

**MIDWAY  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

1930 Midway Rd.  
Douglasville, Ga. 30135  
(770-942-8238)



**Church Wedding Handbook**  
May 2008

## **Congratulations!**

You have found someone you love and who loves you! Nothing is more meaningful to you. Your love for one another will help both of you to grow. You will have a wonderful time nurturing each other through the good and bad days ahead. The joys that will come your way will be far more than you can count. The strength shared will be stronger than any disappointment.

You have decided to marry one another, making a life-long commitment. To share in this commitment is very holy. God intended for man and woman to become one. He created us so that we need to be united to another. Life is whole only when we find such love and commitment in another person.

**Marriage is the joining together of a man and a woman who have begun an ongoing process of growing together in love and intimacy (See Genesis 2:14-25). It is the fulfillment of God's intention that we are male and female with a deep need to share our innermost selves with a spouse.**

## **Midway UMC is here for You**

We are pleased that you have considered and chosen Midway UMC as the place where you will make your life commitment to each other. We will assist you in every way possible to ensure that your wedding day is a lovely memory for you and a solid foundation for your marriage. To ensure that your wedding day is as meaningful as possible, we offer the following information and suggestions.

## **Your Wedding is a Holy Event**

You are considering a “church wedding” which is much different from a wedding conducted by a “justice of peace.” A “church wedding” invites God to be a part of your wedding and marriage. Midway UMC is a Christian church, and therefore, all weddings at Midway UMC are considered Christian weddings. Holy matrimony is when both husband and wife acknowledge God's participation both in their individual lives and in their shared life. Both know Jesus Christ as Lord and as Savior. As God gives grace, both individuals are growing in love and obedience to God. In the Christian faith in God is instrumental in helping the couple to grow together in all dimensions of love.

In weddings conducted at Midway, Christian symbols, music, and orders of worship are used.

The Sanctuary is a holy place. It is a place where hungry souls come to hear God's redemptive words. It is a place where wounded souls come to be healed. It is a place where the people of God praise Him by singing their love songs to Him. It is a place where you make a commitment to the person you love.

With this in mind, the Sanctuary needs to be respected by your wedding party and your guests. Through such respect, your wedding will take on a spiritual dignity that will undergird your wedding day. Such spiritual dignity will be apparent and will offer your wedding service support and direction.

The Chancel area, where you will make your life-long vows to one another, is a very special place to the Christians who worship at Midway. The Baptism Font, the Pulpit, the Communion Table, the Paraments and Banners all “talk” Christianity. These need to be included in your wedding because you have chosen to make your wedding a “church wedding.”

The Order of Worship that will be used is not just a “wedding service.” It is the way in which you make your vows to each other. The Order of Worship is the way you include God in the exchanging of vows and the giving and receiving of rings. The Order of Worship will help bond your souls together. Although there are various “Orders of Worship” for weddings, we have provided you with a copy of what we prefer you use. This “Order of Worship” is the service developed by the United Methodist Church and has proven very meaningful to an endless number of couples before you.

The minister is most important. He or she is not just the person who leads your through the service. The minister is the professional person who manages your wedding service on your behalf. He or she will guide you through some of the planning, the actual service and the early steps of your marriage by participating with you in pre-marital and post-marital counseling.

Midway UMC will allow you to use your own minister if you so choose because we recognize that the person who performs the wedding service can sometimes be very dear to you.

The congregation of Midway UMC wants your wedding day to be as perfect as possible. We share in your joy and celebrate your happiness.

### **Pre-Marital Counseling is Vital**

We want your love to grow and prosper. We want you both to live out your lives with each other in love and harmony. The Midway UMC desires the very same thing that you want for yourself – a lifelong marriage, full of joy and fulfillment. In order to accomplish such a goal, each of us has to be taught how to be a husband or a wife. We have to be taught how to be married just as we are taught how to walk, or talk, or read.

In order to help you learn as much as you can about your marriage, we suggest that you acquire and read the following books:

1. “Getting the Love You Want” by Harvel Hendricks
2. “His Needs, Her Needs” by William Harley
3. “Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus” by Gray
4. “Mars and Venus in the Bedroom” by Gray

5. "Courtship after Marriage" by Zig Ziglar
6. "The Road Less Traveled" by Scott Peck
7. "Forgiveness: A Bold Choice for a Peaceful Heart" by Robin Casarjian
8. "Restoring Innocence" by Alfred Ellis
9. "Loving Each Other" by Leo Buscaglia
10. "Sexual Awareness" by Barry/Emily McCarthy

We also highly recommend Gary Smalley's video tape, "**Hidden Keys to Loving Relationship.**"

Certainly, there are other books that you might substitute in place of one of these.

Please remember that the "wedding" is the easy part. It is the marriage that is so very difficult. A marriage based on wisdom and counsel, as well as love, will last your lifetime. Midway UMC stands ready to help you have not only a perfect wedding but also a life-long marriage. Love alone will not create a life-long, happy marriage.

For all who desire to marry it is our hope to provide a beautiful, meaningful, holy and memorable wedding. We have certain beliefs and convictions about what marriage is and the role that God plays in it.

## **Rules and Guidelines for the Use of Midway UMC**

The Midway UMC is very serious about ensuring the spirituality of your love and union. In order to protect the dignity of your wedding and the facilities of Midway UMC, these “rules and guidelines” have been established. By following these rules and guidelines, you will have our professional support and experience available to you. All of these guidelines are designed solely for the purpose of creating a wonderful wedding full of memories.

### Scheduling

Establishing a schedule is most important since so many different people are involved. Here are some necessary steps if you are going to use Midway UMC:

1. Contact the Church office (770-942-8238) and acquire a copy of the “Wedding Booklet” (you’re reading it now; make sure you have a current copy by noting the date on the cover and asking the Church Secretary to verify). If you need a current copy, it will be mailed or e-mailed to you or you can stop by the Church office and pick it up.
2. If the guidelines are acceptable to you, contact the Church office and make an appointment with the Minister or Wedding Coordinator. This must be done even if another minister is going to be used.

The purpose of this visit is to establish dialogue with the minister/wedding coordinator regarding the wedding plans, the service itself, and other concerns that might be shared. The minister/wedding coordinator will be able to answer your questions and offer guidance as you make your plans.

3. Establish the date and time of the wedding and rehearsal with the Church office and Minister by completing the “Wedding Contract” and make the necessary financial commitments. To reserve the Sanctuary for a desired date, the couple should do this at least 4 months prior to the wedding date.

At this point, the couple must make the required Security Deposit fee of \$100. By making this deposit, the couple is assured that the dates and times are “locked-in” on the Church’s calendar and reserved only for them. Until the deposit is made, the dates and times are still open to other groups. Please make your check payable to Midway UMC. The “Security Deposit Fee” will be returned if the “Rules and Guidelines” are followed, if the facilities are left clean, and if no damage is done to the buildings or equipment. If the couple chooses to cancel their plans to use the facilities at Midway UMC after the dates have been “locked-in,” all funds paid will be returned except \$50 of the security deposit.

4. Two weeks prior to the wedding, the balance of the fees is due in the Church office. Again, the check should be made payable to Midway UMC. This check should be the total of the balance of the fees. The ministers of Midway UMC cannot perform the service without clearance from the Church office.

### The Wedding Rehearsal

The rehearsal for the wedding will typically be scheduled on the day before the wedding at about 6:30 p.m. It is expected that all participants in the ceremony be present (and on time) plus parents of the bride and groom. Under normal circumstances, the rehearsal will take 45 minutes to 1 hour. The pastor will conduct the rehearsal. Any special wishes of bride and groom concerning the wedding should be made known to the Pastor prior to the rehearsal.

### Using Another Minister

Midway UMC will allow you to use another minister beside those on staff at Midway. The Senior Minister of Midway must approved the use of an outside Pastor. This may be a family member/friend who is an ordained minister, presently functioning as a Pastor. A word of caution is offered. The State of Georgia has a pretty well defined statement about who is qualified to perform wedding services. If there is any doubt, you should discuss this matter with the Senior Minister of Midway. These are some guidelines that you will need to follow.

The person you choose to perform the service must be “ordained” by an acknowledged denomination and presently serving as a “pastor” of a congregation. There might be some exceptions to this rule if the person chosen is a United Methodist minister in good standing with his/her Annual Conference and appointed to serve beyond the local church. Such a person might be the Chaplain of a Wesley Foundation. Another exception to this rule would be a retired minister from one of the recognized denominations.

Again, the choice of using an outside minister finally rests with the Senior Minister of Midway UMC. Please make sure that you have permission to use an outside minister early in your plans.

### Using the Sanctuary and Other Buildings

The Midway UMC Sanctuary is capable of seating up to 250 people.

The Fellowship Hall can easily handle up to 150 people for a reception. The tables in the Fellowship Hall vary in length from 6’ to 10’. There are also 10 round tables, 6’ in diameter.

The Sound System is capable of providing an audio recording if the bride wishes. She must inform either the minister or representative from Midway if this service is desired.

Video taping the wedding service is acceptable as long as the photographer does not enter the chancel area while the service is being conducted. Consult with the minister about this matter if you are planning on video taping your wedding.

The Chancel furniture may not be moved. Please do not ask the minister for permission. This policy is established by the Board of Trustees.

Pre-recorded music may be played through the house system. The house system can handle CD's or cassette tapes. Such music must be appropriate for a Christian wedding. The Senior Minister has final say over any music being played in the Sanctuary.

No tacks, tape, nails, or staples may be used to affix decorations to any of the furniture. The use of "ties" or "clips" is expected.

Only dripless candles and snuffers are to be used, and plastic must be placed under any candle arrangement to protect the carpet. The florist will normally provide the plastic sheeting.

The florist and caterer must decorate at times suitable to the schedule of Midway and must adhere to the policies of the church. All decorations must be removed immediately after the service. The building will be locked three to four hours after the service (including reception).

Neither smoking nor alcohol is allowed in any of the buildings. Alcohol is not allowed on the Church property.

Dressing accommodations for the wedding party are as follows:

Bride and Bridesmaids -- Bride's Room  
Groom and Groomsmen -- Vacant SS Room above the gym

Aisle Cloth -- may be provided by the florist or other source. The center aisle measures 60 feet. Have your florist/decorator anchor the cloth well. We have carpets and you may use pins; be sure that all pins are removed when the aisle cloth is removed.

The church open/close times must be arranged with the Pastor or church representative during the planning meeting. It is the responsibility of the couple to notify musician(s), soloist(s), florist, caterer, custodian and other participants in the ceremony of these times.

Only birdseed is permitted for seeing the happy couple off. ***It is not to be thrown inside any church building.***

**Reception** -- Our fellowship hall may be used for the reception. If you choose to use a caterer he/she is permitted to use the hall and tables and chairs. If you choose to use the kitchen facilities, arrangements must be discussed with the pastor and/or Wedding Guild. All table clean-up and removal of trash and garbage, including reception area, is the responsibility of the caterer. Receptions may not last past 10:00 p.m. including "clean up time."

### **The Wedding Service**

Although large amounts of energy are expended in preparing for the wedding, it is when the bride and groom approach the Altar that the wedding begins. All of the plans, intent and hopes will be overshadowed by what happens there.

An embarrassing situation may be avoided by adequate planning, preparation and by using professional people who know how to conduct a wedding service. Much thought must go into the actual service if your wedding is going to be perfect for you and your family.

The service itself is to be a Christian service. The actual service is the responsibility of the minister. Any deviation from the established order of the service must be approved by the Midway UMC Senior Minister.

Your wedding service should be as religious as possible. An outside minister must use a service that reflects Christian traditions.

Midway's Wedding Service is included for your information and consideration. This is the "Order of Worship" used if one of the ministers from Midway conducts the service. Some variations will be allowed but only after consultation with the minister.

"But the fact that a man or woman has only one mate does not of itself make a marriage successful. Divorce is not the only thing that destroys a marriage; there may be a gradual divergence so wide and deep that the essential marriage is destroyed even though the shell of it remains. It takes more than staying together to keep a man and woman "faithful." To be "faithful" they must create and cherish mutual sympathies, mutual convictions, [and] mutual aims. They will not do that if their individual desires and preferences get out of hand. Faith in one another and faithfulness toward one another depend upon a bond secured by something higher than either one."

Interpreter's Bible, Volume 1, page 668

Remember:

The Senior Minister of Midway, or Midway's Wedding Coordinator has complete authority over the service and the use of the building

## Midway United Methodist Church

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### Wedding Contract

Bride's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Current Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Telephone Number: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Office) \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Current Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Telephone Number: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Office) \_\_\_\_\_

Couple's Mailing Address after Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number after Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Doors Opened By (Time): \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Reception: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Officiating Minister: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Connection or Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the Deposit Refund made payable to: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fee Schedule (Work Sheet):**

	<b>Normal Charge:</b>	<b>Charged:</b>	<b>Paid:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
1. Security Deposit:	\$100.00	_____	_____	_____
2. Sanctuary:				
Rental (including custodial services)	\$400.00	_____	_____	_____
3. Fellowship Hall:				
Rehearsal Dinner (including custodial services)				
(If Used)	\$250.00	_____	_____	_____
Reception (including custodial services)				
(If Used)	\$250.00	_____	_____	_____
4. Organist or Pianist (Includes Rehearsal and Wedding)				
(If Used)	\$150.00	_____	_____	_____
5. Sound Technician (Includes Rehearsal and Wedding)				
(If Used)	\$ 75.00	_____	_____	_____
6. Midway's Minister: (If Used)				
	\$150.00	_____	_____	_____
7. Midway's Staff Member (if outside minister is used)				
	\$150.00	_____	_____	_____

\*This "Security Deposit" is refunded if the "Rules and Guidelines" are followed, if the facilities are left clean, and no damage is done to the buildings.

\*If an outside minister is being used, it is the wedding couple's responsibility to dialogue with that minister his/her fee and make necessary arrangements to pay them directly.

\*All fees are a point of discussion with the Pastor of the church.

**All payments are to be made to the Church Office at least 1 week prior to the wedding. The Church Treasurer will then disburse the appropriate amounts to staff personnel.**

**Fee Schedule (Work Sheet):**

	<b>Normal Charge:</b>	<b>Charged:</b>	<b>Paid:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
1. Security Deposit:	\$100.00	_____	_____	_____
2. Sanctuary:				
Rental (including custodial services)	\$400.00	_____	_____	_____
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(If used)	\$250.00	_____	_____	_____
Reception (including custodial services)				
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4. Organist or Pianist (Includes Rehearsal and Wedding)				
(If used)	\$150.00	_____	_____	_____
5. Sound Technician (Includes Rehearsal and Wedding)				
(If used)	\$ 75.00	_____	_____	_____
7. Midway's Minister: (If Used)				
(If used)	\$150.00	_____	_____	_____
7. Midway's Staff Member				
(if outside minister is used)	\$150.00	_____	_____	_____
	Total Due:	_____		
	Deposited:	_____		
	Balance Due:	_____	By: _____	

As the bride or her agent, I have read the "Church Wedding Handbook" (September, 2004) provided by the Midway UMC. I accept the terms of that booklet and obligate myself and my wedding party to abide by the guidelines. I understand that failure to abide by the "Rules and Guidelines" will result in my forfeiting the \$100 Security Deposit. Likewise, if damage occurs to the building, furniture or equipment because of my wedding, I also forfeit my "Security Deposit."

Bride's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Midway's Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

## Midway United Methodist Church

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### Guidelines for Your Florist

We are glad that you have been contracted to provide the flowers for a wedding that is being conducted at the Midway UMC.

As a professional, you know that each local church has its own rules and guidelines for the use of its buildings. Churches establish rules to protect their property while meeting the needs of the community.

We have asked the bride and groom to give you this page so that you will know Midway's rules and guidelines. We trust that you will abide by them as you practice your chosen career. **Failure to do so will cause this church to prohibit you from being used for weddings at Midway in the future.** These rules and guidelines are fairly universal and reflect common sense.

1. The Chancel furniture (Pulpit, Communion Table or Baptism Font) cannot be moved. Do not suggest to the wedding couple they can.
2. No tacks, tape, nails, or staples may be used to affix decorations to any of the furniture. The use of "ties" or "clips" is expected.
3. Only dripless candles and snuffers are to be used, and plastic must be placed under any candle arrangement to protect the carpet. The florist is responsible for providing the plastic sheeting.
4. The florist must decorate at times suitable to the schedule of Midway and must adhere to the policies of the church. All decorations must be removed immediately after the service. The building will be locked two hours after the service (including reception).
5. The Sanctuary building will be opened at a reasonable time for your use. Normally, you can get into the building on Friday afternoon before a Saturday wedding. Please contact the Church office and verify appointment time. Do not ask for the Sanctuary to be opened and then not be there at that time.
6. Midway expects you to respect the rules and guidelines even if the couple asks you to violate them.

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### Guidelines for Your Photographer

We are glad that you have been contracted to provide photography services for a wedding that is being conducted at the Midway UMC.

As a professional, you know that each local church has its own rules and guidelines for the use of its buildings. Churches establish rules to protect their property and respect the ceremony while meeting the needs of the community.

We have asked the bride and groom to give you this page so that you will know Midway's rules and guidelines. We trust that you will abide by them as you practice your chosen career. **Failure to do so will cause this church to prohibit you from being used for weddings at Midway in the future.** These rules and guidelines are fairly universal and reflect common sense.

1. No flash photography during the actual service.
2. You may not enter the Chancel area during the actual service. If you are video taping the ceremony, you may do so from the "choir doorway" in the Choir Loft area but may not leave it to get a "closer picture."
3. Pictures taken prior to the service must be completed no less than one hour before the service is to begin. Do not instruct the couple otherwise.
4. The service can be re-enacted for your use afterwards.
5. Midway expects you to respect the rules and guidelines even if the couple asks you to violate them.

**PAYMENT OF WEDDING FEES**

\* Fees for the sanctuary and fellowship hall are waived for members and active constituents of Midway. Personnel fees are not waived. For the fees to be waived, the Senior Minister must be consulted.