

Wedding Guidelines



Calvary United Methodist Church
403 South Main Street
Mount Airy, Maryland 21771
301-829-0358 ~ church@calvary-mtairy.org
www.calvary-mtairy.org

Senior Pastor: Reverend Stephen Larsen
Associate Pastor: Reverend Angela Flanagan

Congratulations on your engagement! We are pleased that you are planning to be married and are considering having your wedding at Calvary United Methodist Church. The congregation and pastors wish to do all that they can to make this occasion memorable and rewarding for the two of you and your guests.

You probably have many questions at this stage of your planning. This guide is intended to anticipate many of the questions that couples commonly raise related to the church and the wedding service. We trust that this guide will be helpful to you as you plan and prepare for your wedding.

God bless you as you prepare for your wedding and the life you will share together as husband and wife.

Scheduling:

- The ideal time to make the first contact with the church is six or more months ahead of the wedding date. This allows sufficient time to plan and reflect on your relationship, as well as make all the arrangements necessary for a smooth and hassle-free wedding day.
- When you initially contact the church, the date and time of your wedding will be penciled onto the church calendar.
- Weddings at Calvary United Methodist Church are usually conducted by the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor. If you have a preference for either pastor, please let us know when you initially contact the church. One of the pastors will be in touch with you to discuss availability and confirm the date and time.
- The church will not be reserved until the church has received a scheduling fee (\$100) and completed Wedding Reservation form enclosed in this booklet. The scheduling fee is non-refundable.

- If you wish to see the Sanctuary, the best time is to join us for worship on a Sunday morning. The pastors will be happy to take a few moments after one of the services to meet you and answer any questions you may have.

Requirements for Marriage:

- Calvary United Methodist Church does not require that either the bride or the groom be a member of this congregation or any other church. However, all wedding services at Calvary will be carried out as an act of worship consistent with a Christian understanding of marriage.
- If neither of you are currently a member of Calvary Church, we ask that you attend a worship service at least once before we place your wedding date on the church calendar. When you attend, please be sure to sign the Registration Book during the worship service so that we know that you have been with us.
- Upon occasion, a wedding ceremony may be performed without one of the pastors of Calvary Church being present. This does require the approval of one of the pastors. It may also be possible for additional clergy to participate in the wedding ceremony upon approval of one of the pastors from Calvary. Calvary's Wedding Coordinator is required for all weddings not performed by a Calvary Church pastor.
- Each couple is required to complete pre-marriage counseling with one of the pastors, focusing on ways to strengthen and grow in the couple's relationship and communication skills. The pastor will discuss this with the couple at the initial interview.



Use of the Church:

- The main worship space or Sanctuary has seating capacity for approximately 400 guests.
- The church is available to the wedding party and guests up to 90 minutes before and after the ceremony.
- No smoking is allowed anywhere in the building. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on church property.
- A smaller worship space is available in the Trinity Chapel, which can seat about 35 guests.

Music:

- Music is an important part of the wedding ceremony. In most cases, music will be provided by the church organist. A list of other qualified organists is available if the regular organist is not available. Additional music may be included in the services as well, in consultation with the church pastor. The marriage ceremony is first and foremost a service of worship and the music for the wedding needs to reflect this.
- It is the couple's responsibility to contact the organist in a timely fashion, well in advance of the wedding day, to arrange for her services.

Photography and Video:

- Since all church weddings take place in the context of worship, all photographers (amateur as well as professional) are asked to refrain from taking pictures during the ceremony, with the exception of the processional and recessional. This includes pictures taken without a flash.

- Pictures re-enacting the ceremony can be taken before or after the service and the presiding pastor will be available for this purpose.
- A stationary video camera can be used if arranged with the pastor in advance.
- The couple is expected to inform the photographer and their guests of these policies regarding photography and use of video.

Other Considerations:

- The marriage license must be obtained at the **Carroll County** courthouse. In the State of Maryland, there is a 48-hour waiting period between applying for the license and receipt. The license is good for six months. It is best to obtain the license well ahead of the wedding date. The license must be given to the pastor no later than the start of the wedding rehearsal.
- No rice, birdseed or confetti is to be thrown on the church property. This tradition is best followed as the couple leaves the reception. If you wish to have something comparable at the church, bubbles are best.
- Arrangements can also be made for a pastor to conduct a wedding ceremony away from the church.

Regarding the Use of the Church Building:

- No alcoholic beverages are to be consumed in the church or on the grounds.
- Smoking is not allowed inside the church building.
- Rice, birdseed, or confetti should not be thrown on church property.

- All personal belongings of the wedding party must be removed from the church building following the ceremony, unless other arrangements are made with the pastor or Wedding Coordinator. The church is not liable for possessions left behind in the building.
- Custodial support is required for all weddings and is included in the basic wedding fee. If additional set-up and/or cleanup time is required, a fee of \$25.00 per hour will be charged.
- If flowers are to be delivered or decorations put in place prior to 90 minutes before the wedding ceremony, please call the Church Office (301-829-0358 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday).
- Altar flowers may be taken from or left at the church.
- A nursery room for young children is available if the family wants to engage an adult (18 or older) to supervise the children.
- The church can also provide a venue for a rehearsal dinner and/or a reception. Cost and guidelines for use of our church facilities for these events are available upon request.



Regarding Wedding Fees:

- Please contact the church office at 301-829-0358 or church@calvary-mtairy.org for more information on fees.