campus, so return areas used for photographs to their original arrangement.
 - All pre-ceremony photos in the Sanctuary/Chapel must be completed *at least* 30 minutes prior to the ceremony starting time.
- Please advise your photographer that flash photos may be taken only during the processional and recessional (when your photographer may also be in the center aisle) but not during the rest of the ceremony to help honor the spirit of this worship service.
- For all other photography during the service, we ask that photographers be respectful and limit their movements so as not to be distracting.
- When your videographer arrives at the Church, please direct them to speak to the DUMC wedding directors to confirm appropriate camera placement. General guidelines are:
 - We allow for an unlighted, unmanned camera at the front of the Church in the chancel area.
 - Manned cameras in our worship spaces must be in the back, either stationary or with limited movement.
- We ask that guests refrain from taking photos during the ceremony. You are welcome to request this in your printed programs or to have the officiant include it in their welcome.

- Following the ceremony, the wedding party may return to the Chancel area for photos. Your photographer will need to observe the time limitation, completing all photos not more than one hour after the ceremony starting time.

FLORIST/CANDLES/DECORATIONS/EQUIPMENT

- Please advise your florist of the location of your wedding (Chapel or Sanctuary) and that they may arrive precisely 2 hours prior to your ceremony to set floral arrangement and decorate. We are unable to provide time to set floral arrangements/decorations the evening of the wedding rehearsal.
 - In the Sanctuary, a container of fresh flowers may be placed on the altar, or two arrangements of fresh flowers may be placed on the pedestals on either side of the altar, or on the floor in front of the pulpit and lectern.
 - In the Chapel, a small arrangement of fresh flowers may be placed directly on the altar table. Two arrangements of fresh flowers may also be placed on portable pillars for your ceremony.
 - Additional flowers or greenery may be used if desired, but it may not cover religious symbols.
 - If your florist brings additional candles for your ceremony, they will be responsible for lighting them.
 - All flowers, containers, and accessories must be picked up by the florist/provider or removed by the wedding party or their designee within an hour of the wedding starting time.
- Two single candles on the altar will always remain in place.
- If a Unity Candle is to be used, we will supply one that fits our candle holder for a fee of \$65.
- Additional candles are allowed in the Chancel area, and the Church will provide two 7-candle candelabras for wedding if desired.
- Bows or flowers may be attached to the pews; however, appropriate holders or ribbons must be used to attach them. No tape, tacks, nails or any adhesive may be used.
- No aisle cloth may be used. (Our aisles are carpeted.)
- The Church's kneeler may be used by the Bride and Groom.
- Furniture and flags must remain in place for the wedding.
- For weddings scheduled in December (Advent), note that the Christmas decorations (including, but not limited to, Christmas trees, candles in windows, etc.) will remain in place. The same is true for weddings scheduled during Lent (February-April) when there is a purple drape on the cross.

WEDDING PROGRAMS

- Wedding programs are optional, but often helpful if people are traveling to a reception at another location.
- If creating programs, the couple supplies them, but the officiating clergy, Wedding Coordinator, or organist are glad to confirm details before printing.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

- The rehearsal lasts 1 hour and is generally scheduled the day before between 4 and 6 PM. All participants are requested to arrive 15 minutes prior to the rehearsal time.
- Those attending should include the couple, the wedding party, and all those taking part in the wedding, including readers, ushers, and those who are to be formally seated.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

- The Wedding Coordinator will explain the process of obtaining your marriage license when you meet.
- During the week preceding your wedding, or at the rehearsal, please bring your marriage license paperwork, your marriage certificate, and 2 programs (if you're creating them) to the Church to give to the wedding director.
- The wedding director will deliver the marriage license to the officiating pastor. Following the ceremony – a copy will be given back to you and the original will be mailed to probate for you.

WEDDING DAY ARRIVAL TIME

- The Sanctuary/Chapel will open 2 hours prior to the ceremony time. Please ask your wedding party, photographer, videographer and florist to arrive then.
 - Dressing areas are available for bridesmaids and groomsmen. Please use only the assigned rooms and discourage attendants from leaving valuables unattended, as the Church cannot be responsible for money or valuables.
 - Please encourage groomsmen to try on their apparel prior to the wedding day to prevent fitting problems. (We know from experience!)
- The Church will be available for a total of 3 hours.
- Please **do not** ask for exceptions to these timeframes.
- Anything brought into the Church for the wedding must leave after the ceremony. Special arrangements must be made the day before and approved by the Wedding Coordinator if anything is to be left overnight.

NURSERY

- Nursery care can be arranged for preschool age children. The fee will be based on the anticipated number of children and requires a two-hour minimum. Our Wedding Coordinator can put you in touch with our Nursery Director.
- Please make arrangements for a nursery at least one month in advance.

FOOD

- Food and non-alcoholic beverages are permitted prior to the ceremony in the dressing areas. They are not permitted in the worship spaces.

CELEBRATION THROW

- As you exit the Church, bells or bubbles are permitted.
- It is recommended that you have 2-3 people distribute these immediately following the ceremony.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

- We will open the back gate of our parking lot for all weddings, allowing your guests to exit through The Shops of Dunwoody to access Chamblee Dunwoody Road. If you would like additional traffic control (to stop traffic so that guests may turn left directly onto Mount Vernon Road), it is available for an additional fee. Traffic officers will stop traffic in both directions for people entering/exiting the parking lot.

WEDDING RECEPTIONS

- DUMC can host small wedding receptions in our Parlor area. This is an ideal space for a “cake and punch” reception for 50-60 people. Receptions of this sort tend to be shorter with less table seating. This location is right down the hall from either the Sanctuary or the Chapel. Fees are negotiable based upon the size and duration of your reception.
- For all receptions, you will need to use an outside caterer, who will have their own fees. The caterer must provide a Certificate of Liability Insurance, with DUMC listed as additional insured for the day of the event.
- Receptions must conclude no later than three hours after the wedding starting time.
- As a reminder, no alcoholic beverages or smoking are allowed during the reception, either inside or outside the Church building.
- No nails, tacks or tape may be used to secure decorations. No glitter or sequins may be used.

OUR BLESSING TO YOU

Your wedding marks a new chapter in your lives. For all the excitement, we pray that this process of planning and preparation would also be a time for growth – for you as individuals, as a couple, and as people of faith. Know that you have the pastors, staff, and people of Dunwoody United Methodist Church as supports along the way. We pray for all that your life together and marriage will hold!

DUNWOODY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Wedding Fees

| | SANCTUARY (capacity 900) | | CHAPEL (capacity 100) | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| | <i>Member</i> | <i>Non-Member</i> | <i>Member</i> | <i>Non-Member</i> |
| *Facility Rental | \$800 | \$1,000 | \$400 | \$600 |
| | | | | |
| **Pastor | \$400 | \$400 | \$400 | \$400 |
| | | | | |
| Organist | \$400 | \$400 | \$400 | \$400 |
| | | | | |
| Wedding Directors (2) | \$400 | \$400 | \$400 | \$400 |
| | | | | |
| Total | \$2,000 | \$2,200 | \$1,600 | \$1,800 |

* Non-refundable deposit to secure wedding date

** Suggested honorarium

Additional Fees:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Traffic Control (2 officers) | \$300 |
| Unity Candle | \$65 |
| Additional Clergy | TBD |
| Additional AV Support | TBD |
| Vocalists/Additional Musicians | TBD |
| Nursery | TBD |
| Special Set Up Requests | TBD |

Payment may be made electronically (+3% processing fee), by cash, or by check payable to Dunwoody UMC with your wedding date in the memo line.