

Wedding Policy and Guidelines

To the Prospective Bride and Groom,

We are happy that you have chosen Anniston First United Methodist Church as the place for your wedding. We are grateful to God that we have this beautiful and historic church for you to use at this time. We feel that our sanctuary or chapel provide a worshipful setting for weddings.

Since this is a very special moment in your lives, we want to assist you in any way that we can to make this experience worshipful and meaningful for you. In keeping with this desire, these guidelines have been prepared to aid in preparation of your ceremony.

If we can be of further assistance, please feel free to call upon us. It is the desire of the church for this to truly be an experience of worship and a time of great joy for you.

In Christ's Love,

Sara F. Starling

Wedding Director

256-452-5091

Weddings at Anniston FUMC

For over 130 years, our beautiful sanctuary has been the chosen site for weddings in downtown Anniston. From the magnificent stained glass window to the traditional center aisle for the bridal procession, Anniston First has everything you need for a memorable wedding.

This is an important ministry of our church. We seek to extend the Grace and Love of God to you. We invite any couple seeking a Christian ceremony, both members and non-members, to have their wedding at Anniston FUMC.

Our sanctuary seats approximately 600 guests and the chapel will seat approximately 80 guests.

The scheduling of the wedding should be made through Sara Starling, Wedding Director at 256-452-5091.

Once your wedding date has been approved and the deposit and Wedding Application turned in, the Wedding Director will place your wedding on the church calendar.

The balance for all wedding fees is due two (2) weeks prior to the wedding.

Weddings are generally held on Saturdays or can be scheduled during the week or on a Sunday afternoon. (Please discuss this with the Wedding Director)

Sanctuary weddings will not be scheduled during Holy Week, Easter weekend, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Smoking, alcoholic beverages and drugs are not permitted in or around the premises at any time.

The Role of the Pastor

Weddings in the church sanctuary and chapel normally will be performed by one of the pastors at Anniston FUMC. If you would like another minister to perform the wedding, please discuss this with the Wedding Director. Our pastor will decide if this is possible and, if approved, will issue the appropriate invitation to the visiting minister.

The pastor is in charge of the service and must approve all elements of the wedding service. All wedding ceremonies are under the supervision of our pastor.

Anniston FUMC considers the wedding ceremony a deeply spiritual and sacred experience. Our Pastor will use the Services of Christian Marriage as found on page 864 of the United Methodist Hymnal. This hymnal may be found in the Sanctuary. Should you desire some other ceremony, consult the Pastor. Additionally, if Holy Communion is observed, it must be served to the entire congregation present. It may not be served only to the Bride and Groom or Wedding Party.

Anniston FUMC Senior Pastor has the right to make exceptions to any of the wedding policies and procedures.

Counseling

Premarital counseling with the pastor is required before marriage and is scheduled by the pastor. Please call the church office as soon as possible to make an appointment to meet with the pastor and begin the pre-marital counseling. Both the bride and groom must be present at this first meeting. You will need to schedule a minimum of three (3) visits with the pastor for counseling. There is a small fee for an online survey and the Pastor's fee will be covered I your honorarium to him. (Suggested fee: \$200.00)

These sessions are helpful in preparing for one of life's greatest decisions.

If you are receiving pre-marital counseling from another pastor, please send a letter to the Anniston FUMC Pastor verifying that you have gone through pre-marital counseling one months prior to the wedding date.

The Role of the Wedding Director

The church will provide a Wedding Director. This person is responsible for meeting with prospective brides and grooms and communicating to them the wedding guidelines, receiving all applications and fees, directing the wedding rehearsal and ceremony, and is tasked with a leadership and organizational role over all wedding activities at the church to include the participating staff of AFUMC, wedding vendors, musicians, details and wedding day tasks. The Wedding Director's duties are limited to wedding events that will occur on the campus of AFUMC. Should a couple hire a wedding event planner to assist in details beyond the scope of the Wedding Director, the Wedding Director will collaborate with the Event Planner while representing the Sacrament of Marriage at the Church.

She is the liaison between the bride and the church.

Determines availability of facilities for a wedding and confers with the Pastor.

Receives wedding applications and deposits.

Confirms rehearsal and wedding dates to the Bride.

Attends the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

Responsible for coordinating the facilities with the maintenance staff in regards to heating/cooling and locking/unlocking for rehearsal and wedding.

Arranges with maintenance staff for the wedding set up.

After wedding, determines whether or not deposits can be returned or collected.

Payment & Fees

Reservation fee is due when the date is approved and booked with the Wedding Director. The reservation fee is non-fundable. The damage deposit and other fees are due two (2) weeks before the wedding.

The damage deposit is refundable. The Wedding Director will determine whether or not deposits can be returned or collected. Breakage and/or damage to any church equipment/facilities must be reimbursed at replacement price.

Rehearsal

Most rehearsals take place at 6:00 PM the evening prior to the wedding. If you wish a different time or date, please contact the Wedding Director. All wedding rehearsal will begin promptly and will last one hour.

The Role of the Music Consultant

Music is a very important part of the ceremony and should be in keeping with the sacredness and dignity of Christian worship. A Music Consultant/organist is provided by Anniston FUMC. They can suggest a wide variety of appropriate music for the wedding and an early appointment for consultation is important.

Should be contacted by the bride three (3) months before the wedding

Co-ordinates the music for weddings held at Anniston FUMC

Ensures that the music conforms to the standards of dignity and is theologically appropriate. Makes arrangements with one of the church musicians, if requested.

May obtain guest musicians, soloist upon request. Approves all guest pianist, soloist and musicians and arranges practice times. Consults with the Sound Technician if there are any special sound needs. Will be present at the rehearsal if participating in the wedding.

Schlicker Pipe Organ

Since the organ is a sensitive and balanced instrument, its use is restricted to the Music Consultant or organist approved by the Music Consultant.

Guest Pianist

Must be approved by the Music Consultant if not an Anniston FUMC musician. Should make rehearsal arrangements with the Music Consultant.

If not an Anniston FUMC musician he/she is required to be at the rehearsal. Financial arrangements are the responsibility of the bride.

Guest Soloist

Must be approved by the Music Consultant if not an Anniston FUMC musician. Should make rehearsal arrangements with the Music Consultant. If not an Anniston FUMC musician he/she is required to be at the rehearsal. Financial arrangements with the soloist are the responsibility of the bride.

The Role of the Sound Tech

Available in Sanctuary. (Audio available upon request)

Not available in the Chapel.

Will be present at the wedding.

Is scheduled by Wedding Director.

Must be an approved Anniston FUMC sound technician.

The Role of Building Personnel

Is scheduled by the Wedding Director.

Prepares the Sanctuary, Bride's, Bridesmaid's and Groom's rooms for the wedding.

Sets the temperature controls and door locks as needed.

Re-sets the Sanctuary for Worship.

*they DO NOT clean up or remove your wedding flowers and decorations after the wedding. That is your responsibility and ALL items should be removed within 1 hour after the ceremony.

Facilities

Sanctuary Seats approx. 600

Chapel Seats approx. 80

The Wedding Party

Bride's Room	Located in the Narthex
Bridesmaid's Room	Located in Asbury or Parlor
Groom's Room	Located in Asbury, the Chapel or Parlor

We do not store wedding dresses, bridesmaids or groom's clothing at the church.

We have limited availability of outlets for curlers, irons, etc.

Anniston FUMC is not responsible for any of your private belongings.

Photography

It is recommended that as many pictures as possible be taken prior to the wedding ceremony.

The church building will be available for pictures four (4) hours before the wedding. The photographer may begin taking pictures at that time.

All pictures should be completed within one (1) hour after the completion of the service. All photography equipment must be removed after the wedding.

In making photographs, care must be exercised to insure that persons do not stand on or deface equipment or furnishings in the sanctuary or chapel.

PLEASE DO NOT stand on the needlepoint cushions at the chancel railing.

PLEASE DO NOT hang the wedding dress from the mirror or chandelier in the Bride's room.

PLEASE DO NOT hang the wedding dress from the wall sconces in the sanctuary or chapel.

Movement and distractions should be kept to a minimum.

The failure of any photographer to cooperate with these requirements may result in the forfeiture of security deposit.

Although the photographer is hired and paid by the wedding party, he/she is subject to the direction of the pastor and/or the Wedding Director in the event such direction is necessary. The wedding is a worship service and all photographers are asked to respect the reverence of the place and event.

Videography

Videotaping of the service is permitted from the balcony.

An unmanned camera can be placed in the back corner of the choir loft.

No external light on video camera equipment may be used during the service.

Although, the videographer is hired and paid by the wedding party, he/she is subject to the direction of the Pastor and/or the Wedding Director in the event such direction is necessary. The wedding is a worship service and all videographers are asked to respect the reverence of the place and event.

Floral and Decorating Policies

We think our Sanctuary is already a place of beauty and feel that it isn't enhanced by elaborate decoration. Decorations should magnify the spirit of worship.

The Altar Table is to remain central in the chancel area and cannot be obscured. No furnishings are to be removed or obscured except with the permission of the pastor.

Live arrangements behind the altar table is frequently all that is necessary. The use of artificial flowers or artificial greenery for altar decorations is not allowed. We feel the live flowers and greenery represents the creation of God.

The church is available for decoration four (4) hours prior to the ceremony on the day of the wedding and no earlier than 9:00 AM.

Use only dripless candles.

Pews may be marked with flowers, bows, or ribbons tied to the pews.

POSITIVELY no tacks, glue, tape (of any kind), screws, unwrapped wire or nails may be used on any furniture or elsewhere in the church. No flowers in water tubes can be attached to the pews.

Access from the pews to the aisles must remain open.

It is the responsibility of the florist to *remove any debris from the decorations prior to* the wedding. A church vacuum cleaner is not available.

Flowers, decorations and equipment must be removed *within one hour following* the wedding ceremony. This includes all decorations outside of the building. The facilities must be left in the same condition in which they were found.

The Flower Girl may drop silk petals on the aisle. Live petals may not be used.

Please leave the altar flowers for Sunday Worship. The bride and groom will be acknowledged in the church bulletin.

Please do not place flowers, ferns, candles or anything decorative on the piano. Please do not use Bibles or hymnals as props.

If the florist has questions that are not covered in these policies, those questions are to be communicated to the Wedding Director. It is your responsibility to insure that the florist understands and abides by these policies. The failure of any florist to cooperate with the requirements may result in the forfeiture of security deposit.

General Rules & Guidelines

A bride will be considered a member for the purposes of securing Anniston FUMC for her wedding if she, the groom, or their parents have been members of the Anniston FUMC for a minimum of one year prior to the application date.

All weddings must be approved by the Senior Pastor.

We fully comply with the requirements of the Book of Discipline regarding marriages performed at Anniston FUMC.

A non-refundable booking fee of \$250 is due when the wedding is scheduled on the church calendar. This check should be made payable to Anniston First United Methodist Church.

No smoking within the buildings or near the entrances.

No alcoholic beverages or drugs allowed on church premises (building and grounds).

No pets are allowed inside church buildings other than those necessary for physically challenged persons.

Rice is **NOT** allowed. Bird seed cannot be thrown within the buildings. It may be handed to guests **OUTSIDE** the church buildings.

Church facilities are made available to the wedding party four (4) hours prior to the wedding hour. If the wedding party wishes access to the church earlier than four hours, a fee of \$25.00 per hour/per staff person affected may be charged.

Times for the rehearsal and clean-up after the wedding are outlined in this policy. Overtime for either event may incur additional fees of \$25.00 per hour/per staff person effected. Funds may be deducted from the damage deposit.

Breakage and/or damage to any church equipment/facilities must be reimbursed at replacement price.

We do not provide Unity candles or Unity candle holder. Contact your florist. We do not provide tablecloths for gift table. Please bring your own.

If Communion is served, the bride is responsible for obtaining/paying for the elements with the instruction and direction of the clergy as to what the elements consist of.

The church is not responsible for lost or stolen articles or equipment.

Violations of any of the policies or rules may, at the discretion of the Pastor or Wedding Director, result in the forfeiture of the Damage Deposit and/or, if prior to the wedding, loss of permission to use the Anniston FUMC facilities.

The Wedding Director will approve the return of the damage deposit, or some portion of it, after an inspection of the church premises following the ceremony. Please read the entire contents of this booklet. The return of your damage deposit may depend on your understanding and cooperation of the guidelines.

Important names, address and numbers:

First United Methodist Church Anniston

Street Address / Location 1400 Noble Street

Anniston, AL 36201

Mailing Address:

P. O. Box 1789

Anniston, AL 36202 WEBSITE: www.annistonfirst.info

PHONE: 256-236-5605

FAX 256-236-5426

Sara Starling, Wedding Director

256-452-5091 (cell)

256-235-0721 (home)