

WEDDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SAINT MARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

2901 COLUMBIANA ROAD
VESTAVIA HILLS, ALABAMA 35216

TO THE BRIDE AND GROOM

May your time of planning for this service of commitment be filled with joy and anticipation. May the love that all have for you and that you have for each other surround you and sustain you. May you love, honor and live together in faithfulness and patience that your lives will be filled with joy. May the home that you establish become a haven of blessing and a place of peace through Jesus Christ.

Your Wedding

In planning your wedding the following quote from “Manual, Methodist Altars” should be kept in mind:

“The church should be made as festive and beautiful as it is possible to make it, but it should be remembered that a church wedding is a service of worship and consecration, a religious ceremony. The bride-to-be has a wide range of choices as to the wedding she will have. It may be a civil ceremony, a home wedding with a sacred and impressive service, or she may choose to be married in a garden, surrounded by beautiful flowers. If she decides to be married at the altar of the church, then certainly no attempt should be made to change the church into a garden scene, or to move the furniture out to make room for an elaborate floral display.”

A couple desiring to use the sanctuary or any area of Saint Mark should contact the church secretary. The secretary can check the church calendar to see if the date you are interested in is available. If it is, and you would like to reserve space, the first step is to fill out a wedding application and turn it in to the office. The date will then be reserved for you. If it is a non-member wedding, the date is tentative until 12 months before the wedding. A wedding director will be assigned for each wedding, and will work with you regarding policies, procedures and questions you might have. Weddings for non-members will be subject to the wedding coordinator’s approval for the following holidays: New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day, Holy Week, Memorial Day, July 4th, Thanksgiving weekend, or the month of December.

Members will not be charged for the use of the sanctuary, fellowship hall, or gym. A bride will be considered a member for the purposes of securing Saint Mark United Methodist Church for her wedding if she, the groom, or their parents have been members of Saint Mark for a minimum of six months prior to the application date.

Weddings for couples who are not members of Saint Mark cannot be confirmed prior to 12 months before the ceremony.

Minister

It is our policy to schedule premarital counseling sessions with the officiating minister of your wedding. We recommend that the senior or an associate pastor at Saint Mark conduct your wedding ceremony. However, should you prefer to use a minister outside Saint Mark, this request will be presented to the senior pastor for approval. The senior pastor may require that one of the Saint Mark pastors be co-officiants at the wedding.

Music

A wedding is a sacred ceremony. The music should be fitting, appropriate, and of a spiritual nature. All fees for musicians (organist, pianist, solos, etc.) are negotiated individually and paid directly to the musician. The church office can provide a list of organists who are approved to play the pipe organ. Any other organists must be approved by the Music Director at Saint Mark. The songs to be sung cannot be secular in form. Only approved music of ecclesiastical and classical nature may be used. Love songs that are appropriate for a church facility may be played or sung in the reception rooms, but not in the sanctuary. Our music director will be happy to discuss any questions about the music.

Photographers

Pictures may be taken before and after the wedding ceremony. It is the bride's responsibility to notify friends and relatives attending the wedding that no photography is allowed during the service. Video recordings may be quietly taken at the back of the sanctuary. They may be set in the choir loft if they are on a tripod and not a disturbance to the ceremony.

No flash pictures shall be taken in the sanctuary from the time the guests begin to arrive until the ceremony is completed. Please inform your photographer and friends of the procedure. Photographers violating this rule will be forbidden from taking pictures at future weddings at Saint Mark. Time exposures may be taken from the back doorway of the sanctuary only. NO FLASH PICTURES except as the couple leaves the church. To conserve time and prevent delay of the reception, pictures may be taken before the wedding begins.

Photographers/videographers will be sent policy statements by the bride (See Attachment 2). The statement will be signed and returned to the church office no later than three weeks prior to the wedding.

Decorations

The Altar is the central object of furniture in the place of worship. Any candles must be dripless. Care should be taken not to "over-decorate" for a wedding. Movement of furnishings in this area requires special permission from the senior minister. If this permission is granted, the bride's family will need to assume responsibility for these furnishings to be put back in place for worship following the wedding.

White paraments will be used for weddings. All candles, flowers (unless to be used for the Sunday morning worship service), and decorations should be removed from the church immediately after the wedding in order for the cleaning service to have the church ready for the next service.

No tacks, nails, screws or other material may be used that might permanently mar, deface, or otherwise damage any part of the church building or furnishings. In the event there is damage to any church property, the parties responsible (those making the reservations) will be held fully responsible. Nothing may be thrown on the couple in the sanctuary, nor in any of the church buildings. Birdseed, bubbles or flower petals are recommended in lieu of rice.

Candles used in the candelabra must be protected by shields, cups, or foil paper on the carpet to prevent drippings. No flowers or candelabra are permitted in front of the Altar or on the piano or organ. No hurricane lamps or candles are permitted on windows or on the pews. Battery operated candles may be used instead. After the candles are extinguished, they should be permitted to cool for a few minutes before being removed so the liquid drippings will harden and not spill on the carpet.

Seasonal adornments (such as Christmas tree) present in the sanctuary are not to be disturbed or moved. The wedding director will know in advance of special adornments or decorations in the sanctuary on the date of your wedding.

Florists must not block any entrances in the church building or chancel area with floral arrangements or greenery.

If flower girls are to drop flower petals, only artificial ones are allowed.

No food or beverages will be allowed in the sanctuary. No alcoholic beverages or controlled substances may be used on the church premises under any circumstances. Minister may refuse to perform a wedding service for anyone he or she considers to be under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance at the time of the wedding.

Florists will be sent policy statements by the bride (See Attachment 3). The statement will be signed and returned to the church office no later than three weeks prior to the wedding.

Wedding Director

A wedding director from Saint Mark will be assigned for your wedding. The director will be a church member who serves in an adjunct staff position. He/she will serve you in planning the details of your wedding, and will give directions at the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony regarding the placement of the wedding party, entering and exiting, and other general matters. You may wish to specify which director at Saint Mark you would like to use at the time you schedule your wedding date. However, the assignment of a wedding director is the responsibility of the overall wedding coordinator. A wedding director of your choice is acceptable as long as he/she works with the required wedding director from Saint Mark.

The maximum number of hours the wedding director will spend on the day of the wedding is 6 hours. If a reception is planned at Saint Mark, an additional 3 hours will be allocated. If additional time is required, \$25 per hour will be added to the fees stated on page 4.

A wedding director will not be required if your wedding is to be very small (just bride and groom), with no church reception, and if the Saint Mark pastor is willing to assume responsibility for the work of the director. The wedding still needs to be put on the church calendar to avoid any scheduling conflicts.

Reception

The Family Life Center (Gym) or Fellowship Hall is available for receptions. The parties concerned will arrange for the reception, through the wedding director, and pay for all expenses incurred.

Please note the following:

1. The church does not furnish tablecloths or any supplies for the reception.
2. Bird seed or bubbles may be used outside the building for the reception.
3. No alcoholic beverages may be served and no smoking is allowed in any of the church facilities.
4. In the event there is damage to any church property, the parties responsible (those making the reservations) will be held fully accountable.
5. Gym or Fellowship Hall use for receptions may be restricted due to church worship schedule.

Deviations

Any request not covered in policies and procedures should be presented in written form to the wedding coordinator. The request or question will be taken under advisement and answered promptly in writing. If additional requests are approved, fees may be added , i.e.: child care, additional classroom space, additional staff needed, etc.

Financial Arrangements

MEMBERS

Members will be charged as follows:

Wedding Director	Wedding Only \$300.00 Wedding and Reception \$400.00 Wedding and Rehearsal Dinner \$400.00 Wedding, Reception and Rehearsal Dinner \$500.00
Sound	Wedding only \$125.00 Wedding and Reception \$250.00 Wedding and Rehearsal Dinner \$250.00 Wedding, Reception and Rehearsal Dinner \$350.00
Minister	Member's Discretion
Organist	Negotiated and paid directly to the organist
Custodian	See Below

Members will not be charged for the use of the sanctuary, fellowship hall, gym or kitchen. A bride will be considered a member for the purposes of securing Saint Mark United Methodist Church for her wedding if she, the groom, or their parents have been members of Saint Mark for a minimum of six months prior to the application date.

NON-MEMBERS

Non-members will be charged as follows:

Sanctuary / Bride Room / Groom Room	\$750.00
Wedding Director	Wedding Only \$300 Wedding and Reception \$400.00 Wedding and Rehearsal \$400.00 Wedding, Reception and Rehearsal \$500.00
Minister	\$250.00
Organist	Negotiated
Sound	\$125.00 (Wedding Only) Wedding and Reception \$250.00 Wedding and Rehearsal \$250.00 Wedding, Reception and Rehearsal \$350.00
Family Life Center / Gym	\$400.00
Fellowship Hall	\$150.00
Kitchen	\$75.00 (room rental) + \$90.00 (staff fee) = \$165.00
Custodian	See Below

A check must be received at the time the wedding is confirmed to reserve the sanctuary, bride room and grooms room, and should be made payable to Saint Mark United Methodist Church. All other checks/cash are submitted to the Wedding Director or as noted in the Policies and Procedures.

CUSTODIAN

Members and non-members will be charged the following:

Sanctuary / Bride Room / Groom Room	\$200.00
Fellowship Hall	\$100.00
Family Life Center / Gym	\$150.00
Kitchen	\$50.00

ADDITIONAL FEES

If additional requests are made, fees may be added, i.e.: child care or additional classroom space requested and etc.

Financial Requirements (Bride retain for your records)

Bride: _____

Wedding Date: _____

1. Church Facilities
 Member _____
 Non-Member _____
2. Wedding Director _____
3. Kitchen _____
4. Kitchen Coordinator / Staff _____
5. Custodian _____
 Sanctuary /Bride Room / Groom Room
 Family Life Center / Gym
 Fellowship Hall
 Kitchen
 Other Rooms needed
6. Sound Technician _____
7. Music _____
 Organist
 Soloist
8. Minister _____
9. Other _____

(Bride: Retain for your records)

What to Do to Schedule a Wedding at Saint Mark UMC

AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

1. Fill out the wedding application form and submit it to the Church Office. Weddings for couples who are not members of Saint Mark United Methodist Church will be tentative until twelve months before the ceremony.
2. Once the application has been submitted and the date has been cleared on the church calendar, the Wedding Coordinator will get in touch with the bride, and a Wedding Director will be assigned. Non-members send a check to the church office for the use of the sanctuary and/or Fellowship Hall and/or Family Life Center/Gym at the time the wedding is confirmed.

SIX WEEKS BEFORE THE WEDDING

1. The wedding director should contact the bride and discuss any last-minute details.
2. Check and make sure the florist, photographer, videographer and caterer have returned the signed copies of their policies and procedures to the church secretary.
3. Completed Ceremony Planning Sheet should be returned to Wedding Director.

TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING

1. Arrangements should be made with the Wedding Director as to time of florist delivery.
2. Turn in marriage license to officiating minister
3. Call the Wedding Director to confirm final plans.

REHEARSAL

1. All wedding rehearsals should begin on time and forty five (45) minutes to one hour should be allowed for the rehearsal. Instruct all members of the wedding party to be prompt.
2. The rehearsal for your wedding should be held at a time when all members of the bridal party can be present. The best time for this is usually between 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM on the evening prior to the wedding.
3. Pay the remaining fees to the wedding director.

WEDDING DAY

1. 6 hours prior to ceremony (but not earlier than 8 am) – Church is opened
2. 3 hours prior to ceremony – Church is available for photography & videography

Wedding Application

Wedding _____ Date _____ Time _____ Rehearsal _____ Date _____ Time _____

Reception: Fellowship Hall ____ Family Life Center / Gym ____ Reception Elsewhere ____

Minister _____ *Organist _____

Minister's Phone _____ *Organist's Phone _____

*Photographer _____ *Florist _____

*Photographer's Phone _____ *Florist's Phone _____

*Caterer _____ *Vocalist _____

*Caterer's Phone _____ *Vocalist's Phone _____

*This info due 6 weeks before wedding.

Bride Elect

Groom Elect

Name	Name
Street Address	Street Address
City, State, Zip	City, State, Zip
Home Phone	Home Phone
Work or Cell Phone	Work or Cell Phone
Email Address	Email Address
Parents Name	Parents Name

Bride Elect's Church Affiliation:

Groom Elect's Church Affiliation:

I have read the church wedding policies/procedures and agree to abide by them. I will make every effort to ensure that my guests will do likewise. I understand that the Saint Mark wedding director and/or minister shall be given discretion regarding certain areas and procedures. Anything not covered in the policies must be submitted in writing and approved by church officials. I agree to pay all fees to cover the use of the church prior to my wedding date.

Application Submitted _____ Date _____ Applicant's Signature _____

Director _____
(this info will be supplied by the wedding coordinator)

**Ceremony
Planning Sheet**

Please note: Have this sheet completed and turned in to the wedding director or church office as soon as all information is known, but not later than 6 weeks prior to the wedding.

Attendants _____

Groomsmen _____

Ushers _____

Time to be at the church (for pictures) _____

Are candles to be lighted and by whom and by what time _____

Usher/music to seat Groom's mother _____ Time _____

Usher/music to seat Bride's mother _____ Time _____

Father at Bride's left _____ right _____ music _____

Do you plan to use a unity candle? _____

Will there be Bride's book in the Narthex? _____

What order do you want attendants to come in (all girls first, all guys first, or alternating)?

Usher/music to seat Groom's grandmother _____ Time _____

Usher/music to seat Bride's grandmother _____ Time _____

Notes to the Photographer / Videographer
Weddings and other Special Occasions

We welcome you to Saint Mark United Methodist Church. Pictures are always a special memory of any wedding. We request that you keep in mind that a wedding is a Worship Service. Please refrain from taking any pictures during the ceremony that would be distracting in any way to the minister, wedding party, or your guests. All of our weddings have a Wedding Director who is available to answer any questions you might have concerning our policies. Ask the bride for the name and phone number of her wedding director. The director is familiar with some of the special needs of our Sanctuary and additional facilities.

Your Wedding Director is:

Director's name

Director's phone

Policies for all Photographers

1. Pictures may be taken before and after the ceremony.
2. No flash photography shall be taken in the Sanctuary from the time guests begin to arrive until the ceremony is completed. Flash pictures may be taken as the couple leaves the church but photographers may not enter the Sanctuary for these pictures.
3. Video recordings may be quietly taken from the back doorway of the Sanctuary.
4. Time exposures may be taken from the back doorway of the Sanctuary.
5. Arrival for pictures is not to be more than two and one-half hours prior to the wedding.
6. Please keep pictures following the ceremony as brief as possible; there are quests waiting to celebrate this special day.
7. Photographers violating these rules will be forbidden from taking pictures at future weddings at Saint Mark. Policy statements must be signed and returned to the church office within three weeks of the wedding.

Complete the following agreement, cut on the line below and return agreement to:

Saint Mark United Methodist Church
2901 Columbiana Road
Birmingham, AL 35216
Attn: Wedding Director
Church email address: info@saintmarkumc.org
Church office: (205) 822-5980

Agreement of Policies

We/I agree to abide by the Photography Policies of Saint Mark United Methodist Church.

We/I will be photographing the wedding of _____ on _____
Bride's name Wedding date/time

Signature of the photographer

Address & phone number

Notes to the Florist
Weddings and other Special Occasions

We welcome you to Saint Mark United Methodist Church. Floral arrangements are always a special memory of any wedding. We request that you keep in mind that a wedding is a Worship Service. All of our weddings have a Wedding Director who is available to answer any questions you might have concerning our policies. The director is familiar with some of the special needs of our Sanctuary and additional facilities. Please contact the Wedding Director to schedule a time for decorating the church.

Your Wedding Director is:

Name

Phone

Policies for all Florists

1. Any candles used must be dripless. Candles used in the candelabra must be protected by shields, cups and/or foil paper on the carpet to catch drippings.
2. No furnishings or equipment in the Sanctuary may be moved.
3. No tacks, nails, screws or other material may be used that might permanently mar, deface or otherwise damage any part of the church building or furnishings.
4. No flowers or candelabra are permitted in front of the Altar, on the piano or organ.
5. No hurricane lamps or candles are permitted in windows or on the pews.
6. Extinguished candles should be permitted to cool a few minutes before being removed so that the liquid drippings will harden and not spill on the carpet.
7. Floral arrangements or greenery should not block any entrance in the church building or chancel area.
8. Only artificial flower petals may be dropped by flower girls.

Complete the following agreement, cut on the line below and return agreement 3 weeks before the wedding to:

Saint Mark United Methodist Church
2901 Columbiana Road
Birmingham, AL 35216
Attn: Wedding Director
Church email address: info@saintmarkumc.org
Church office: (205) 822-5980

Agreement of Policies

We/I agree to abide by the Florist Policies of Saint Mark United Methodist Church.

We/I will be providing flowers for the wedding of

Name of bride or groom

Date/time of wedding

Signature

Name of florist & contact person

Phone

Address

Notes to the Caterer
Weddings and other Special Occasions

We welcome you to Saint Mark United Methodist Church. Catering arrangements are always a special memory of any wedding. We request that you keep in mind that a wedding is a Worship Service. All of our weddings have a Wedding Director who is available to answer any questions you might have concerning any policies. The Director is familiar with some of the special needs of our Sanctuary and additional facilities. Please contact the Director to schedule a time to utilize the kitchen and reception area. **Saint Mark does not have a food handler's license and is not inspected by the Jefferson County Health Department. Therefore, all food must be prepared off site and brought in to be served.**

Your Wedding Director is:

Name

Phone

Policies for all Caterers

1. Wedding receptions may be held in the Fellowship Hall or Gym which may be opened up to six hours prior to the wedding. The kitchen may be used and must be left in the order in which it was found. This includes removal of all trash from the premises to the outside dumpster.
2. The caterer and/or the Bride must furnish all equipment (candelabra, punch bowls, plates, serving pieces, table linens, etc.)
3. Smoking is not permitted in or around any of the buildings. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the premises at any time.
4. It is your responsibility to insure that the caterer understands and abides by all policies. Should any problems arise, conforming to these guidelines, a conference should be called between the bride, the wedding director and the caterer. If a caterer should fail to abide by these rules, the caterer will not be allowed to participate in future weddings at Saint Mark United Methodist Church.
5. **Saint Mark does not have a food handler's license and is not inspected by the Jefferson County Health Department. Therefore, all food must be prepared off site and brought in to be served.**

Complete the following agreement cut on the line below and return agreement 3 weeks before the wedding to:

Saint Mark United Methodist Church
2901 Columbiana Road
Birmingham, AL 35216
Attn: Wedding Director
Church email address: info@saintmarkumc.org
Church office: (205) 822-5980

Agreement of Policies

We/I agree to abide by the Caterer Policies of Saint Mark United Methodist Church.

Name of bride or groom

Date/time of wedding

Signature

Name Caterer

Phone

Address