

**Wedding Policy** (Adopted May 5, 2009)  
Surfside United Methodist Church  
800 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue North  
Surfside Beach, SC 29575  
843-238-2734 ksims@surfsideumc.org

We are happy that you have chosen Surfside United Methodist Church for your wedding. We want to help in every way to make your wedding a significant and joyous event. A Christian wedding is a service of Divine worship. It should be simple, reverent and in keeping with the liturgy, ritual and traditions of the church. Please remember as a service of worship, that all invited guests who share in this event are not spectators, but worshipers.

The pastors and the wedding coordinators have assembled this booklet to answer any questions you may have and to inform you of specific policies and procedures for weddings within Surfside United Methodist Church.

### **PLACEMENT ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR**

Reservations for church facilities for rehearsal, rehearsal dinner, ceremony and/or reception must be made through the church Office Manager (Mrs. Kesha Sims). Arrangements made by telephone are only tentative. The church is not considered *reserved* until the application is signed AND the officiating pastor has confirmed the date on his/her calendar.

Weddings will not be scheduled on the following holidays: Holy Week, Thanksgiving weekend (including Wednesday night), Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day.

Non-members can secure a date for a wedding only six months prior to the desired date. Members are defined as individuals being an active participating member for at least one year prior to the date of the wedding. This must be either the bride or groom or the parent(s) of either the bride or the groom.

### **PASTORS**

Weddings at Surfside United Methodist Church will be performed by one or more of our staff pastors, or by a staff pastor and a visiting pastor. If the bride or groom would like for another pastor to participate in the service, the invitation must be extended by a pastor of Surfside United Methodist Church. You are asked to contact the Office Manager when you set the date for your wedding. She will clear the date with the pastor that you have requested to conduct your ceremony. You are asked to contact the officiating pastor to discuss the schedule for the **REQUIRED** pre-marital counseling **six months** prior to the wedding date. Completion of six hours in this premarital preparation course entitles the couple to a SC tax credit. Final decisions on all questions about process and procedures for the wedding will be made by the officiating pastor.

### **RITUAL AND SERVICE**

The ritual of the United Methodist Church is to be used for the service. Pastors of other denominations will be expected to use this ritual. The traditional language of the United Methodist ritual is in keeping with the sacred atmosphere of a worship service.

There is no such thing as a private service of Holy Communion in the United Methodist Church. If the Sacrament is desired as a part of your service, all persons must be invited to commune. The best optional time for the Sacrament is during the rehearsal.

Surfside United Methodist Church encourages the use of a processional for all weddings that includes all members of the wedding party—including the groom, best man, and pastor(s). We utilize a processional because we are a liturgical church and the wedding ceremony is a service of Divine worship no different than any other worship service. The use of an acolyte is suggested. The processional leads to the presence of God at the altar.

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### **WEDDING COORDINATOR**

**It is the policy of this church that the Wedding Coordinator (Mrs. Gini Abee) or one of her designated assistants handles all weddings at SUMC.** This is to insure that all ceremonies are services of worship. She is to be employed by the wedding party and will implement the church policies and be ready to assist the wedding party regarding all details of weddings. It will be the responsibility of the Wedding Coordinator, in conjunction with the pastors, to direct the rehearsal and the wedding. (Contact information for the Wedding Coordinator is available in the church office.)

Both members and non-members using the church facilities are required to consult with and use the Wedding Coordinator as soon as the wedding date is secured through the church office. **Payment for these services should be made directly to the Coordinator and are due PRIOR to the wedding rehearsal.**

### **MUSIC**

Church Organist: Mrs. Sherri Boschen (sboschen@surfsideumc.org).

Music for your wedding will be arranged through the Church Organist, **who will help you plan appropriate sacred music for the service.** Please be in touch with her as soon as you reserve the church for your wedding. If for any reason, she cannot participate, she will make recommendations as to who may be contacted for your service. The Organist will also be available to consult with you regarding soloists or instrumentalists and will play the organ for the wedding service. The Church Organist will discuss with you the fees. **Payment for these services should be made directly to the Organist and are due PRIOR to the wedding rehearsal.**

Since a wedding is a service of worship, sacred music will be used. Any other music desired should be played at the rehearsal party or wedding reception. All music, both vocal and instrumental, must be in keeping with this standard. The words must be sacred and the style of musical composition must be in keeping with our congregation's standards. Use of the United Methodist Hymnal and the opportunity for congregational singing is an option. Non-sacred (secular) music is prohibited. If a soloist is desired, this singer must be approved by the Church Organist before the rehearsal date, as rehearsals must occur before that time. **Fees are payable directly to the soloist and are due prior to the wedding rehearsal.**

### **DECORATIONS/FLOWERS**

Floral and candle arrangements should be appropriate for the worship service with the cross and the Altar Table as the focal point of the sanctuary. We encourage simplicity of decoration. Therefore, below is a list of guidelines to help in selecting appropriate decorations.

1. No decorations may be placed on the Altar Table, Altar Rail, Lectern, or Pulpit, with the exception of a floral centerpiece on the Altar Table.
2. Paraments reflecting the seasonal color or white may be used.
3. No tacks, sticky florist's clay, tape, or anything else that is harmful to the surface of wood may be used to secure decorations. Pew markers may be secured with ribbons or pipe cleaners.
4. No decorations shall be placed that prevents free movement of the wedding party, the pastor(s) or is in conflict with local fire codes.
5. If candles are used in decorations, non-wax candles are required.

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6. The florists/decorators should call the church office to schedule a time for decorating even if they have a key to the church. The church office will share with the florist the times the church will be open for decorating. The church is open two hours prior to the wedding and two hours after. Our Custodian is not available beyond those times.
7. Surfside United Methodist Church does not allow the use of an aisle cloth or runner.
8. If the decorations are not removed promptly after the ceremony, our custodial supervisor will remove them. The church is not responsible for decorations following the wedding's conclusion.
9. **The bride must apprise the florists/decorators of these policies.** Any property damage must be fully restored at the expense of the bride.
10. Upon engaging the church, the bride must inform the Office Manager whether flowers are to be left for Sunday worship services. They may be dedicated in memory or in honor of a loved one. The bride is responsible for the wording to appear in the bulletin.
11. Use of floral or greenery containers not belonging to the church must be approved by the wedding coordinator. Containers which belong to the church may not be removed from the church.
12. Furnishings not to be moved or removed include: Bibles, the piano, the Altar Table, baptismal font, the lectern and the pulpit.
13. No confetti may be dropped in the aisles. Glitter on arrangements and/or ribbons is not permitted.
14. Acolytes are trained to light candles at all services of worship and are available for weddings as well, upon request. If ushers are asked to light the candles, extra time at the rehearsal for instructions by the pastor or wedding director will be needed.

### **PICTURES FOR THE WEDDING**

Pictures are treasured possessions and the pastors will gladly cooperate so that beautiful pictures may be made following the service's conclusion. **Photographers must not interfere with the worship experience during the ceremony.** Below are listed guidelines designed to facilitate the photographer's capturing appropriate remembrances of the ceremony:

- Photographers should be at the church at least one hour prior to the ceremony.
- **NO** flash photographs are permitted **during the ceremony.**
- The photographer will **NOT** stand or kneel in the aisle for a picture of the bride processing. The photographer will **NOT** block the aisles.
- Videotaping is permitted. The wedding coordinator will assist with appropriate placement of cameras/equipment.
- After the ceremony, it is requested that pictures involving the pastors be taken first.
- *Ushers can greatly assist by discreetly reminding guests who arrive with cameras that photographs may be taken AFTER the ceremony ONLY. The conclusion of the service is the Benediction/Recessional.*

It is the bride's responsibility to inform her photographer of the above policies.

### **WEDDING BULLETINS/PROGRAMS**

Surfside United Methodist Church does not produce bulletins/programs for weddings. The following guidelines are for the bride's use in preparing an order of service (in consultation first with the pastors) prior to submitting the order of service to the printers.

Surfside United Methodist Church utilizes either of our denomination's current rituals for the Service of Marriage.

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*A Service of Christian Marriage*

*Prelude*  
*Seating of the Grandparents*  
*Seating of the Mothers*  
*Processional*  
*The Greeting*  
*Declaration of Intent*  
*Presentation of the Bride*  
*Scripture Lesson*  
*Homily (if desired)*  
*Prayer*  
*Exchange of Wedding Vows*  
*Blessing and Exchange of Rings*  
*Declaration of Marriage*  
*Lighting of the Unity Candle*  
*Solo (if desired)*  
*Pastoral Prayer*  
*The Lord's Prayer (in unison or sung.)*  
*Benediction*  
*Recessional*

*Pastor:*

*Organist:*

*Soloist:*

*\*Members of the congregation will be invited to stand for the entrance of the bride. If the bride opts for the congregation to remain seated it should be noted in the Order of Service since general consensus among people attending weddings is to stand at the entrance of the bride.*

**REHEARSAL**

The rehearsal time (approximately one hour) should be arranged when the facilities for the wedding are initially reserved, in order that various members of the wedding party can structure their schedules accordingly. In fairness to the Pastor, the Wedding Coordinator, and others involved, the rehearsal must begin **PROMPTLY** as scheduled and should proceed without unnecessary delay. At the rehearsal, the Wedding Coordinator will give the time schedule for members of the wedding party to arrive for the ceremony. Dressing areas for the bride and her attendants will be assigned at this time. *The marriage license should be brought to the Office Manager no later than Thursday for a Saturday wedding date.*

It is necessary for only the bridal party, parents, and grandparents to attend the rehearsal. **BOTH THE BRIDE AND GROOM SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HAVING THEIR ATTENDANTS ARRIVE ON TIME.** Rehearsals are held to help the wedding party learn the procedures for the service and to remove some of the tension and confusion from the actual service. For this reason, the bride should plan to participate fully in the rehearsal. (THE USE OF STAND-IN BRIDES COMES FROM A NONCHRISTIAN TRADITION AND IS STRONGLY DISCOURAGED.)

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### **CIVIL PREPARATIONS**

A marriage license must be secured from the Probate Court in any county prior to the wedding. A 24-hour waiting period is required before you can secure a license. **A WEDDING CANNOT BE CONDUCTED WITHOUT A VALID LICENSE.** The wedding does not need to be held in the same county in which the license was obtained but the license must be obtained in South Carolina.

### **FACILITIES**

- The Sanctuary will seat approximately 450 guests.
- The Fellowship Hall will accommodate 100 for a meal and 150 for a reception.
- The FLC will accommodate 400 for a meal and 550 for a reception.
- **All** smoking and serving of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in **ALL** church facilities and on church grounds.

*The use of bird seed and rice is prohibited indoors and around the entrances at any time. This can be extremely hazardous and it is the responsibility of the bride and groom to ensure that members of their wedding party are properly advised of this important policy.*

### **WEDDING FEES**

Surfside United Methodist Church makes no charge to its members for the use of its buildings. However, to compensate staff and the contracted custodial service for extra duties involved in your wedding, a schedule of fees has been set. In addition, persons who wish to use the facilities and are non-members of our congregation are asked to pay a usage fee in addition to service fees.

**NON-MEMBERS ARE DEFINED AS: COUPLES WHERE NEITHER THE BRIDE, THE GROOM, NOR THE PARENTS OF EITHER PARTY ARE CURRENT PARTICIPATING MEMBERS OF SURFSIDE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN GOOD STANDING.** Where families have been members for less than one year, usage fees will be required. Non-members are reminded that the honorarium for the pastor is in addition to the facility fees. This covers meetings with the pastor for premarital counseling and for the time spent at the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. **These fees are to be paid two weeks prior to the wedding date. The initial non-refundable deposit of \$100.00 will be credited to the total amount due.**

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### Surfside UMC Member Wedding Application

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_ Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Officiating Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Dinner: \_\_\_\_\_ will not be at the church.

Rehearsal Dinner: \_\_\_\_\_ will be in the \_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall \_\_\_\_\_ FLC (check one if applicable)

Reception: \_\_\_\_\_ will not be at the church

Reception: \_\_\_\_\_ will be in the \_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall \_\_\_\_\_ FLC (check one if applicable)

**Sanctuary Facilities Usage Fees** None

**Rehearsal Dinner**

\_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall None

\_\_\_\_\_ FLC None

**Reception**

\_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall None

\_\_\_\_\_ FLC None

**Wedding Coordinator** (pay directly) 200.00

**Organist** (pay directly) 150.00

**Soloist** (pay directly)

**Sound System Operator** (pay directly) 75.00

**Custodial Fee** (payable to *Coast To Coast Cleaning* – send to Office Manager two weeks prior to wedding)

Wedding & Rehearsal Base Fee 150.00

Rehearsal Dinner in Fellowship Hall add 50.00

Rehearsal Dinner in FLC add 100.00

Reception in Fellowship Hall add 100.00

Reception in FLC add 150.00

Total Due \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Bride/Groom/Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Pastor's Honorarium is the responsibility of the groom and is commensurate with services rendered. ***Honorarium will be delivered directly to the pastor.***

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**Surfside UMC Non-Member Wedding Application**

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_ Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Officiating Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Dinner: \_\_\_\_\_ will not be at the church.

Rehearsal Dinner: \_\_\_\_\_ will be in the \_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall \_\_\_\_\_ FLC (check one if applicable)

Reception: \_\_\_\_\_ will not be at the church

Reception: \_\_\_\_\_ will be in the \_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall \_\_\_\_\_ FLC (check one if applicable)

**Sanctuary Facilities Usage Fees** \$500.00

**Rehearsal Dinner**

\_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall \$150.00

\_\_\_\_\_ FLC \$350.00

**Reception**

\_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall \$150.00

\_\_\_\_\_ FLC \$350.00

**TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Non-refundable Deposit:** (checks payable to SUMC) -100.00 Ck# \_\_\_\_\_ date paid \_\_\_\_\_

Received by \_\_\_\_\_

**Balance** (due two weeks prior to wedding): \_\_\_\_\_ Ck# \_\_\_\_\_ date paid \_\_\_\_\_

Received by \_\_\_\_\_

**Wedding Coordinator** (pay directly) 300.00

**Organist** (pay directly) 200.00

**Soloist** (pay directly)

**Sound System Operator** (pay directly) 100.00

**Custodial Fee** (payable to *Coast To Coast Cleaning* – send to Office Manager two weeks prior to wedding)

Wedding & Rehearsal Base Fee 150.00

Rehearsal Dinner in Fellowship Hall add 50.00

Rehearsal Dinner in FLC add 100.00

Reception in Fellowship Hall add 100.00

Reception in FLC add 150.00

Total due \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Bride/Groom/Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Pastor's Honorarium is the responsibility of the groom and is commensurate with services rendered. ***Honorarium will be delivered directly to the pastor.***