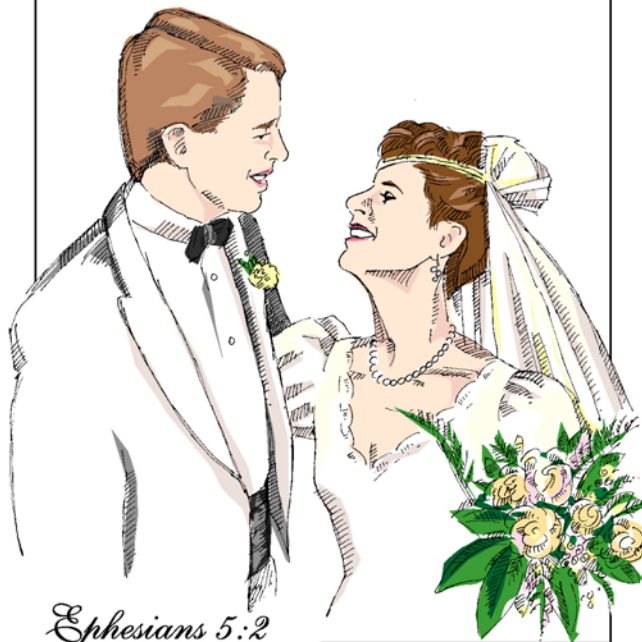




Asbury United Methodist Church
980 Hughes Road
Madison, AL 35758

*...live in love,
as Christ
loved us...*



Ephesians 5:2

The Wedding Booklet

For Non-Member Families

We, at Asbury United Methodist Church are delighted to share with you in the joyous occasion of your wedding. It is our desire to help make this time in your life beautiful and sacred. Your choice to be married at Asbury creates a special significance for your marriage. As Christians, we believe that marriage is an institution ordained by God. The wedding ceremony is an act of worship which: honors the Lord Jesus Christ, witnesses with integrity the unique character of Christian marriage, and is personally meaningful for the couple being united.

Asbury wishes to extend every courtesy to those who desire to use its facilities for weddings. Because careful planning will help make the wedding event most meaningful, we offer this policy manual for your assistance. In addition, these policies serve to guard the integrity of Asbury as we make the church available. Accordingly, the following requirements and procedures have been adopted by the church and are to be followed by all wedding parties at Asbury. These policies take precedence over all other wedding protocol. If there are questions about wedding protocol not covered here, we recommend the “Wedding Etiquette” book by Peggy Post, which is available for reference in our office.

Asbury United Methodist Church is available to church members, children of church members, and others interested in using our facility for a wedding. For purposes of this policy, a church member is defined as someone who has been a member of Asbury for at least six months at the time of scheduling the wedding. The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2004, paragraphs 340 and 341, governs who may be married at Asbury UMC. The United Methodist Book of Worship provides guidelines on the conduct of the Christian Marriage Service.

SETTING THE DATE AND TIME OF YOUR WEDDING

Careful planning is necessary for all weddings. You will want to plan as early as possible so that the use of the church facilities can be arranged without conflict.

To set your wedding date, please contact the Church Secretary during office hours (Monday-Friday, 8am-4:30pm). The Church Secretary will provide you with available dates. Once you have chosen a date, you should contact the Church Secretary to receive initial instructions and documentation. Return the completed reservation form (and facilities fees and policy deposit for non-members) to the Church Secretary. You will be contacted by Asbury’s Wedding Coordinator within one week, and a meeting with the Wedding Coordinator, Church Administrator or representative, and you will be scheduled within two weeks. The requested Asbury facilities will be officially reserved once the meeting has been conducted. You will receive written confirmation following the meeting. Confirmations in writing serve as proof of reservation. Any changes to the reservation (date, time, room, etc.) must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator and the Scheduler, and written proof must be obtained. Reservations are for the use of the Sanctuary, Hospitality Area, basement of the Faith building, Hope Chapel, and Fellowship Hall (Asbury members) only. The use of any other part of the church building must be arranged with the Scheduler.

Weddings of persons who are not Asbury members may be scheduled not earlier than 6 months in advance. While initial arrangements will be made through the Scheduler, about two months before the wedding you must meet with the Asbury Pastor who is officiating at your wedding. If you plan to have a pastor from another church conduct your wedding, the Asbury Senior Pastor must approve your selection of a pastor.

The Church Secretary will arrange appointments with the appropriate Asbury Pastor. The Church Secretary will schedule the officiating Pastor for the wedding. The pastor or the Wedding Coordinator may officiate at the rehearsal.

The Bride is responsible for the reservation of the church and for maintenance of the rules and policies under which the church may be used. The bride and groom are also required to convey all applicable rules and policies to their florist, photographer, videographer, caterer, and any other individual or organization retained to participate in the ceremony. Rules for these individuals/firms are included in this document. The Bride must attest to their willingness to comply and provide for the security deposits.

We sincerely believe these policies to be the most suitable and practical for all concerned. Please read them fully and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the church office for clarification. When both the bride and groom have read this policy brochure and agree to abide by it, please sign the enclosed agreement and return it to the church.

WEDDING COORDINATORS

Upon confirmation of the reservation, an Asbury Wedding Coordinator will work with you to satisfy your wishes within the church's guidelines and will be available to assist you with your planning, rehearsal, and wedding day ceremony to ensure that all runs smoothly. The Wedding Coordinator will assist with any necessary arrangements relative to Asbury facilities and support personnel. The Church Administrator maintains a list of approved Wedding Coordinators.

If you have a "by name" request for one of the wedding coordinators, the Chairman of the Wedding Coordinators will attempt to arrange that assignment. Only trained, official Asbury Coordinators will supervise Asbury weddings. If you wish to use someone other than an Asbury Coordinator, you will be required to have the oversight of an Asbury Coordinator throughout the event. This will ensure that all Asbury guidelines are followed.

A list of the Asbury Wedding Coordinator's responsibilities is included.

The Wedding Coordinator and the Bride must stay in close contact as the wedding date approaches. The Wedding Coordinator and the Bride must coordinate achievement of each milestone leading to the wedding. The bride will be provided a booklet of policies and prices appropriate to her wedding plan.

ASBURY FACILITIES AND ASSETS

Sanctuary Wedding

The sanctuary seats 750 people. There are 21 pews in the center section of the sanctuary and 22 pews on the left and right sides.

The church has a grand piano and an electronic organ. There is a sound system in the sanctuary.

The church has the following items, which can be used for a wedding (Numbers are approximate, check with your wedding coordinator): 8 Candelabra, 4 wooden flower stands, 2 brass flower stands, and one kneeling bench.

The Bride and her party may dress in the Hospitality Area, which is between the Sanctuary and the Hope building. This reception area can be isolated into a large room using sliding wall panels. That room has a “half-bath” and a small kitchenette (refrigerator, sink, countertop). That kitchen may be used only on the day of the wedding. The Groom and his party may dress on the lower level of the Faith Building in room F-001, under the Sanctuary. There are bathrooms at that location.

All chancel furniture shall remain in place. The baptismal font may be moved to the upper or lower level. The use of the American and Christian flags is optional. The candles on the altar table may not be removed, rearranged, or borrowed. The altar candles must be lighted during the wedding. The cross may be removed if necessary. The collection plates may be removed from the chancel but must be returned after the wedding. The church (Wedding Coordinator) will change the Sanctuary to white paraments for the wedding service.

Hope Chapel Wedding

The Hope Chapel, on the second floor of the Hope Building, will seat 50 people. That room has a piano. The Bride and Groom may dress in reserved rooms on the second floor of the Hope Building.

***Asbury will not provide facilities for receptions following non-member weddings.**

Magnetically Locked Doors

The church has doors that are locked and unlocked magnetically. The Bride will provide to the Wedding Coordinator, 7 days before the wedding, the schedule for the rehearsal, florist access, etc so that the computer system can be set accordingly. As a guideline the Bride’s schedule should provide for the church to be open one hour before and after the rehearsal, two hours before the wedding, and one hour after the wedding. The Wedding Coordinator will provide the schedule to the Facilities Manager for computer implementation.

WEDDING MUSIC

It is important to keep in mind that a church wedding is a worship service, and the music should be in keeping with the reverence that is observed upon entering the House of the Lord. Secular music is discouraged as part of the wedding service. Only music which conforms to standards of dignity and is theologically appropriate should be used. The text to be sung is a very important consideration. Songs, including lyrics, must be submitted to the Wedding Coordinator no later than one month prior to the wedding. The Music Director will have the final say in approval or disapproval of your selection(s). Asbury does not negotiate for musicians on your behalf. However, should you need suggestions on musicians, please contact the Music Director. Any musicians playing an instrument that is the property of Asbury music must be approved by the Music Director.

The couple may elect to arrange for a soloist, or the Director of Music may assist in arranging one. When there is to be a soloist, it will be the responsibility of the bride to see that the soloist contacts the organist and arranges for practice, etc.

USE OF SOUND EQUIPMENT

The Sanctuary of Asbury has an integral sound system that will be able to accommodate most applications of your wedding music and sound reinforcement. An Asbury Sound Technician must operate the sound system for your wedding. The bride must coordinate an agenda of the wedding service with the sound technician not later than one month before the wedding.

RICE AND CONFETTI

For ecological and safety reasons, rice and confetti are NOT allowed either inside or outside the facilities. Silk flower petals may be used both inside and outside the church, but arrangements must be made to clean them up following the wedding. Birdseed may be used OUTSIDE the facilities. You may also use bubbles outside the facility.

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

No alcoholic beverages of any kind are allowed in the facilities of Asbury or on the premises. In addition, smoking or use of any tobacco products is not allowed inside any of the church facilities. The persons engaging the church must convey the alcohol and tobacco policy to all persons participating in the wedding. **If this policy is not followed, your policy deposit will not be refunded.**

DAMAGES

It is the responsibility of the persons engaging the church for the wedding ceremony to repair any damages done by the florist, photographers, caterers, or others connected with the wedding. Any damage to the facility should be reported to the Wedding Coordinator immediately. The Coordinator will provide additional guidance as necessary.

POLICY DEPOSIT

A \$500 policy deposit will be required before non-member weddings. The Policy Deposit will be refunded if all policies and procedures have been followed exactly. The Wedding Coordinator will administer this deposit.

SECURITY

The wedding party must be attentive to the security of valuables at all times in the church. All personal clothing and other items must be removed from the church immediately following the wedding. Asbury assumes no responsibility for clothing, jewelry, money, or other items placed or left at the church at any time.

TIMELINESS

It is extremely important that the exact time indicated for the rehearsals and wedding be observed, and care should be taken to have all members of the wedding party in their places at the time indicated. Should scheduled start/end times for events be overrun by more than one hour, the Damage Deposit may be taxed an additional fee of \$20/hr. This also includes removing the flowers and decorations after the service.

WEDDING FEES

Weddings	Non-Members	Pay to
Damage deposit	\$500	Church
Sanctuary (cleaning, etc)**	\$500	Church
Hope Chapel**	\$100	Church
Soloist (if engaged by Asbury)	Individual's price	Individual
Wedding Coordinator (Sanctuary)	\$200	Individual
Wedding Coordinator (Hope Chapel)	\$150	Individual
Sound Technician	\$75	Individual
Asbury Organist (includes rehearsal)	\$200	Individual
Asbury Pianist	\$150	Individual
Pastor*	*	*

Miscellaneous		
Candles/ Candelabras	\$50	Church

*It is traditional that the Groom or Best Man remunerates the pastor. An honorarium of approximately \$200 is suggested. The check should be given to the Pastor prior to the ceremony.

**The wedding party is required to use the church custodian. If Table Cloths are used, cleaning fee is \$18/cloth in addition to Custodial Service above.

***The sound technician will insure that the system and microphones are working properly throughout the event.

PAYMENT OF FEES

- Facility fees (Sanctuary, etc.) and policy deposit must be paid by non-members at the time the reservation is submitted. Checks should be payable to Asbury United Methodist Church.
- Notification of cancellation, if necessary, should be made in writing to the church office. Facility fees will NOT be returned if the ceremony is canceled within seven (7) days of the scheduled ceremony. For all other cancellations ASBURY will return deposited fees not sooner than 14 days from receipt of written notice of cancellation; additionally, Asbury will retain \$75 of the deposited fees to offset administrative costs.

- The Wedding Coordinator must receive all other fees (Wedding Coordinator, organist, custodian, sound technician, etc.) no later than the rehearsal. Individual checks to each of those listed above should be made out to the person. The Wedding Coordinator will provide the names, etc.
- It is understood that Asbury is in no way responsible for any legal obligations that may arise from the hiring of the outside individuals or businesses.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

Those decorating the church must abide by the following practices:

- No decorations may be tacked, taped, glued, stapled, pinned, clamped, or wired to the walls, doors, ceiling, floors, woodwork, or furniture of any church facility.
- No furniture or furnishings (e.g. hymnals) of any type, including musical instruments and choir chairs, may be removed.
- No decorations of any kind will be affixed to the altar rail.
- Only metal-encased dripless candles may be used for weddings, excluding the unity candle.
- Candles and candelabra may be placed only in the chancel and chair areas. This means, among other things, that no candles or hurricane lamps, etc. are allowed on pews. To mark the pews, bows or ribbons may be tied to each. (No taping, stapling etc.)
- All floral decorations must be removed promptly following the ceremony unless the wedding party has made arrangements through the Wedding Coordinator to leave the flowers for Sunday church services. Flowers left for the Sunday services will only be those that are contained in vases, are appropriate for display on the Chancel or in the back of the Sanctuary, and are approved by the Music Director.
- When weddings are scheduled during major festivals of faith (Christmas, Easter, etc.) a number of church decorations may be in place. These are not to be altered or removed unless approved by the Wedding Coordinator and the Music Director. After the wedding any decorations moved will be replaced.
- All facilities must be left “broom clean” after removal of flowers, candles, etc.
- Only the church personnel in charge will turn on air conditioning or heating. The systems are computer controlled and will be set to activate four hours before any scheduled event.
- Florists and their employees must refrain from the use of irreverent language, discourteous actions, and smoking inside the building.

Before the rehearsal, the Wedding Coordinator will review the plan for the Bride’s party to accomplish set-up and removal of decorations, to include candelabra and candles. All decorations furnished by the bride must be removed from the church buildings within one hour after completion of the wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS

Photographers and Videographers must abide by the rules and procedures outlined below:

- Because of the sacred nature of the wedding, flash pictures may only be taken during the processional and recessional and not during the ceremony. Existing light photographs may be taken at any time.
- Photographers may take existing light photos during the ceremony only from the back of the sanctuary.
- Photographers are not allowed to stand on pews or other church furniture.
- Video cameras may only be used from fixed locations, approved by the coordinator. The ceremony must be recorded using only available light, without auxiliary lighting sources.
- The Wedding Coordinator can provide you with the name of the sound technician assigned to the wedding. Only an Asbury sound technician may operate the sound and recording system.

NURSERY

The Asbury nursery (with Asbury Nursery workers) can be made available for care of young children during weddings. Prior arrangements must be made no later than one month before the wedding. An approximate number of children to be attended should be furnished to the Wedding Coordinator and she will provide that to the Nursery Coordinator. Nursery fees will be in addition to other fees listed in this document.

Date Received in Church Office _____

**Asbury United Methodist Church
Reservation of Church
Non-Asbury Member**

The reservation form (and non-member fees, as applicable) must be returned to the church for approval before the date can be reserved.

Bride's Name _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____

Groom's Name _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

Phone: Home _____ Work _____

Reservation of Asbury United Methodist Church is requested on the following dates and times:

Rehearsal Date _____ Time _____

Wedding Date _____ Time _____

Asbury Clergy to officiate _____

**All requests for non-Asbury clergy must be approved by Asbury's Senior Pastor.*

Room requested: Sanctuary _____ Hope Chapel _____

Will the flowers remain for Sunday's services? _____

**If yes, the Wedding Coordinator will coordinate with the Director of Music.*

Wedding Coordinator Responsibilities
Asbury United Methodist Church
980 Hughes Road
Madison, Alabama 35758

The purpose of having the Wedding Coordinator at Asbury United Methodist Church is to both assist the bride and groom in planning a meaningful Christian wedding and to serve as the representative of this church, following established church guidelines. This is an important role in helping guard the facility and equipment against undue wear or damage. The Wedding Coordinator will also act as the assistant to the minister during preparations and the ceremony of the wedding. If the bride and groom choose to provide their own Wedding Director, that Director must still have an Asbury Wedding Coordinator to work with them to assure proper use of the facility.

Each year the Church will evaluate the number of Coordinators, selecting additional ones as warranted. A training session will be conducted for the new Coordinators. This training session, also to be attended by all current Coordinators, will be used as a forum to discuss issues of common interest and to work out any necessary changes to the Asbury United Methodist Church wedding policies. As necessary, the Pastor and other staff members will participate in this training.

When a properly completed Reservation Form is received in the Church Office, the Scheduler is responsible for posting the wedding and rehearsal on the Church calendar. These dates cannot under any circumstances be reserved without a completed Reservation Form and timely payment of any required fees.

The Coordinator will keep the receipt and disbursement of all money received. The Wedding Coordinator and Church Administrator will work in close coordination. Copies of the current Wedding Policies of Asbury United Methodist Church will be provided to each Wedding Coordinator and will always be available in the Church Office.

The Wedding Coordinator is authorized to approve or refuse any request/issue not specifically addressed in this policy.

PRIOR TO THE WEDDING

The Wedding Coordinator represents Asbury United Methodist Church and is expected to uphold all that is good in the Christian Faith: Patience, Love, and Understanding. The Wedding Coordinator coordinates the wedding party's wishes in accordance with the church guidelines for weddings and is responsible for safeguarding the facility against any undue wear or damage.

Contact the bride within one week of being notified by the Scheduler that a Reservation Form has been received, appropriate fees have been paid, and the event has been scheduled on the church calendar. The chairman of the wedding coordinators contacts the bride to see if she has a preference for a coordinator. If the bride has no preference, then the chairman will inform her that a coordinator will be contacting her soon. The chairman then contacts the wedding coordinators and checks with them for availability. If all the coordinators are available for the wedding date, the coordinators will be assigned on a rotational basis.

The selected Wedding Coordinator will schedule a meeting with the Bride. At that meeting she will explain what facilities are available and help the bride plan for their use. The Coordinator will also provide numbers/information to contact the organist, etc. Other items to be discussed include: time of rehearsal, time of wedding, time pictures will start, time the bride will need to get in the church, time the florist will want to deliver flowers, ceremony music approval, ceremony/wedding party details including names/number of bridesmaids, number of groomsmen, maid or matron of honor, best man, ring bearer, flower girl.

Find out how she wants the wedding party to enter and where she wants each one to stand.

Make sure that the Director of Music has approved the music chosen for the wedding ceremony.

Arrange for a sound technician from the authorized list, if a technician is required. The Coordinator will arrange with the Facilities Manager for cleaning.

If flowers from the ceremony are to be left for use the following Sunday, notify the person in charge of flowers so that they can be allocated for Sunday use. Be certain a note is given to the church secretary for the Sunday bulletin.

HOPE CHAPEL WEDDINGS

The Wedding coordinator's duties in regard to weddings in the Hope Chapel are the same as those for the sanctuary.

THE REHEARSAL

- Insure computer is updated with the unlock schedule.
- Be present to help with the rehearsal.
- Assist the bridal party with timing of attendants walking down the aisle, the placement of attendants in the Sanctuary, and any other aspects of the ceremony.
 - The groom's grandparents are to be seated on the hour on the right side. They may be seated on the second pew or the first with the groom's mother (bride's decision).
 - Bride's grandparents are seated on the left side. Seat them on the second pew or they can be on the first with the bride's mother (bride's decision).
 - Typically all guests are seated in the middle section of pews unless a capacity crowd is expected.

- The groom's mother is seated on the right side of the front pew (middle section).
- The bride's mother is seated on the left side of the front pew (middle section).
- Do not escort any guests in after the bride's mother has been seated. If anyone comes in, they should be unescorted and seated in the back.
- If the parents light the unity candle, they should do this when they are escorted in. The groom's parents light the candle on the right side and the bride's parents light the candle on the left.
- The groom, best man, and minister enter using the doors to the right of the altar.
- NO GUM!!!
- The first groomsman enters down the right aisle followed by the rest of the groomsmen (one at a time). The first groomsman takes the position to the far right.
- The first bridesmaid goes down the left aisle followed by the rest of the bridesmaids (one at a time).
- The next bridesmaid enters when the first one gets to the fourth or fifth pew from the front.
- Decide at the rehearsal how the groomsmen will stand – hands in front or in back.
- The maid or matron of honor enters as the last bridesmaid.
- The ring bearer goes next and usually stands with the groomsmen.
- The flower girl is the last one to enter before the bride. She cannot use real petals- only silk.
- Bride and her father wait out in hall until it is time for them to enter.
- Bride is on father's LEFT arm. (Everyone else is always escorted on the groomsmen's RIGHT arm).
- Make sure the bride's train is in place before she goes down the aisle.
- After the wedding party is out, the bride's mother is escorted out first followed by the father.
- The groom's mother is escorted out after the bride's mother.

- Bride's grandparents are escorted out followed by the groom's grandparents.
 - If pictures are made after the wedding, have the entire wedding party go down the steps, under the sanctuary and back up so the pictures can start immediately.
 - Grandparents may wait in the back if they do not want to go down and up again.
 - Assist photographer getting everyone back to the front to make pictures.
 - Pin corsages and boutonnieres before pictures. Always make sure they are pinned on the LEFT side. Make sure all girls have their flowers before pictures.
 - Nothing is to be placed on kneeling rail.
 - The two candles on the altar table are to always be burning during the wedding and should be the last two candles lit.
 - The altar table can be moved back to the organ. Pulpit or organ may not be moved. The baptismal font may be moved down to floor and should be moved back by the wedding party.
- If a flower arrangement for the altar is taller than 21 inches, remove the cross from the altar. Replace the cross after the ceremony and move the flowers to a flower stand for Sunday morning.
 - Supervise the Bride's team in the set-up of the candelabra, benches, candles, and other church items the couple has requested.
 - Change paraments to white for the wedding.
 - Advise and assist with the placement of any photography or video equipment that is to be used. Be certain that these individuals are aware of the policy on photography and that any videotaping or photography is done from a stationary position.
 - Turn lights off after rehearsal.

THE WEDDING

- Insure that the church is unlocked.
- Remember that you are there to assist the wedding party in making the day special.
- Instruct the wedding party how they can safeguard any valuables (purses, etc.) during the ceremony and reception. Remind them that Asbury United Methodist Church assumes no liability for valuables of the wedding party or guests.
- Make sure there is oil in the two candles on the altar table.
- Candles in the candelabra will burn for about four hours. Pictures look better if candles are burning. Candles wicks will not re-light without trimming.

- Evaluate the cleanup and refund applicable deposits, or with the Facilities Manager, schedule proper cleaning using the deposit money as payment of service. Coordinate the withholding of deposits with the Church Administrator.
- After the wedding and reception, check all doors and turn out all lights, including those in rest rooms and the fellowship hall. Locks on outside doors will lock automatically.
- The Wedding Coordinator must stay “on site” for the duration of each wedding event scheduled.
- Make certain that all candles have been extinguished in the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall after the ceremony.
- Insure that candleholders are empty, clean, and returned to storage.
- Return all furniture to its proper position in the sanctuary, narthex, and bride’s room after the ceremony.
- Change paraments back to the original color.

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Notify the Church Administrator if you notice any Asbury furnishings, equipment, or facilities not in working order.
- Contact the Church Administrator if problems arise that merit revision to this policy.
- E-mail a final notice to the Church Administrator that the wedding is finished, how deposits have been assessed, and that all fees have been paid to the workers.

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