

**Vestavia Hills  
United Methodist Church**

# Wedding Policy



2061 KENTUCKY AVENUE, VESTAVIA, AL 35216



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# Weddings at Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church

We at VHUMC are happy that you are having your wedding here. The church is the most appropriate place for the marriage of Christians. It is a fitting place for taking the vows of "those whom God hath joined together."

A church wedding is a service of worship and consecration. A religious ceremony. The policies that follow are in keeping with our desire to make this a memorable experience of Christian worship. I invite you to read them carefully.

Members in good standing of the church and their immediate families will be given priority use of the church. Church members should have been members at least one year prior to requesting a date for the wedding.

Non-member grandchildren of current members may have the privilege of scheduling their wedding at VHUMC outside the three-month non-member window, however, non-member fees will apply.

Non-members may not schedule weddings prior to three months before the requested wedding date.

The wedding ceremony will be a United Methodist ceremony from the Book of Worship. A VHUMC staff minister selected by the senior pastor will officiate at all ceremonies.

If you would like a guest minister of another denomination or United Methodist minister who

is not currently on the staff of VHUMC to assist in the wedding, you must secure the approval of the Senior Pastor to make your request. Our pastor will decide if this is possible and, if approved, will issue the appropriate written invitation to the visiting minister.

Due to limited staff and facilities, we can allow only one wedding per weekend.

VHUMC requires pre-marital counseling sessions with the bride and groom. These sessions must be scheduled by contacting the VHUMC pastor in charge of the service.

**Please contact the pastor as soon as possible for scheduling.**

Weddings on Saturday may not be scheduled any later than 6:00 p.m.

**The VHUMC pastor, wedding director and organist must be notified of rehearsal and wedding time changes. Please send a copy of the rehearsal and wedding invitations for our files.** The Minister, Wedding Director, and the Organist are all here to assist you in planning a service that is both fitting and expressive of the deep significance of this occasion. They will be responsive to your questions, will listen carefully to your wishes, and guide you to ensure that your plans are in keeping with the nature of the service and policies of the church. Our prayer is that God will bless your marriage and grant you fulfillment in it.

**Dates and Times Excluded:** No formal weddings may be scheduled during Holy Week, Charge Conference, Annual Conference meeting weekend, Vacation Bible Camp weekend or on staff holidays or holiday weekends as set by the Pastor Parish Relations Committee (New Year's Eve/Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Palm Sunday weekend, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the Day after Christmas).

# Church Information



**Church Website:** [vhumc.org](http://vhumc.org)

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**Church Office Phone:** (205) 822 – 9631

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**Church Office Hours:** Monday through Thursday,  
8:00a.m. until 5:00p.m.  
Closed on Fridays

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**Ministers:** Bill Brunson – *Senior Pastor*  
Kipp McClurg – *Executive Pastor*  
Kelly Bottcher  
Sherry Harris  
John Sweeney  
Butch Williams

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**Director of Music Ministries:** Quint Harris

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**Assist. Dir. of Music Ministries  
and church Organist / Pianist:** Karen Krekelberg  
[kkrekleberg@vhumc.org](mailto:kkrekleberg@vhumc.org)

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**Wedding Directors:** Alison McCall  
[amccall@vhumc.org](mailto:amccall@vhumc.org)  
Nancy Mosley  
[nancy@lamlighthousefitness.com](mailto:nancy@lamlighthousefitness.com)

# Wedding Checklist

**This list is provided for your convenience to assist in planning your wedding:**

- Please read this entire guide before submitting a Wedding Request Form, which will signify your understanding of the church policies.
- Upon receipt of the request, deposit, and approval by a pastor, the wedding date will be put on the calendar. (See policies for non- member dates)
- Make an appointment with the pastor for premarital counseling as soon as possible before the wedding.
- A Wedding Director will be assigned to you. She will contact you to arrange a time to make plans for an orientation session.
- Contact the church organist / pianist [kkreckelberg@vhumc.org](mailto:kkreckelberg@vhumc.org) to plan for music.
- Make arrangements with your Florist and Photographer / Videographer ensuring that they understand church policies and sign and return the policies to the Wedding Director.

- All fees should be paid one month prior to the wedding. You may make a payment anytime online.
- Instruct all members of the wedding party to be on time for the rehearsal and make sure they understand and agree to follow the church policies.

**YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES** are to schedule counseling with the minister, contact the organist, request any instrumentalists, vocalists, the florist, photographer, videographer, and caterer. Members of the church staff are here to assist you in understanding the policies and procedures as you plan for your wedding. In requesting the use of VHUMC's facilities, you agree to accept and comply with the policies which follow. Remember that photographers, caterers, florists, videographers, etc., are guests of the Church for your wedding and will be expected to follow all church policies.

# Scheduling & Times

Please contact Alison McCall for the scheduling and coordination of all church facilities for weddings. She will consult with you about dates, facilities, and policies. For members, the date is confirmed when the Wedding Request Form is submitted and approved by a Pastor, and deposits are paid. "Members" are defined as church members and their immediate families who have been members at least one year. "Non-members" are persons who have been members of VHUMC for less than one year and other persons who are not current members of the congregation of VHUMC. Non-member grandchildren of members of VHUMC may schedule weddings outside the regular three-month window, however, they will pay non-member fees.

For non-members, an application cannot be accepted until three months before the date requested for use of the Large Sanctuary or Chapel. If cost of damage exceeds deposit amount, bride/groom agrees to pay for total amount of damage.

No non-member wedding can be scheduled during the Advent/Christmas or Lent season. Weddings will not be scheduled during Holy Week (beginning with Saturday before Palm Sunday), Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Thanksgiving weekend, other major holidays such as Memorial Day or Labor Day, or during other key events marked out on the church calendar.

The rehearsal should take no more than an hour. It is important that all members of the wedding party be present and on time. Musicians should practice prior to the rehearsal.



# Facilities

## WEDDING CEREMONY:

The sanctuary seats 1,000. Chapel seats 125. Each of these locations is appropriate for a wedding.

- No appointments, furnishings or equipment may be rearranged or removed from the church. Any seasonal decorations in the sanctuary (banners, Christmas Tree, wreaths, etc.) may not be changed or removed. White paraments are used for weddings.
- Weddings on Saturday may not be scheduled any later than 6:00 pm.
- No Alcoholic beverages or drugs are allowed anywhere on church property. Smoking is not permitted on the church premises.
- Only silk flower petals may be thrown during the service inside the building (example: flower girl). No helium balloons may be brought in or through the sanctuary by guests or those decorating. No sparklers may be used at the church. No candles may be attached or used on the pews in any way and no candles may be carried by members of the wedding party.
- Specific guidelines for florists are found as a part of this packet. You are asked to ensure that your florist understands, signs a copy of the policy, and follows these instructions. Keys cannot be furnished to florists or caterers. Access can be arranged through the wedding director.
- A building custodian will be assigned to the wedding for set-up and cleaning the facilities for Sunday (see fee schedule).
- Nursery Services are not available.

## BRIDAL PARTY ROOMS:

The bride, groom, and attendants may dress at the church if they wish, but the church cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. The Bride's Room is located off the Narthex near the Sanctuary. The Groom will be assigned a room for use the day of the wedding, usually the Parlor. We do not store wedding dresses, bridesmaids or groom's clothing at the church.

Many bridal parties like to have refreshments available the day of the wedding.

A minister of Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church will officiate at the wedding ceremony. The Senior Pastor will assign a staff pastor to officiate based on schedule and availability. Wedding ceremonies will be United Methodist ceremonies and the Service of Christian Marriage from the United Methodist Book of Worship will be used. There will be no exceptions.

Only ministers currently serving on the VHUMC staff can officiate weddings at VHUMC. If you would like a guest minister to assist in the wedding, you must secure the approval of the Senior Pastor (see General Guidelines). Upon approval, the Senior Pastor will issue the invitation.

Non-United Methodist guest pastors may assist in the ceremony by the invitation of the VHUMC minister, however the VHUMC minister will conduct the major parts of the ceremony and will have final approval on all parts of the service, including vows, scripture and homily.

The Parlor may be reserved for this purpose. Refreshments may not be taken into the Sanctuary, Chapel, Bride's Room, or Choir Suite.

**RECEPTION:**

For an additional cost, you may choose to schedule a reception in our fellowship hall. The Fellowship Hall seats approximately 350, depending on set-up. Note: Fellowship Hall may not be available if previously booked with another event.

Catering is available for receptions in the Parlor and Fellowship Hall. Outside

contractors are permitted but must be approved, and may use the Parlor kitchen only. No one other than VHUMC kitchen staff may use the commercial kitchen in the Fellowship Hall because of health regulations. Please contact the Wedding Director for prices and quotes.

Wedding receptions in the Church Parlor or the Fellowship Hall must end by 9 p.m. to allow time to clean and set-up the rooms for use on Sunday. Parking lots must be vacated by 9:30 p.m. to avoid disturbing our neighbors.



# Role of the Minister

A minister of Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church will officiate at the wedding ceremony. The Senior Pastor will assign a staff pastor to officiate based on schedule and availability. Wedding ceremonies will be United Methodist ceremonies and the Service of Christian Marriage from the United Methodist Book of Worship will be used. There will be no exceptions.

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Pre-marital conferences are ordinarily scheduled between the VHUMC minister who will officiate at the service or a designated counselor. These conferences will enable the minister to discuss the nature of Christian marriage, explore the marriage expectations of the couple and examine the wedding service. The bride and/or groom must contact the minister to schedule counseling sessions.

The honorarium (\$300-750 suggested amount) is to be handled between the groom (or his best man) and the minister(s). This should be a separate check.

In the event of an out-of-town wedding, the wedding party will reimburse the pastor performing the wedding for customary expenses (travel, lodging and meals).



# Wedding Director

One of the church's Wedding Directors is assigned for all weddings at VHUMC. Our directors are fully trained and experienced in all the components of planning and directing your wedding. She will be a wonderful resource for you and will relieve you of any need for worry on the day of your wedding. The Director will call you to make an initial appointment. The Wedding Director serves as your advisor on Church resources and Church policies regarding florists, caterers, photographers, and any others who have a role to play in your wedding.

The Director will be present at the rehearsal to place the wedding party, direct the

processional, and assist the bride in the amenities of the service. On the day of the wedding, she will be responsible for seeing that the Sanctuary is in proper order, for directing ushers in receiving and seating guests, and for directing the processional and recessional. If there is a reception at the church, she will remain on site during the reception. Her function is to ensure that your wedding service will flow smoothly according to your wishes and the church policies. We realize that many brides hire their own wedding planners, directors, or consultants. However, at the rehearsal and on the day of the wedding, VHUMC's wedding directors will take the lead.

If at any time there is a need to see the sanctuary in addition to the initial meeting of the Bride and Wedding Director, these appointments must be set with the Director. The main office for the church is not responsible for these appointments. The Director will check with the church office to set these on the calendar and make sure there are not conflicts for the time being requested.

# Wedding Music

Music is an effective part of the wedding ceremony. It creates an atmosphere of reverence as the guests arrive and contributes to the worship experience for participants.

The selection of music must be appropriate to a service of worship. The wedding ceremony is a sacred service as well as an act of corporate worship. Therefore, only music which conforms to standards of dignity and is theologically appropriate may be used.

Organ music is recommended for the wedding ceremony, although instrumental solos using harp, trumpet, violin, or flute are acceptable. Vocalists may be used at appropriate times in the ceremony.

Secular and popular music is not permitted, nor is any type of pre-recorded or taped music allowed in the wedding service.

The Faith We Sing, the supplement to The United Methodist Hymnal, includes music conducive to contemporary ceremonies in the Sanctuary.

A church organ is a highly complex musical instrument designed for a specific church installation. If you wish to use an organist in the Sanctuary, the church organist will be happy to assist you. The organist will also assist you in selecting music and will be available to direct the vocalists and musicians at your rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

If you choose not to use an organist or pianist, all music selections in the wedding ceremony, including soloist music, must be approved by the VHUMC Director of Music in conjunction with the senior pastor. Please call the church office to discuss your music selections with the director no less than six weeks prior to the ceremony. Please do not print your programs before music selections have been approved.

Financial arrangements with the organist, pianist and contracted vocalists and musicians are the responsibility of the wedding party. The fee for the organist (or pianist) is included in "Facilities and Fees" and must be paid to VHUMC with your other fees one month prior to the ceremony.

**NOTE:** The piano may not be moved for any reason. If additional musicians such as string quartets are used, they must be located in the Choir Loft.

# Floral & Decorating Policies

The following policies have been found to be practical and useful. They are given for your guidance to assure that the church and its furnishings will not be defaced or damaged and that the church can be easily prepared for the next function or service. Candles and greenery used during the wedding ceremony are more than decorations. They are Christian symbols.

## **The church is available for decorating at 9 a.m. on the day of the wedding.**

Access from the pews to the aisles must remain open.

The pulpits and piano may not be moved under any circumstances.

No flowers or decorations of any sort may be hung from or placed on the wooden half wall behind the altar or on the railing of the choir loft. Decorations or flowers may not be attached to exterior walls or doors.

Candles must be drip-less or oil-burning. Suitable material (non-flammable) must be used to protect floors and carpets from candle drippings even if drip-less candles are used.

Pews may be marked with flowers, bows or ribbons tied to the pews. Absolutely no tacks, nails, screws, fasteners, or tape other than masking tape can be used on the furniture or elsewhere in the church.

The Altar Table is to remain in the chancel area and cannot be obscured. Due to limited space in front of the altar, flowers may not project forward from the face of the altar in a manner which may possibly obstruct or interfere with the positioning of the officiating clergy, Bride and Groom, or Wedding Party. If you are unsure, or have any questions about floral policies, please contact the Wedding Director.

You must use your own flower containers. Papier-Mache containers are not acceptable. Liners must be used in all containers and adhesive tape should be attached to the liners, not to the containers. No water should be put into containers. Drop cloths must be used to protect the carpet while arranging flowers. Leak-proof buckets for all your arrangement material are to be kept on the drop cloths.

Live rose petals may not be thrown in the church. Only silk petals may be used, and they must be completely removed after the service.

Placing flowers, ferns, candles, or anything decorative on the piano is strictly prohibited. Decorations may not be placed near or on the organ console. Greenery on stands in the choir loft may not be watered.

A unity candle is available for use with prior arrangement made through the wedding coordinator.

Seasonal decorations such as the Christmas tree, the Advent wreath, poinsettias, and Easter lilies may not be removed.

It is the responsibility of the florist to remove any debris from the decorations prior to or after the wedding.

No tacks, nails, screws, tape or other fasteners may be used that might deface, permanently mar or damage any part of the church building or furnishings. Tape may not be used on the pews to secure pew bows/ decorations. Aisle cloths may not be used. Floral arrangements and greenery may not block doors; carpets must be protected from soiling by flowers or greenery. No dragging of items to be used for floral arrangements, etc. on the carpet or flooring. Please be sure you have adequate carts to move your items.

All decorations, ferns, or other materials (inside and outside) that you bring in, must be removed immediately after the wedding.

The wedding flowers are to be left on the altar for Sunday worship for use at VHUMC's discretion. Wording for the Sunday bulletin is approved by Nancy Remke.

Non-conformity or unwillingness to abide by these policies will necessitate a conference between the bride, the florist and the VHUMC wedding director.

Although the florist is hired and paid by the wedding party, he/she is subject to the direction of the Pastor and/or the VHUMC Wedding Director in the event such direction is necessary.

**NOTE:** All decorations, candle holders, ferns or other material you bring in must be removed immediately after the wedding. Anything you move must be put back exactly as you found it.

*The florist must agree to abide by all VHUMC floral decorating policies by reading and submitting the release.*

# Photographer & Videographer Policies

It is the bride's responsibility to notify friends and relatives attending the wedding that no photography/videography is allowed during the service. This is a distraction to the minister and wedding party.

Posed pictures may be taken before and after the service. It is recommended that as many pictures as possible be taken prior to the wedding ceremony or at the conclusion of the service after the congregation has been dismissed. The church building will be available for pictures three (3) hours before the wedding.

All professional photography during the ceremony must be made without flash or floodlights. Professional photographs during a service are only permitted from the balcony of the Sanctuary or from the rear of the Chapel adjacent to the sound system console. There should be no photography from the aisle during the ceremony. No external lights on video equipment may be used during the ceremony.

Videotaping of the service is only permitted from the balcony of the Sanctuary or from the rear of the Chapel adjacent to the sound system console. No external lights on video equipment may be used during the service. No video sound equipment of any kind can be used, including lapel microphones, recorders or stand microphones. There will be NO EXCEPTIONS.

Any pictures of members of the group leaving the ceremony may be taken in the narthex after the congregation has been dismissed. All pictures must be completed within one (1) hour after the completion of the service.

Absolutely no tacks, nails, screws, fasteners, duct tape or scotch tape can be used on the furniture, walls, pews, carpeting or elsewhere in the church. Masking tape is permissible.

It is the wedding party's responsibility to ensure that the photographer and/or videographer understands and abides by these policies. Non-conformity or unwillingness to abide by these policies will necessitate a conference between the bride, the florist and the VHUMC wedding director.

Although the photographer/videographer is hired and paid by the wedding party, he/she is subject to the direction of the Pastor and/or the VHUMC Wedding Director in the event such direction is necessary.

The Wedding Director is not available for assisting photographers.

Financial arrangements with the photographer / videographer are the responsibility of the wedding party. If you choose to hire VHUMC's videographer, the fee will be included in "Facilities and Fees" and must be paid to VHUMC with your other fees one month prior to the ceremony.

*The photographer / videographer must agree to abide by all VHUMC floral decorating policies by reading and submitting the release.*



# Wedding Fees

A non-refundable deposit of \$200 will reserve the facilities and date. This \$200 will be applied towards the balance. A refundable damage deposit of \$250 is payable to the church when application is turned in. **Because of the demand for our facilities, any cancellation will forfeit the reservation deposit.**

There are no fees for the use of church facilities by VHUMC members\* or children of members. All fees are for the services of those who will be assisting you in making your wedding a memorable occasion. All fees are due one month before your wedding and can be paid online. \*Applicants must be members of VHUMC prior to date of application. All Fees are payable one month prior to wedding.

## FACILITIES:

	Member:	Non-Member:
Sanctuary	0	\$1,500
Chapel	0	\$1,000
Parlor (pre wedding only)	\$50	\$100
Parlor (pre wedding & reception)	\$100	\$200
Fellowship Hall Reception	\$500	\$1,000

## CUSTODIAL CHARGES:

	Member:	Non-Member:
Sanctuary	\$300	\$400
Chapel	\$150	\$250
Parlor (pre wedding only)	\$100	\$200
Parlor (pre wedding & reception)	\$200	\$300
Fellowship Hall Reception*	\$500	\$600

\*Includes 2 Custodians

## SERVICES:

	Member:	Non-Member:
Wedding Director**	\$500	\$600
Organist/Pianist	\$350	\$400
Audio Engineer	\$225	\$250
Videographer (Optional)	\$550	\$650
Minister (Suggested Honorarium)	\$300-750	\$350-750

\*\*Includes necessary planning time, rehearsal, and wedding day.



**2061 KENTUCKY AVENUE, VESTAVIA, AL 35216**





**VESTAVIA HILLS**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH