



WEDDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A wedding in a Christian setting is a special event in that it is a service of worship. This service is to be distinguished from weddings in other settings. It indicates the interest of the couple to seek Divine participation in the establishment of their human relationship. It is the desire of Grace Avenue United Methodist Church to make every wedding a beautiful, meaningful worship event for each couple who marry within our church.

Please use this brochure to familiarize yourself with the procedures of Grace Avenue UMC. If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact the Wedding Coordinator.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

The church provides a Wedding Coordinator to assist the couple with their wedding plans, to aid the minister in conducting the rehearsal, and to coordinate all that happens during the wedding. If you are working with a coordinator you have chosen, that person must work under the leadership of Grace Avenue's wedding coordinator.

The Coordinator is the source of information regarding wedding procedures at Grace Avenue UMC and can answer many questions. The Wedding Coordinator is here to help make the wedding as special and individual as possible and will guide the bride and groom regarding church policy.

The couple must contact the Wedding Coordinator before the wedding will be scheduled on the church calendar.

SCHEDULING OF WEDDINGS

The scheduling of a wedding is arranged through the Wedding Coordinator. Members and their immediate family may reserve the Grace Avenue UMC facilities as far in advance of the ceremony as they wish. The Grace Avenue UMC Sanctuary or Worship Center is available for non-members but the date cannot be confirmed until nine months before the wedding date. For all weddings, arrangements must be completed and finalized by the bride, groom, parents, or a responsible person acting on their behalf. This is accomplished by meeting with the Wedding Coordinator for the purpose of signing a contract. A security deposit must be made at the time the wedding contract is signed. The check will be deposited into the church account. The deposit will be refunded within 30 of the ceremony and will include an explanation for any refund that is not paid in full.

The deposit will not be refunded under these conditions:

- Member(s) of wedding party bring or consume alcohol or illegal drugs on the campus of Grace Avenue UMC on the rehearsal day or wedding day; any evidence of this will result in forfeit of the full deposit.
- Damage is caused to the property of Grace Avenue UMC by the wedding party or guests on the rehearsal day or wedding day;
- Photographer or Videographer does not follow Policy as printed in the Grace Avenue's Wedding Policies and Procedures.
- Cancellation of the event. In the event of a cancellation, the full deposit will be forfeited.

It is the responsibility of the bride and the groom to explain the policies to their families, wedding party, photographers and videographers or any other vendor and explain the ramifications of non-compliance with the Policy.

Grace Avenue UMC's Sanctuary and Worship Center are available for weddings.

Sanctuary Seating Capacity	450
Worship Center Seating Capacity	350

All weddings are scheduled on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., 4:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. (4:30 and 7:00 pm is Sanctuary only). Other days may be scheduled as they are available. Please check with our wedding coordinator for scheduling.

Weddings or rehearsals, whether for members or non-members, may not be scheduled to take place on the following days: Sundays, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter Monday), Independence Day, Holiday Bazaar weekend, Thanksgiving, or December 24th, 25th or 26th.

MINISTERS

Officiating Minister: A Grace Avenue UMC Minister will be conducting your wedding ceremony. They can explain the elements of your wedding and remain available to answer any of your questions about the worship service. A couple may request a specific Grace Avenue minister to officiate at the time the wedding is booked. However, a Grace Avenue minister not requested by the couple may be assigned because of scheduling or other conflicts.

Guest Ministers: If you wish to have an outside minister conduct your wedding service, your assigned minister must extend the invitation. This request should be made to the Wedding Coordinator when the wedding is booked. It is at the discretion of the Grace Avenue minister whether to accept this request.

The Wedding Coordinator will contact the couple once the minister is scheduled. The couple will meet with the minister to discuss arrangements for the wedding and for required counseling. It is the responsibility of the couple to contact the minister to schedule these appointments at least four months before the ceremony.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Preparing a couple for the marriage is even more important today than preparing them for the wedding. The wedding is one day, but the marriage is for life. The church cannot emphasize enough how important it is that a couple enters the marriage with an awareness of the dynamics of a marriage relationship. Couples face more difficulties today than ever before, and the Church wants to ensure that you have as many tools as necessary to build a strong and lasting marriage. All couples that are to be married at Grace Avenue UMC must receive pre-marital counseling by the minister who is performing the service or by someone who is approved for counseling by your assigned minister.

REHEARSALS

The wedding rehearsal is an integral part of the preparation of a wedding and should proceed reverently. The purpose of the rehearsal is to familiarize the wedding party with the procedure for the wedding, to enable them to be as comfortable as possible with the arrangements, and to enhance the beauty of the ceremony.

It is imperative that the wedding rehearsal begins promptly at the scheduled time. Please allow appropriate time for introductions. Forty minutes will be reserved for rehearsal. Rehearsal time does not include time for the vocalist to rehearse. The vocalist must schedule other rehearsal times with the pianist. The Wedding Coordinator will be in charge of the rehearsal and will let you know when to arrive.

MISCELLANEOUS

Your wedding coordinator will give you information on what time the photographer, florist, videographer, or other wedding party vendors may arrive. The coordinator will have the final decision on the timing of these arrivals.

- **Dressing Rooms:** A Bridal Suite is available for the bride and her attendants and a classroom will be available for the groom and his attendants. The Bridal Suite will be available to the bridal party 1 ½ hours prior to the wedding time.
- **Recessional:** Birdseed, confetti or rice may not be thrown and sparklers may not be used. Acceptable alternatives include bubbles or flower petals. These items may only be used outside the building.
- **Video Recording:** A person of your choice may take video recordings. We ask that the cameras be set in non-intrusive areas.
- **Food or drinks:** Food and drinks are not permitted in the Sanctuary or Worship Center.
- **Alcohol, drugs and tobacco:** **Alcoholic beverages, drugs and any kind of tobacco use are forbidden anywhere on the premises of Grace Avenue UMC.** No one under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be allowed to participate in the rehearsal or the wedding ceremony.
- **Only pets which are in the service of the disabled are permitted inside the facilities.**

It is the responsibility of the persons making arrangements for the wedding to see that all members of the wedding party are informed concerning these matters.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SAFEKEEPING OF PERSONAL ITEMS

Every possible effort will be made to protect personal items such as wedding dresses, purses, silver to be used for receptions, etc. **However, the church cannot be responsible for such items if lost, stolen, or damaged.** It is imperative that money, jewelry, and other valuables not be left unattended in the bride's or groom's room, but entrusted to a reliable person of the family's choice, or preferably, not be brought into the church at all.

Members of the wedding party need to bring dresses when they arrive to prepare for the wedding, and not before. The wedding coordinator and church staff are not permitted to sign for dresses or any other deliveries including flowers or food.

MUSIC

A wedding ceremony in the church is always a Christian worship service, and only music suitable for Christian worship may be used. Since the focus of worship is on God, the texts should either be songs in praise of God or prayers for God's presence, blessing, and guidance in the uniting of the couple and in the founding of a Christian home.

The bride and/or groom must meet with the assigned minister and music minister, to arrange the music at least thirty 30 days prior to the wedding. All decisions regarding the appropriateness of music choices are the specific responsibility of the Music Minister, and wedding programs should **NOT** be printed until all music choices have been approved.

All music will be accompanied by the piano, or approved instrumentalist. No recorded music will be allowed during the ceremony. The Pianist of Grace Avenue UMC shall play for all weddings unless the wedding party wishes to use an outside pianist. Any guest pianist must be approved by the Music Minister.

The Music Minister must be notified of any instrumentalist playing at the ceremony. There will be a charge for extra rehearsals for vocalists and/or instrumentalists; these are not a part of the fees collected by Grace Avenue UMC. The bride and/or groom are responsible for these fees, payment being made directly to the individual.

The Pianist will begin playing the Prelude not more than 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.

VOCALIST

The assigned minister and Music Minister must be notified and approve of any vocalists who will be singing at the ceremony. The vocalist must provide the necessary sheet music at least 2 weeks prior to the wedding. Photocopied music is prohibited. Plan ahead, for it may take weeks to get music that has to be ordered. The vocalist may rehearse with the Pianist at a time scheduled other than the Friday rehearsal time. The Pianist may be contacted through the church office.

Vocalist and instrumentalist rehearsals, scheduled on the day of the wedding, must be completed no later than 30 minutes prior to the wedding time.

SOUND

A sound technician will be present an hour before the wedding to conduct a sound check for vocalists and/or scripture readers. The minister will be amplified and the sound technician will remain through the ceremony.

RECEPTIONS

Receptions at Grace Avenue UMC are available. Receptions must be scheduled with the Wedding Coordinator at the time of scheduling a wedding. With the allowance of one reception per Saturday, the reception will be given on a first-come basis. All receptions are to be held in Tom Graves Hall which has a total seating of 120 guests. Tom Graves Hall does not have a commercial kitchen and there is no area available to store food prior to set up of the reception. The church will provide tables and chairs; all items must be brought in by the caterer. Custodial services will set up and take down for a reception. No alcoholic beverages may be served. Receptions will be no longer than two hours.

PHOTOGRAPHY

So that the taking of pictures will not distract from the wedding service, no flash photography or videotape lighting equipment may be used while the ceremony is in progress. Videotape equipment may be used in specified areas only. The Wedding Coordinator can help with specifics. Following the wedding ceremony, the wedding party may return for the photography session. Flash photography and other lighting equipment may be used at that time.

The photographer and/or videographer may arrive one and a half (1 1/2) hours before the wedding time.

Please advise friends and relatives not to take flash photographs during the ceremony. Ushers should remind wedding guests whom they observe with cameras that no flash photographs will be allowed.

Preceding the ceremony, flash photography session of the wedding party may be conducted inside the Sanctuary and Worship Center. Flash photography may also be taken as the recessional is in progress from the Sanctuary doors.

It is the responsibility of the person making arrangements for the wedding that the photographer is aware of these policies.

FLOWERS AND OTHER DECORATIONS

Decorations used for the wedding should enhance the chancel, not obscure it. Decorations may not displace the Christian symbols on the altar or hide from clear view the worship symbols within the chancel, such as the altar table, the pulpit, and the cross. Decorations should not hide the beauty of the chancel area, destroy the appeal of the church setting, de-emphasize the symbols of the church or detract from the simple dignity and elegance that should characterize the wedding service.

A kneeling rail is available upon request. So that furnishings will not be damaged, decorations must not be attached to the pews, carpeting, or other furniture by pinning, gluing, nailing, tacking, or taping. Pew bows, bouquets and ribbons will be permitted with the use of padded pew hooks. Floral arrangements or decorations may not be placed on or hanging from the altar table, piano, or communion rail.

Dripless candles are allowed in the altar area only. Nothing is allowed to be placed on the altar. Please discuss all deliveries of flowers and other decorations with your wedding coordinator. All decorations must be removed immediately following the wedding. Flower arrangements may be donated to the church by notifying the Wedding Coordinator and will be placed where the church deems appropriate the following Sunday. The florist or designated other is responsible for all set up and clean up of decorations, other than candelabras and/or the unity candle. The florist or designated other will be held responsible for any damage to furniture in every case. Flower girl(s) may only drop silk flowers down the aisle.

For seasonal weddings, it is not permissible to remove church decorations or flowers.

WEDDING RITUAL

The following ritual is the United Methodist Book of Worship Wedding Service, which is used for all weddings at Grace Avenue UMC:

Processional

Greeting

Declaration of Intention

Presentation of the Bride

Scripture Reading

Witness to Christian Marriage

Exchanging of Vows

Giving and Receiving of Rings

Declaration of Marriage

Prayers

Benediction

Recessional

***Optional Sacred Music Selections**

****Optional Sacred Music Selections and/or Unity Candle**

If the sacrament of Holy Communion is observed it must be offered to the entire congregation.

All programs must be approved by the officiating minister.

ESTABLISHED FEES FOR WEDDINGS

Weddings are a ministry of Grace Avenue United Methodist Church. Fees charged for a wedding cover the church's basic expenses. Cost should not preclude an active church family from being married at Grace Avenue. Please contact the Wedding Coordinator for additional information.

Fees are established by member/non-member status.

Member status: Any person who has been a member of Grace Avenue UMC for six (6) months or more at the time of scheduling their wedding.

Non-member status: Any person who has been a member of Grace Avenue UMC for less than six (6) months at the time of scheduling their wedding.

All fees are to be paid in full ninety (90) days before the wedding date; if not the calendar date will be opened for other weddings.

MEMBER FEES

	<u>Sanctuary</u>	<u>Worship Center</u>
Deposit (due upon scheduling)	\$500.00	\$500.00
Facilities & Fees (includes coordinator, sound tech, custodial and honorarium for minister)	\$1400.00	\$1300.00
*Reception	\$500.00	\$500.00
*Pianist	\$250.00	\$250.00
*Vocalist	\$150.00	\$150.00
*Instrumentalist	\$150.00	\$150.00
*Optional services		

NON-MEMBER FEES

	<u>Sanctuary</u>	<u>Worship Center</u>
Deposit (due upon scheduling)	\$500.00	\$500.00
Facilities & Fees (includes coordinator, sound tech, custodial and honorarium for minister)	\$1900.00	\$1700.00
*Reception	\$500.00	\$500.00
*Pianist	\$250.00	\$250.00
*Vocalist	\$150.00	\$150.00
*Instrumentalist	\$150.00	\$150.00
*Optional services		

The following three pages are intended for the wedding party to distribute to vendors.

PHOTOGRAPHER

This letter is to affirm the use of your services for this wedding, Name: _____,
Time: _____, Date: _____, and to familiarize you with the Grace
Avenue United Methodist Church Wedding Policies.

Grace Avenue recognizes the value of wedding photographs as a lasting remembrance of this most special occasion and we trust that you will work with us to ensure a beautiful ceremony.

Please consider the following policies for your information:

1. You are encouraged to take photographs in this facility prior to the wedding.
2. Photographs may be taken during the processional and recessional.
3. During the wedding service, time exposure photographs may be taken from the back.
4. A receiving line is discouraged at the church because it delays pictures following the ceremony.
5. The party may return to the Sanctuary / Worship Center after the ceremony for 20 minutes of pictures.
6. Facility and furniture must be respected at all times.
7. The Wedding Coordinator is available to answer your questions and desires your cooperation in making this a beautiful event.

If you have any questions, please contact the Wedding Coordinator, _____ at _____.

Grace Avenue United Methodist Church
3521 Main Street
Frisco, Texas 75034

FLORIST

This letter is to affirm the use of your services for this wedding, Name: _____,

Time: _____, Date: _____, and to familiarize you with the Grace Avenue United Methodist Church Wedding Policies.

Grace Avenue recognizes the value of flowers for this most special occasion and we trust that you will work with us to ensure a beautiful ceremony.

Please consider the following policies for your information:

1. All flower pots must contain liners.
2. Do not place anything on the Communion Table.
3. Facility and furniture must be respected at all times. Decorations must not be attached to furniture by gluing or nailing.
4. Use only dripless candles. Rented candelabras and/or unity candle stands must be placed on plastic and removed immediately following the ceremony. We do not have space to store fixtures over the weekend and will not accept responsibility.
5. Flower girls are not permitted to drop natural flowers in the Sanctuary or Worship Center (silk flowers are permitted).
6. The Sanctuary / Worship Center will be available 1 and 1/2 hours prior to the wedding.
7. Ribbon swagging create difficulty for the guests and are not allowed.
8. The Wedding Coordinator is available to answer your questions and desires your cooperation in making this a beautiful event.

If you have any questions, please contact the Wedding Coordinator, _____ at _____.

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VIDEOGRAPHER

This letter is to affirm the use of your services for this wedding, Name: _____,
Time: _____, Date: _____, and to familiarize you with the Grace
Avenue United Methodist Church Wedding Policies.

Grace Avenue recognizes the value of wedding videos as a lasting remembrance of this most special
occasion and we trust that you will work with us to ensure a beautiful ceremony.

Please consider the following policies for your information:

1. All video equipment shall be set up in the Sound Booth
2. Recording equipment will be allowed on the stage only if it can be operated remotely.
3. Facility and furniture must be respected at all times.
4. The Wedding Coordinator is available to answer your questions and desires your cooperation in making this a beautiful event.

If you have any questions, please contact the Wedding Coordinator, _____ at
_____.

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SAMPLE WEDDING CONTRACT

To be completed and signed by bride, groom or family representative at time of scheduling and payment of deposit.

Wedding Date: _____

Wedding Time: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____

Rehearsal Time: _____

Officiating Minister: _____

Home Address: _____

Bride: _____

Groom: _____

Cell phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Home phone: _____

Home phone: _____

Family Rep: _____

Wedding Planner: _____

Phone/Email: _____

Phone/Email: _____

I understand and agree to adhere to all of the above Grace Avenue United Methodist Church wedding policies. I understand that it is my responsibility to explain said policies to my family, wedding party, photographer, florist, videographer and any other vendor and explain the ramifications of non-compliance with the policy.

Signature Bride/Groom or Family Representative

Date

Grace Avenue Representative

Date

Below for Office Use Only

Total Deposit Due: \$ _____

Date Rec'd _____
Check # _____

Full Payment Total Due: \$ _____

Date Rec'd _____

Full Payment Due Date: _____

Check # _____