

Weddings at Soapstone United Methodist Church

We are pleased that you are choosing Soapstone UMC for your wedding. We hope that the following guidelines and procedures will help you with the plans you are about to make. Since each wedding is unique, there may be aspects about your wedding that have not been covered by these policies. Should questions arise regarding plans or policies that are not included, please contact our Wedding Coordinator.

Staff Contacts

Pastors:	Rev. Laura Fine Ledford & Rev. Dr. Damion Quaye (919-846-2212)
Director of Music:	Andrea Turner (919-846-2212)
Director of Administrative Services:	Rebecca Mitchell (919-846-2212)
Wedding Coordinator:	Laura Hutchison (919-539-7508)

General Statement

A Christian wedding ceremony is a sacred service of worship. It is a celebration of a relationship between two people, ordained by God. The content of the service should be planned to include proclamation of the Word, with prayer and praise. All plans for the service must be approved by the Soapstone pastor who will preside over the service.

Scheduling

The Wedding Coordinator will schedule a face-to-face meeting with the prospective couple to explain the wedding policy and all rules and fees associated with using our facility. The Wedding Coordinator will schedule a tentative wedding date after consulting with the pastor and Director of Administrative Services. Soapstone hosts weddings for members, and children of members. If non-members want to hold their wedding at Soapstone, it will be at the discretion of the pastor and dependent on calendar availability. Non-member fees are listed at the end of this document. Weddings cannot be scheduled more than nine months in advance for members, and not more than six months in advance for non-members. Contacting the Wedding Coordinator and completion of the Wedding Planning Sheet are required to confirm and hold the date on the church calendar. Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays, major holiday weekends, or on any day that would conflict with day-to-day programs and ministries of Soapstone UMC.

Pastors

Typically, one of the pastors appointed to Soapstone UMC will preside over the wedding ceremony. Use of another pastor to officiate or participate at the wedding is at the discretion of the pastors at Soapstone. The couple should make this request to the pastors of Soapstone who will extend the invitation to the guest clergy, as is required in the United Methodist Church.

Pre-marital Counseling

All couples wishing to unite in marriage at Soapstone must complete premarital counseling with the presiding pastor. A series of 3-4 one-hour sessions should be arranged to begin approximately three months prior to the wedding. Discussion topics will include: The sharing of stories; discussion of personality types; biblical and theological foundations for marriage; planning the service; experiences brought to the marriage; sources of stress in marriage, and detailed discussion of wedding vows. The couple should contact the pastor directly to schedule the counseling sessions. If another pastor will be performing the ceremony, please ask that pastor to submit a written statement to the pastor of Soapstone UMC showing that pre-marital counseling has been completed.

Wedding Coordinator

The Soapstone Wedding Coordinator will assist you with any questions regarding the church facility, equipment, and the Policies and Procedures Guide. Please fill out the enclosed Planning Guide. This information may be completed during your face-to-face meeting or emailed to the coordinator and is required to confirm your wedding date. We realize you may not be able to complete the entire form at the time you schedule your wedding. Please complete what you can and supply the rest of the information as soon as possible.

After the wedding is scheduled, the Wedding Coordinator will assign a **Soapstone Church Liaison** who will work with the couple at the rehearsal and on the day of the ceremony.

Wedding Director

At this time, Soapstone does not have a Wedding Director to assist with your dress rehearsal and ceremony. You are highly encouraged to have someone perform these duties for you during your ceremony.

The Rehearsal

If you have a Wedding Director, during the wedding rehearsal, the Wedding Director will direct the participants regarding their responsibilities and movements according to the plans you have discussed; ushers will be instructed as to the seating of family members and guests; a walkthrough of the processional and the recessional will be conducted. The pastor will lead the couple through their vows and movements as they will be performed at the actual ceremony.

It is important that all members of the wedding party attend the rehearsal and arrive at the church 15 minutes before the scheduled time so that the rehearsal can begin promptly. Please schedule your rehearsal time with this in mind. Bring the marriage license and any items that will be needed for the wedding day (guest register, wedding programs, unity candle, etc.) to the rehearsal. The rehearsal shall proceed in as timely a manner as possible due to time constraints for the pastor and musicians. Starting on time will also help your wedding party be on time for post-rehearsal festivities. You can plan on the wedding rehearsal lasting approximately one hour.

Your Wedding Day

If you have a Wedding Director, they will assist with the preparations, distribute flowers, and direct the wedding procession. The Wedding Director will notify the ushers when it is time to seat the family members, and when to gather for the processional. This person will organize the wedding party for the processional and assist with timing. Following the recessional, the Wedding Director will direct the couple to a private area until the Sanctuary is cleared and the photographer is ready.

Church Liaison

The services of the Soapstone Church Liaison are required for all weddings held at Soapstone. The Church Liaison is to be present at the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony to assist with any facility concerns on the day of the rehearsal and wedding. There is a \$150.00 fee for the services of this person, and includes opening the church for the rehearsal through closing the church after the rehearsal and opening the church for the florist, wedding party and photographer through the clean-up and closing of the church building after the wedding has concluded. This fee should be paid directly to the Church Liaison at the rehearsal. The Church Liaison will arrive at the church no more than 30 minutes before the rehearsal to unlock the doors, turn on lights, etc. If items need to be brought to the church on the day of the rehearsal (candelabras, flowers, etc), please coordinate this with the Wedding Coordinator. This person will ensure that the building will be unlocked and available to drop off your items. On the day of your wedding, the Church Liaison will open the church for the wedding party, photographer, and florist.

Music Selections

Since the Christian marriage ceremony is a sacred service of worship, special care should be taken to choose music that is worshipful. Secular music is discouraged. The Director of Music can suggest appropriate instrumental and vocal selections.

A piano is available in the church Sanctuary at our main site on Norwood Road.

Soapstone does not negotiate for musicians or soloists on your behalf. However, should you need suggestions on musicians or soloists, please contact the Director of Music. It is recommended that these arrangements be made at least 6 months prior to the wedding date. Guest musicians and soloists should plan to attend the wedding rehearsal. Arrangements should be made to pay all musicians directly.

Facilities

Sanctuary

The Sanctuary at our main site seats approximately 325 people. A grand piano is available. Because the Sanctuary also serves as our multipurpose room, this space is not available for a reception. Small receptions may be requested in Room 200 (max occupancy is 120 people).

THE PIANO AND PULPIT CANNOT BE MOVED. After confirming with the Wedding Coordinator, the following furniture can be moved from the front of the Sanctuary: the altar and large chairs. No other furniture may be moved from the altar area. All Praise Band equipment will be removed from the chancel area by the Soapstone AV Team. Please do not move any items yourself. Any movement of furniture or rearrangement of the Sanctuary chairs must be approved in advance through the Wedding Coordinator.

A Soapstone AV operator is required and will be assigned to assist you. There will be an additional fee of \$150.00 for this service that will be paid directly to the AV operator at the rehearsal. At least four weeks before the wedding date, we will need to know the AV needs for the ceremony. The couple will need to complete the AV Needs Form attached to this policy.

The couple may use rooms 119 and 101/103 for dressing and preparing for the ceremony.

Custodial Services

Custodial services are required for ensuring the space is ready prior to and after the ceremony. The custodial fee is \$150.00 and can be given to the Church Liaison at the rehearsal. This provides for: vacuuming and cleaning of all facilities used for the wedding, cleaning of sidewalks and entry way before and after the wedding and returning furnishings to their original positions (if moving them has been requested and approved). Any special setup arrangements must be made through the Wedding Coordinator. All decorations must be removed immediately following the ceremony.

Decorations and Flowers

Soapstone has two altar candles and a kneeling bench available if the couple would like to utilize them.

Arbors are allowed, but are not provided. The candlelighter/extinguisher is to be used for lighting and extinguishing all candles. Do not use tacks, nails, uncoated wire, or staples on any church furnishings. Ribbons and greenery may be attached using elasticized cord, string, non-adhesive tape, or chenille sticks. To protect the facility, any flower petals dropped by the flower girl should be silk or paper. Please place plastic under any plants or containers that could possibly leak. Do not place decorations on top of the piano, Bibles or hymnals. You are responsible for informing the florist of these policies. You will need to contact the Wedding Coordinator to

schedule a time to decorate the Sanctuary and if special arrangements need to be made for delivery of flowers. Flowers for the wedding party may be left in the foyer and should be labeled for the Wedding Director or assigned person to distribute. If you would like any flowers to be used for Sunday Worship in your honor, contact the church office as soon as possible. Please do not leave any flowers on the altar unless this has already been arranged with the Director of Administrative Services. Outside, please use birdseed rather than rice. Bubbles may also be used outside. Do not use paper, balloons, or other materials on the car of the couple that will litter the churchyard and highway as you depart.

Photography

The taking of pictures should not detract from the worship service. Pictures may be taken before the ceremony, and the wedding party is welcome to return to the Sanctuary for pictures immediately following the ceremony. Filming is permitted if done discretely and without extra lighting. No flash photography or film advance noise is permitted during the ceremony. Neither photographers nor videographers are permitted to move about the Sanctuary during the ceremony. Please inform your photographer and guests of this policy. Photographers may take pictures from the back of the Sanctuary during the ceremony as long as there is no flash and no advance noise to interrupt the ceremony. Any equipment must be in place and operational 45 minutes before the ceremony is scheduled to begin.

Miscellaneous Regulations and Information

- Any adjustments to the thermostat must be made by the Church Liaison.
- No alcoholic beverages are allowed on the church property at any time during the rehearsal, wedding preparations, or wedding ceremony.
- The use of tobacco is prohibited on church property.
- The wedding party is responsible for all personal items brought to the church. If rented or borrowed property has been used, it is the responsibility of the family to see it is removed immediately after the wedding.
- The church will not be responsible for personal items such as wedding dresses, purses, silver or glassware brought to the church for use in the wedding. The church shall not be held liable for such items being lost, stolen, or damaged.
- The wedding activities (florist set-up, wedding party arrival, etc.) cannot begin more than 4 hours prior to the wedding time. If you have a 5pm wedding, the church will be opened at 1pm for the florist to set up any floral arrangements or other approved decorating or for the wedding party to arrive for pictures, etc.
- The wedding activities (florist take down, photographs, etc.) must be completed no later than 1 hour after the completion of the wedding ceremony.

Wedding Planning Checklist

Following the engagement, contact the Wedding Coordinator

Fill out Wedding Planning Sheet to confirm wedding date on church calendar.

Six Months prior to Wedding

Schedule any musicians and/or soloists.

Contact the Pastor to schedule counseling sessions.

Two Months Prior To the Wedding

Couple should review wedding plans with the Pastor and Wedding Coordinator.

One Month Prior to Wedding

Finalize all wedding service plans with Pastor & Wedding Coordinator.

Contact Wedding Coordinator if there are any special room arrangement needs. Also, set date/time for Sanctuary to be decorated, if applicable.

Submit Audio Visual Planning Form if you will require Audio Visual services.

At the Rehearsal

Pay the Soapstone UMC Church Liaison directly (**Do not** make check out to Soapstone UMC)

Pay the Audio/Visual Operator directly (**Do not** make check out to Soapstone UMC)

Pay the Custodian Fee directly to the Church Liaison (**Do not** make check out to Soapstone UMC)

Immediately Following the Wedding

All personal items and decorations must be removed from the church.

Soapstone Wedding Planning Sheet

Please complete as much information on this form as possible and turn in to your Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible to confirm your wedding date.

Wedding Date and Time _____

Rehearsal Date and Time _____

Partner 1 _____

Member / Non-Member (circle one)

Partner 2 _____

Member / Non-Member

Partner 1's Parents: _____

Members / Non-Members

Partner 2's Parents: _____

Members / Non-Members

Contact Person: _____

Phone # _____

Email: _____

Pastor performing ceremony _____ Phone # _____

(If someone other than a Soapstone UMC Pastor, a letter confirming premarital counseling must be sent by presiding pastor.)

Facility Requirements

Main Site

Partner 1 Room: (Room 119 recommended) _____

Partner 2 Room: (Room 101/103 recommended) _____

Will the wedding party be dressing at the church? Yes _____ No _____ Arrival Time _____

Will you require use of the AV system? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please fill out the AV Planning Form and turn in at least one month prior to the event.

Wedding Service Providers

Wedding Director _____ Phone # _____

Florist _____ Phone Number _____ Arrival time _____

Photographer _____ Phone Number _____ Arrival Time _____

Pictures taken before wedding All _____ Half _____ Pictures start at _____

Videographer _____ Phone Number _____

Who have you enlisted for the following?

	Name	Phone Number	Email	Arrival Time
Pianist				
Vocalist(s)				
Other musicians				

I have read and understand the policies and procedures contained within this document.

Signed _____

Date _____

Office Use Only:

Church Liaison: _____

AV Operator: _____

Custodian: _____

Wedding Fees and Honoraria for a Soapstone UMC member wedding:

\$150 for Church Custodian, given to Church Liaison at rehearsal

\$150 for Church AV operator, given to Church Liaison at rehearsal

\$150 for Church Liaison, given to Church Liaison at rehearsal

No honorarium is required for our pastors, but should the couple want to offer, a suggested amount is \$250.

Non-Member Fees:

\$1250 for Church Usage made out to Soapstone UMC and payable prior to wedding date being put on the church calendar

\$250 for Church Custodian paid to Wedding Liaison at rehearsal

\$250 for Church AV operator paid to AV Operator at rehearsal

\$250 for Church Liaison paid to Wedding Liaison at rehearsal

\$500 for Soapstone Pastor for pre-marital counseling and to perform the ceremony paid to the Pastor at the rehearsal

Soapstone UMC Wedding AV needs

Microphone for Partner 1 _____ Yes _____ No

Microphone for Partner 2 _____ Yes _____ No

Microphone for Pastor _____ Yes _____ No

Will you have a pianist? _____ Yes _____ No

Will you use any recorded music that will need to play through the speakers

_____ Yes _____ No

Will you have a scripture reader that will need to use the Pulpit mic

_____ Yes _____ No

Will you have a soloist/vocalists that will need a microphone _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, how many _____

Will you have a musician/musicians other than pianist that will need a microphone

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, how many and what types of instruments _____

Will you have any type of slide show or presentation needs for the screen/projector

Any other AV needs not listed above _____
