



**SILVER SPRING**  
**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  

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**A RECONCILING CONGREGATION**

## **Wedding Information Handbook**

### **Two Ministry Locations**

#### **Downtown Campus and Administrative Office (Formerly Woodside UMC)**

8900 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Telephone; (301) 587-1215

Website: [silverspringumc.org](http://silverspringumc.org)

Fax: (301) 589-6338

E-mail: [info@silverspringumc.org](mailto:info@silverspringumc.org)

#### Church Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday – 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

(The Church Office is closed Wednesdays)

#### **Four Corners Campus (Formerly Marvin Memorial UMC)**

33 University Blvd., East, Silver Spring, MD 20910

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Congratulations on your decision to get married. We have prepared this wedding manual to assist you in making arrangements for your wedding ceremony.

A wedding is a service of worship, whose shape is largely determined by the Wedding Ritual of the United Methodist Church and its Book of Worship. We ask you to read carefully and consider thoughtfully the procedures outlined in this booklet. Other liturgies and forms may be authorized after consultation with our pastors.

In the case of persons of different faiths, the clergy person of another church or religion may officiate along with one of the Silver Spring UMC pastors. The ritual may be an adaptation of the faith traditions of the couple. Your wedding at Silver Spring UMC will be conducted in a reverent, beautiful, and memorable manner.

## **MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CONGREGATION**

Woodside United Methodist Church and Marvin Memorial United Methodist Church merged to form Silver Spring United Methodist Church in January of 2014.

The mission of Silver Spring United Methodist Church is to be a movement of Christ's love to the people of Silver Spring, feeding all God's people – body, mind and spirit – so that no one goes hungry. We also seek to follow the Wesleyan model of Christian discipleship that is both inwardly and outwardly focused, that is both personal and communal. This is how we live out our Christian faith and are empowered to “transform the world” by our own spiritual growth and the discipleship of others.

Further, upon becoming a Reconciling Congregation in 2013, we adopted a welcoming statement that says: Silver Spring United Methodist Church believes that having open hearts, open minds and open doors means we are called to share God's welcome with all people. We are a community where believers, seekers and doubters of every race, ethnicity, age, ability, socioeconomic status, gender identity and sexual orientation are valued as beloved children of God. We believe that Jesus taught of God's love and acceptance for all, which we seek to embody through our actions, prayers, service, witness and discipleship. All are welcome here!

## MINISTRY OF MARRIAGE

At Silver Spring United Methodist Church, a Reconciling Congregation, we believe that marriage is a ministry of the church. Just as our worship and sacraments are open to all, so too is the covenant of marriage open to any two persons who wish to commit their lives in faithful covenant to one another before God and the faith community. The specific guidelines below primarily relate to the marriage ceremony itself. However, SSUMC's commitment to marriage as a ministry extends beyond the marriage ceremony. We seek to nourish the marriage relationships of those in our congregation by addressing healthy marriage relationships in retreat opportunities, counseling, small group study, and other programming.

Christian marriage is an extension of baptism and demonstrates that our lives are holy and sacramental. The language, symbols, and ritual of Christian marriage embody this concept. Those gathered are not just passive witnesses, but part of a worship service.

The Christian wedding ceremony is a religious celebration in which two persons, before God and the faith community:

- Ask for God's blessing
- Declare and affirm their faith, love, and commitment
- Commit their common journey into the hands of God
- Reconcile themselves with God and with each other, and
- Join their lives to the fullest of their capacity

A Christian wedding ceremony can be performed in one of our sanctuaries or officiated off-site by one of our pastors. Interfaith weddings are welcome and the Ministry of Marriage is available to both members and non-members. Couples seeking to be married will meet with one of our pastors.

Together they will:

- Examine the guidelines surrounding Christian marriage
- Determine the timing of the wedding and availability of one of our pastors to officiate
- Establish the couple's willingness to participate in pre-marital counseling
- Discuss services available to the wedding ceremony (music, reception space, etc.)
- Review the restrictions on use of the church facility (or related to off-site ceremonies)

## **TIME FOR YOUR WEDDING**

Silver Spring United Methodist Church has been the choice of many couples as that special place for their wedding. Our experience indicates that three hours provides plenty of time for most weddings. At the same time, it takes into consideration that another wedding or other church events may be scheduled for the same day. The basis for and normal use of this time is as follows:

- One and one half hours before the wedding ceremony, to allow for delivery and arrangement of flowers, set-up by photographers, arrival of the wedding party with plenty of time to dress , arrival of ushers and seating of guests,
- One half hour for the average length ceremony, and
- One hour after the ceremony for photography and receiving line if one is scheduled for the church.

If you believe additional time will be required for your wedding, please discuss it with the church during your initial meeting so special overtime arrangements can be made.

To avoid conflicts with other church events,

### **YOUR REHEARSAL AND YOUR WEDDING MUST BEGIN ON TIME!**

All participants of the wedding party must be present for the rehearsal and wedding to begin, and it is the responsibility of the couple to ensure that everyone does arrive on time.

All persons entering our church are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for a house of worship, and to exhibit behavior that is respectful of the church and other people. Pastors will not proceed with the wedding if any wedding party member is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

## SCHEDULING

The pastors and congregation of Silver Spring United Methodist Church are pleased that you have chosen to consider our church for the location of your wedding. If you have not visited our church in the past, we encourage you to arrange a tour of our facilities. After reviewing this booklet, please telephone the church office during our business hours.

When you telephone the office, some basic information will be obtained. One of our pastors will then call to schedule an initial meeting with the couple at which time a preliminary date and time can be noted for our calendar.

Please complete the **Wedding Information Sheet** (found on page 15 of this handbook) and return it to the church office along with your deposit. Your wedding will be officially scheduled on our calendar upon approval by our pastor and receipt of your deposit.

Our pastors expect to meet with couples for Pre-Marital Conferences, usually four sessions, prior to the rehearsal. These meetings are intended to explore the dynamics of your relationship, to discuss the church's understanding of the marriage covenant and your own, and to make specific plans for the ceremony.

A Marriage License is required and must be presented to the pastor at the rehearsal. The couple is responsible for obtaining the license. For specific information, please contact the Marriage License Division of the State of Maryland Circuit Court in Rockville at 240 - 777-9460. Please apply for the license at least four to six weeks in advance.

Rehearsals are generally held the evening before the wedding. The date and time will be arranged with the pastor.

If you desire a wedding bulletin (program), the pastor will assist you with the Order of Worship details and must approve them. Bulletin production is the responsibility of the couple.

Weddings may be scheduled in the Downtown Sanctuary, which seats 500 guests. Smaller weddings may be held in Downtown Chapel, which seats about 100 people. Weddings may need to be scheduled around other building uses. Wedding party dressing rooms are available.

## OUR WEDDING COORDINATOR

The Wedding Coordinator assists in planning and coordinating details of wedding ceremonies at Silver Spring UMC such as flowers, photography, etc. You are encouraged to arrange a meeting with the coordinator at the church at your earliest convenience for assistance in the practical matters pertaining to the wedding setting and building usage.

From the date your wedding is scheduled until the conclusion of your ceremony, the wedding coordinator will familiarize you with the church, the equipment, the policies, and the procedures for use of the space.

The coordinator can be consulted by your florist and photographer at the church, prior to the ceremony, to answer questions about your arrangements, as well as church policies as needed.

Experienced in such matters as wedding protocol, the coordinator ensures that the wedding procession and the ceremony go well.

The coordinator will attend the rehearsal to ensure that every member of the wedding party understands the importance of their part in your wedding. Fielding last minute questions and walking through the ceremony will ensure that your wedding will be the special event that you want.

## MUSIC

As an integral part of a wedding ceremony, music should be an important element in your wedding planning. Our Director of Music can serve as a valuable resource.

Our Sanctuary contains a 35 rank Moller pipe organ. Both the Sanctuary and Chapel also have fine pianos. Permission must be secured from the Director of Music to use any of the church's instruments by anyone other than Silver Spring UMC organists.

Wedding music is played as guests arrive. There is processional music for the wedding party and the couple, and recessional music at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Our organist will help you choose specific pieces of music for these elements of the service. If the church organist is not available to play a wedding, we will work to secure another organist. If you wish to use vocal soloists or instrumentalists in your wedding, please ask them to contact our Director of Music to arrange rehearsal times. Please discuss your plans to use recorded music with the Director of Music.

If our church organist is not available to play at your wedding, the minimum wedding fee for someone from outside to play is \$250 plus \$75 or more for attending the rehearsal(s). Be sure to include those costs in your wedding budget.

Unless special arrangements have been made, the organist does not attend your wedding rehearsal.

## FLOWERS

The beauty of flowers is a special part of any wedding ceremony. At Silver Spring UMC such arrangements may be placed on stands at either side of the steps leading to the chancel area or on window stands in addition to other locations throughout the building. The wedding coordinator can offer suggestions for placement of floral and decorative arrangements.

The church has seasonal flowers, decorations, symbols and banners that cannot be removed from the church. No flowers will be placed on the communion table.

Please recognize that our church is a worshipping community and that we observe the liturgical year. Consequently, the 'look' of our sanctuary changes with the church season. Sometimes there are special flowers. A special wreath appears at Advent; special banners hang during other seasons. A wedding held in our church takes place in the existing, ongoing worship life of the congregation, not separate and apart from it. Therefore, please do not ask for sanctuary decorations to be removed for your wedding. Please ask a pastor what you may expect to find in the sanctuary on the date of your wedding.

If you plan any decorations beyond normal floral arrangements, we ask that scotch tape, thumb tacks, or plastic holders NOT be used in connection with any such decorations. The use of ribbons or chenille stems is suggested. Additionally rice, confetti, flower petals, birdseed, etc. may NOT be used in the sanctuary or on the property.

Please contact our wedding coordinator to make arrangements for access to the church by the florist. After the ceremony, flowers may be removed or left for our Sunday morning worship.

For reasons of safety, floor runners are not permitted in the church Sanctuary or Chapel.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

When you desire a wedding in our church, it becomes our concern that there be a worshipful and religious atmosphere at all times. It is therefore necessary that you, the couple, read, understand, and inform your designated photographers, as well as your guests, of the following rules and procedures before the wedding to eliminate any misunderstanding at the time of the ceremony. We encourage you to ask them to contact our Wedding Coordinator for answers to any questions they have relative to our church policies.

1. Photographs may be taken before the ceremony, in the room where the bridal party is assembled, until 15 minutes before the ceremony is scheduled to begin.
2. Some couples like to have their photos taken before the ceremony. This should take place minimally one hour prior to the service.
3. Photographs may be taken after the wedding in the Sanctuary, where the ceremony may be simulated, if desired.
4. During the ceremony, pictures may be taken **ONLY FROM THE BALCONY** -still or video. This is for professionals as well as the guests. **Flash or floodlight pictures are NOT permitted at any time during the ceremony.**

The photographer shall confer with the Wedding Coordinator regarding placement of equipment when he or she arrives at the church.

Couples frequently also have their wedding ceremony recorded by a video photographer. The same rules of decorum apply.

## **PARKING**

Our Downtown parking lots accommodate about 125 cars. This limit is important to remember when determining how many invitations to send.

The couple is responsible to ensure that their guests not park in reserved or handicapped spaces (unless the car is properly tagged).

Silver Spring UMC is bordered by the very busy Georgia Avenue, on which there is no parking during the week; and adjacent streets that require residential parking permits.

## **OTHER POLICIES YOU SHOULD KNOW**

- NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES are permitted at any time on the property of Silver Spring United Methodist Church, except as part of Holy Communion.
- NO SMOKING is allowed anywhere inside our buildings or on the portico or sidewalks.
- NO throwing of rice, confetti, or birdseed.
- The church is not responsible for personal possessions of guests.

## RECEPTIONS IN DOWNTOWN CAMPUS FELLOWSHIP HALL

Receptions may be held in Silver Spring UMC's Fellowship Hall. If you wish to have your reception at Silver Spring UMC, please contact the church office as soon as wedding arrangements are completed with the Pastor.

A fee of \$500.00 is charged for use of Fellowship Hall for a wedding reception lasting up to four hours. There is a charge for \$125.00 for each additional hour. Additionally, a minimum deposit of \$100.00 is charged for custodial services required, such as set-up and cleanup.

Food preparation for a reception served in Fellowship Hall must be done under the supervision of qualified persons who have completed the Montgomery County Health Department Service Courses. Your wedding coordinator can give you the name and contact information for our preferred caterer.

Food and beverages are NOT to be taken out of Fellowship Hall. As a **reminder**, **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** are permitted at any time on the property of Silver Spring United Methodist Church.

All activities must conclude by 10:00 p.m.

The maximum capacity for Fellowship Hall is 150 people seated at tables. We have Chairs and rectangle and round tables available for use. Talk with our Wedding Coordinator to determine your layout and setup needs.

Please ask your wedding coordinator for contact the church office if you are interested in using our pre

## THINGS TO REMEMBER

- |   | Date  | Time  |
|---|-------|-------|
| • Wedding:  | _____ | _____ |
| • Rehearsal:  | _____ | _____ |
| • Appointments with Pastor (Call _____ to schedule)         |       |       |
| ○ Initial Meeting:  | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Counseling Session 1:                                     | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Counseling Session 2:                                     | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Counseling Session 3:                                     | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Counseling Session 4:                                     | _____ | _____ |
| • Meeting with Wedding Coordinator (Call _____ to schedule) |       |       |
| ○ Initial Meeting:  | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Additional Meeting(s):                                    | _____ | _____ |
| • Meeting with Music Director (Call _____ to schedule.)     |       |       |
| ○ Music Selection:  | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Rehearsal, if necessary:                                  | _____ | _____ |
| • Other Wedding Vendors, if necessary                       |       |       |
| ○ Florist:  | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Decorator:  | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Photographer:   | _____ | _____ |
| ○ Caterer:  | _____ | _____ |

### Fees Paid to Church

Date	Amount Paid	Balance Due
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

## **NON-MEMBER FEE & PAYMENT INFORMATION**

The fee charged for a wedding includes use of our facilities and parking lot as well as honoraria for the officiating pastor, the organist, the wedding coordinator, and other staff to encompass the many services involved in both the arrangements and ceremony.

### **PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

	<u>Sanctuary Wedding</u>	<u>Chapel Wedding</u>
Refundable Security Deposit	\$250.00	\$200.00
Wedding Fee	\$2,500.00	\$1,000.00
Hourly Overtime Charge (over 3 hrs)	\$125.00	\$100.00
Reception Hall Use (optional)	\$500.00	\$500.00

The security deposit is necessary to cover non-schedule overtime costs and ensure that any damage done to the church property by wedding participants and guests is repaired or replaced, as needed. The Security Deposit is refundable upon the satisfactory condition of the space after the wedding.

A minimum first payment of \$750.00 fee and the Wedding Information Form must be received by the Church Office to officially schedule your wedding.

The balance of your wedding fee must be received in the Church Office no later than 30 days before your wedding date. Do not hesitate to contact the Church Office with any questions.

If you cancel or need to change your wedding date, your deposit is refundable if the church is notified at least 90 days in advance of your schedule wedding date. Changes are subject to the approval of the senior pastor, the officiating pastor and space availability on the date of any such request.

## **CHURCH MEMBER FEE & PAYMENT INFORMATION**

The fee charged for a wedding includes use of our facilities and parking lot as well as honoraria for the officiating pastor, the organist, the wedding coordinator, and other staff to encompass the many services involved in both the arrangements and ceremony.

A church member is a person who joined the church at least one year prior to the date of the planned wedding,

When either member of the engaged couple is a full member of Silver Spring United Methodist Church, the charge for a wedding ceremony is as follows.

### **PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

	Sanctuary Wedding	Chapel Wedding
Wedding Fee	\$1,000.00	\$750.00
Hourly Overtime Charge (over 4 hrs)	\$125.00	\$100.00
Reception Hall	\$350.00	\$350.00

A minimum deposit of \$500.00 and the Wedding Information Form must be received by the Church Office to officially schedule your wedding.

The balance of your wedding fee must be received in the Church Office no later than 30 days before your wedding date. Do not hesitate to contact the Church Office with any questions.

If you cancel or need to change your wedding date, your deposit is refundable if the church is notified at least 90 days in advance of your schedule wedding date. Changes are subject to the approval of the senior pastor, the officiating pastor and space availability on the date of any such request.



Silver Spring United Methodist Church | 301-587-1215 | silverspringumc.org

## Wedding Information Sheet

### Marrying Parties:

Name 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Office Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell/Office Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

We would like to use:

Service:      Downtown Sanctuary            Downtown Chapel            Four Corners Sanctuary

Reception:    Downtown Fellowship Hall    Four Corners Fellowship Hall    Not Needed/Off-Site

We would like to consult with the music director about service music \_\_\_\_\_

We do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ plan to have the Reception at the church.

We do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_ plan to use the Fellowship Hall.

We estimate (within 10%) that \_\_\_\_\_ people will attend the wedding.

**By signing below, we acknowledge that 1) we have received a copy of the SSUMC wedding booklet; 2) we have familiarized ourselves with church polices and fees outlined in the booklet; 3) we agree to respect and honor the sanctity of the church; and 4) we understand that pre-marriage counseling sessions are required and it is our responsibility to coordinate with the officiating pastor to schedule these sessions.**

Marrying Party Signature 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Marrying Party Signature 2 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Office Use Only: Receipt of deposit, scheduling, and approval \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you, and all good wishes to the Happy Couple!!*