

Wedding Policies

OF NORTHSIDE CHURCH



Wedding Policies

Revised April 2024



NORTHSIDE CHURCH
A UNITED METHODIST CONGREGATION

2799 Northside Drive NW · Atlanta, Georgia 30305

404.355.6475 · www.NorthsideUMC.org

Congratulations!

Welcome to Northside Church. We look forward to hosting your upcoming wedding. In the United Methodist Church, weddings are a worship service and covenant before God. They follow “The Service of Christian Marriage,” as prescribed by The United Methodist Book of Worship.

We are pleased that you are planning to have your wedding here and look forward to being of assistance to you in this most important event. The Christian marriage ceremony celebrates God’s blessing of the union of husband and wife.

The music, the ceremony, and all other aspects should fit into the sacred concept of marriage. We trust that your marriage will be a continuing blessing long after this special event has passed.

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THE CHURCH

Please contact the church's Executive Assistant when you are ready to set a date for your wedding. We reserve wedding dates up to one year in advance for non-members and 18 months in advance for members. Dates will be confirmed upon receipt of the deposit, Wedding Information form, and signed Policy Acknowledgment.

Weddings cannot be held later than 6:00PM, or scheduled during New Year's Eve, Holy Week (the week before Easter), Memorial Day weekend, Independence Day weekend, Labor Day weekend, Thanksgiving weekend, or Christmas weekend. Other dates during Lent and Advent are limited, depending on holiday church events.

Standard church and holiday decor must remain during wedding ceremonies. The paraments on the lectern and pulpit will be white, and the altar will not have a parament.

Candelabras may not be placed in the pulpit or in front of the pulpit. A unity candle may be incorporated into your service upon request at your consultation with the wedding coordinator.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

At least one premarital session with the officiating Northside pastor is required before the marriage. This minimum requirement may vary depending upon each individual Northside pastor. It is the responsibility of the couple to make an appointment for the session no less than two months before the wedding.

REHEARSAL

Rehearsals will require at least 45 minutes, and punctuality will assist with this. Rehearsals will be scheduled during church business hours—8:00AM–5:00PM (latest start time of 4:15PM)—on the day prior to the wedding, unless otherwise approved by the wedding coordinator.

The rehearsal is a time for careful planning of a worship experience. Please encourage your participants to conduct themselves with proper decorum. Northside's organist does not attend the rehearsal. Production staff will be present only by prior arrangement and will require an additional fee.

The marriage license, copy of your approved programs, and any remaining fees must be brought to the rehearsal and given to the wedding coordinator for distribution.

WEDDING

Ceremony

It is no longer necessary that relatives and friends of the bride and groom be seated on the left and the right sides of the church, respectively. It is better if people are seated so that there is even distribution on both sides of the church. For a smooth flow of seating guests, we recommend one usher per 50 guests.

The ceremony shall follow the United Methodist order of service (listed on the following page) and a Northside pastor will participate in the service. If you have a request for a specific Northside pastor, it should be stated when making your reservation. Since the format and style of a wedding should be consistent with Northside's tradition of worship and weddings, our pastors will be most valuable in planning the order of service.

A visiting pastor may assist in the service of marriage. The request for a visiting pastor should be made when making your reservation. The Northside pastor will welcome the congregation and pronounce the Declaration of Marriage along with signing the marriage license. Usually the visiting pastor can take part in the exchange of rings, reading of Scripture, or a prayer of blessing.

Order of Service

- ✠ Processional of Wedding Party
- ✠ Greeting
- ✠ Declaration of Intention
- ✠ Scripture Reading*
 - ☛ Genesis 2:20b–25
 - ☛ Ruth 1:16-17 (16–18)
 - ☛ Matthew 19:4–6
 - ☛ 1 Corinthians 13
 - ☛ Canticle of Love; etc.
- ✠ Presentation of the Bride
- ✠ Special Music or Congregational Hymn*
- ✠ Homily (Sermon/Devotional)*
- ✠ Exchange of Vows
- ✠ Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- ✠ Declaration of Marriage
- ✠ Unity Candle*
- ✠ Special Music during (or instead of) the Unity Candle*
- ✠ Blessing of the Marriage (Pastoral Prayer)
- ✠ The Lord's Prayer
- ✠ Special Music*
 - ☛ The Lord's Prayer (may be sung rather than spoken by congregation)
- ✠ Dismissal with Blessing
- ✠ Presentation of the Couple
- ✠ Recessional of the Wedding Party

Northside Wedding Coordinator

The Northside wedding coordinator's responsibility is to make sure your wedding day runs smoothly. Six months prior to your wedding, the assigned coordinator will contact you to schedule an initial meeting to determine a timeline leading up to your wedding.

Your Northside wedding coordinator will coordinate your ceremony and direct the rehearsal along with the officiating pastor. The Northside wedding coordinator is to be used at all Northside rehearsals and weddings.

The Northside wedding coordinator can also provide referrals for photographers, videographers, caterers, reception locations, florist, etc.

Northside Music

Northside Church is charged with planning music for all services held at the church, including weddings. In an effort to maintain a level of consistency among services, we uphold the following guidelines:

- ✠ Northside Church will provide an organist to play for all weddings.
- ✠ Since the wedding ceremony is a service of worship, all music must be sacred in nature, something appropriate for a regular worship service.
- ✠ Examples of standard wedding music can be found on the following page.
- ✠ If you have a favorite selection or composer that is not listed, please discuss this with the organist.
- ✠ The organist must approve all music used in your wedding at least six weeks in advance.
- ✠ The optional addition of vocalists and instrumentalists shall be chosen by the couple, in consultation with the organist, from

a list of professional musicians used by Northside Church. Each has proven themselves superior in his/her craft. These are contract musicians, so it is necessary for payment of services to be made directly to the individual musician.

- ⌘ Professional musicians not on our approval list must submit a performance recording for Music Ministry consideration a minimum of six weeks in advance. This may be in the form of an .mp3 or .wav file.
- ⌘ Organ or piano accompaniment will be provided for any guest vocalist, and an additional fee will apply.
- ⌘ No audio track (pre-recorded media) accompaniments are allowed in the wedding service.
- ⌘ Soloist and instrumentalists rehearse one hour prior to the service. The singer or instrumentalist must provide the organist with a copy of the music two weeks in advance, written in the key in which it is to be played.
- ⌘ String quartets and/or piano may be used in lieu of the organ for processions and recessions in the Chapel only. Processionals and recessions in the Sanctuary shall be played on the organ, while string quartets/piano may still be used during the prelude or solos.
- ⌘ At least two-four months prior to your wedding date, contact the organist to schedule your wedding music consultation. The organist is happy to meet in person at Northside or via email and phone.
- ⌘ You will need to select pieces for the seating of the grandmothers and mothers, processional (one for the attendants and a separate one for the bride) and recessional.
- ⌘ The prelude will begin 30 minutes prior to your wedding. Unless you have specific requests, the organist will play standard wedding music during this time.

Wedding Music Selections

Processionals for the Grandparents & Mothers

Aria from Concerto Grosso No. 12	G.F. Handel
Arioso from Concerto Grosso No. 12	G.F. Handel
Air from Water Music Suite No. 1	G.F. Handel
Bist Du Bei Mir	J.S. Bach
Canon in D	Johan Pachelbel
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	arr. McClure
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring	J.S. Bach
Prelude in C	J.S. Bach

Processional for the Bride

Bridal Chorus	R. Wagner
Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee	L. Beethoven
Rondeau	J. Mouret
Trumpet Tune	D. Johnson
Trumpet Tune	H. Purcell
Trumpet Voluntary	J. Clarke

Recessionals for the Couple

Grand Chorus in B-Flat	T. Dubois
Hornpipe from Water Music	G.F. Handel
Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee	L. Beethoven
Psalm XIX	B. Marcello
Toccata from Symphony No. 5	C.M. Widor
Wedding March from A Midsummers Night's Dream --	F. Mendelssohn

Northside Production

Production needs (microphones, special inputs for other instruments, lighting, etc.) are requested by filling out an online Wedding Production form at least eight weeks before the ceremony. You can find this form at www.NorthsideUMC.org/weddings. Please contact our production director with any questions.

Northside Production Staffing includes up to the following:

- ☛ Mic officiant #1 (wireless)
- ☛ Mic officiant #2 (wireless)
- ☛ Mic reader/solo at lectern
- ☛ Mic pulpit
- ☛ Mic additional instrumentalist
- ☛ Mic other solo (wireless)
- ☛ Live mixing audio for the Sanctuary
- ☛ Lighting control during service

Northside Production staff arrives one hour prior to the service, unless otherwise agreed upon. The maximum number of hours for Northside Production staffing on the wedding day will not exceed four hours: two prior to service, one during the service, and one following the service. In most cases, one hour prior and during will suffice to cover the needs of the ceremony, but an additional hour prior can be requested.

The Wedding Program

If you choose to have a program printed for your wedding, you must send a proof to the wedding coordinator and organist at least 48 hours prior to printing for approval or edits. This will help ensure that all of the worship information is correct. We reserve the right to withhold the programs at the wedding if any content has changed after our approval.

Copies of previous ceremonies are kept on file, and Northside Church would be happy to assist in any way with the arrangement of the program. Printing of the wedding program shall be the responsibility of the wedding party. A typical order of worship is outlined previously in the Ceremony section.

Please plan to keep the bride's book and/or receiving line at your reception. Experience has shown that having these elements at the church delays the wedding or wedding photography. Note that due to the Northside pastors' schedules, it may be impossible for them to attend wedding rehearsal dinners or receptions when invited.

OUTSIDE VENDORS

Florist Instructions

We understand that decor is an important part of a wedding, and we desire that ours be a cooperative and successful relationship as we perform our duties on this holy occasion. Since the marriage ceremony is a service of worship, we ask that florists help us maintain it as such by adhering to the following guidelines. Measurements of containers are provided as a helpful resource.

- ✠ Please do not place anything on the altar other than flowers or a memorial candle in either the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- ✠ In the Sanctuary, flower arrangements may not exceed the height of the arms of the cross, as the cross is the focal point of the altar. Altar candles always remain in their places at either side of the cross, and the Bible may be used upon request.
- ✠ The vases on the altar are 19" high (container inside should be 9.5") and are approximately 3.5" in diameter, from lip to lip. Flowers should not extend above the arms of the cross (43" from altar to arms of cross).
- ✠ The vases may not be removed from the altar, unless a large single unit is placed in the middle. Flowers may be arranged in the vases using liners or papier-mâché cones, which hold the oasis.
- ✠ Nothing may be moved or removed from the Chancel.
- ✠ You may place flowers and bows on the pews. You are not allowed to use nails, tacks, tapes, or other means that may damage the wood to secure flowers or other decorations to the church furniture, wall, or fixtures.
- ✠ We do not allow petals, rice, birdseed, or bubbles to be used during or after the service.

- ✠ You may choose to use candles in the window ledges, as long as they are protected and collected following the ceremony.
- ✠ For safety reasons, aisle cloths/runners are not permitted.
- ✠ During the Lent, Easter, Advent, and Christmas seasons, decorations cannot be changed in the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- ✠ Flowers may be delivered up to two hours before the ceremony. If additional time is needed, please coordinate with your Northside wedding coordinator.
- ✠ Florists or wedding party is responsible for removal and pick-up of any items used in the Sanctuary/Chapel immediately following the ceremony. Items may remain no longer than one hour following the ceremony.
- ✠ Altar floral arrangements may remain in the Sanctuary for Sunday services with an acknowledgment in the Sunday bulletin in honor of your wedding. Please coordinate this with the senior pastor's executive assistant two months prior to the wedding, and provide your florist with this information.
- ✠ In the Chapel, the cross may not be removed. The vases on the altar are 12" high and approximately 5" in diameter, from lip to lip (31" from altar to arms of cross). The altar is 5'7" long and 18" wide. The aisle is 4'5" wide and 24' long.
- ✠ All financial agreements and payments are between the florist and the client (bride/groom). Northside Church is not responsible for any breaches of agreement.

Photographer Instructions

We understand that photographs are an important part of a wedding, and we desire that ours be a cooperative and successful relationship as we perform our duties on this holy occasion. Since the marriage ceremony is a service of worship, we ask that photographers help by adhering to the following guidelines:

- ✠ If it is the first time your photographer has taken pictures for a wedding at Northside, it is expected that he/she will attend the rehearsal or schedule a separate appointment with the wedding coordinator. This is so that he/she may become familiar with the various spaces to be used on the wedding day and to avoid any confusion about expectations.
- ✠ The Northside wedding coordinator is responsible for directing the wedding. Photographers are to cooperate with the wedding coordinator at all times. The wedding coordinator has the final say.
- ✠ Pictures may be taken beginning 1.5 hours before the wedding and must be completed 30 minutes before the ceremony.
- ✠ Prior to the ceremony pictures may be taken:
 - ☛ Outside the facilities
 - ☛ In the Parlor (please leave all furniture in original location)
 - ☛ In the Chapel
 - ☛ In the Sanctuary
- ✠ The bride/groom or wedding party may NOT be taken off site before the wedding ceremony for pictures. This should take place before they arrive, two hours before the ceremony, if needed.
- ✠ To avoid being seen by guests or the groom before the ceremony, the bride should be back in the Bride's Room 30 minutes before the wedding ceremony begins.

- ✠ The photographer can only take photos in the Narthex during the processional and should remain in the balcony of the Sanctuary during the service.
- ✠ No flash photography is allowed during the ceremony.
- ✠ Immediately at the end of the recessional, the wedding party is directed by the wedding coordinator to the correct place to allow guests to leave the church. This keeps guests from stopping the wedding party and will optimize your time for taking pictures after the ceremony.
- ✠ The officiating pastor will be glad to participate in the first photograph following the ceremony. Please take pictures involving the pastor first.
- ✠ Pictures following the ceremony must be completed within 30 minutes.
- ✠ Photographers must dress in attire appropriate for church; all black is suggested.
- ✠ All financial agreements and payments are between the photographer and the client (bride/groom). Northside Church is not responsible for any breaches of agreement.

Videographer Instructions

We understand that videos are an important part of a wedding, and we desire that ours be a cooperative and successful relationship as we perform our duties on this holy occasion. Since the marriage ceremony is a service of worship, we ask that videographers help by adhering to the following guidelines.

If it is the first time your videographer has captured video for a wedding at Northside, it is expected that he/she will attend the rehearsal or schedule a separate appointment with the wedding coordinator. This is so that he/she may become familiar with the various spaces to be used on the wedding day and to avoid any confusion about expectations.

It may also be beneficial to have your videographer join you in a meeting with the production director 2–3 weeks prior to your wedding.

The wedding coordinator and staff are responsible for directing and coordinating the wedding ceremony. Videographers are to cooperate with the wedding coordinator and Production staff at all times.

- ⌘ Videographers are to have all equipment secured in approved locations no later than 45 minutes prior to the wedding.
- ⌘ Pre-wedding video may be taken beginning 1.5 hours before the wedding and must be completed 30 minutes before the ceremony, at which time the videographer is to remain in the balcony for videotaping of the ceremony.
- ⌘ All manned videography of the ceremony must take place from the balcony.
- ⌘ Additional lighting is NOT allowed in the Sanctuary or Chapel during the service.
- ⌘ Lighting will be set for ceremony with pre-set lighting by Northside Production staff.

- ⌘ Videographers are to be as unobtrusive as possible and are not to impede the movement of guests or the wedding party either with equipment or themselves.
- ⌘ Videographers are not to attend to equipment—other than that in the balcony—during the ceremony.
- ⌘ Videographers must dress in attire appropriate for church; all black is suggested.
- ⌘ All financial agreements and payments are between the videographer and the client (bride/groom). Northside Church is not responsible for any breaches of agreement.

Receptions

We will be happy to provide you with more information about receptions at Northside upon request.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Alcohol And Smoking Policies

NO alcoholic beverages or any type of non-alcoholic beer or wine are permitted on Northside Church premises. Please do not arrive at Northside Church with the odor of alcohol. Advise your wedding party and your friends! Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere on Northside Church premises. Any paraphernalia found will be confiscated, and you will lose your security deposit.

The Wedding Party

We recommend that flower girls, ring bearers and attendants should be at least 5 years old. No pets may be attendants. We do not allow petals, rice, birdseed, or bubbles to be used during or after the service.

Please ask your ushers and all other members of the wedding party to be on time for the rehearsal and wedding. Any food or non-alcoholic beverages provided for the wedding party at the rehearsal or day of the wedding is the wedding party's responsibility to clean up. No food or drink is allowed in the Parlor or Bride's Room. Refreshments may be set up at a provided table outside of the Fellowship Hall on the stone floor.

By signing the Northside Wedding Policy Acknowledgment form, the bride and groom agree to reimburse Northside Church for any damages the wedding party, outside vendors, or guests cause to the property.

Miscellaneous Information

Valuables should not be left to tempt passersby. Northside Church will not be responsible for theft or loss of valuables. Every effort is made to secure the building, but participants should be warned to keep watch over their possessions. A Lost and Found service is maintained by Northside Church; please claim articles as soon after the wedding as possible.

Northside Church is open on Saturday two hours prior to the time of the wedding. Please use the main Sanctuary entrance located on Kingswood Lane. Guests are encouraged to use our parking deck located at the far end of the building; however, the Sutton Middle School lot across the street, if available, is approved for Northside Church use as well. Northside Church is not responsible for theft or damage to vehicles or for valuables left in vehicles.



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