



HOWARD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

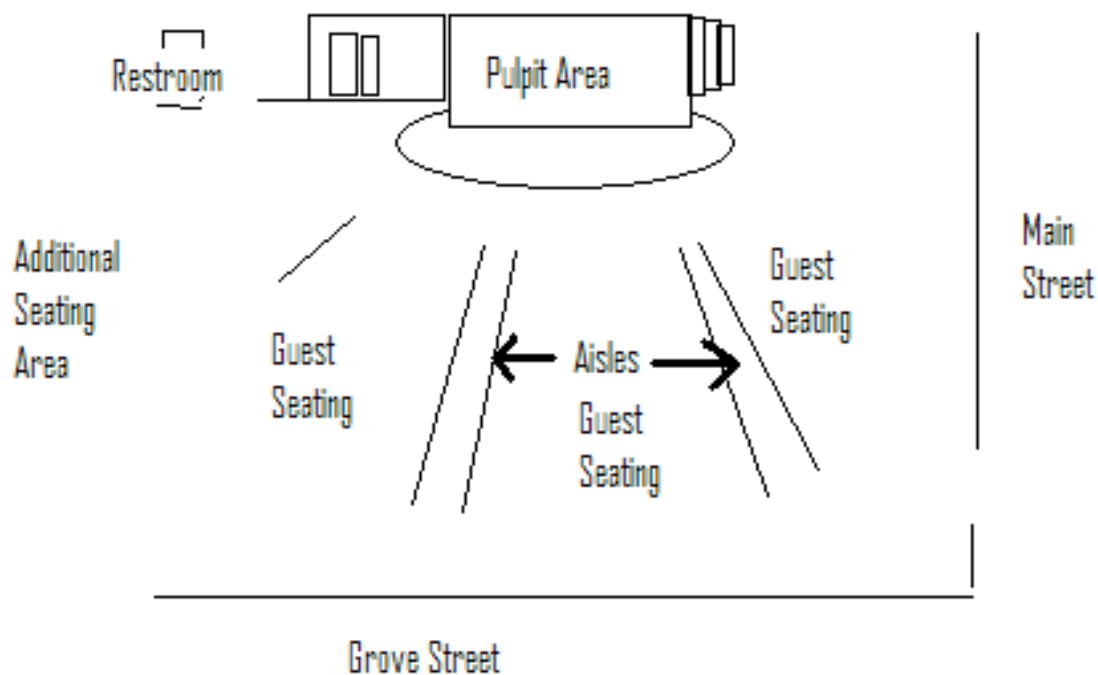
P.O. Box 257 – 144 W. Main St., Howard, PA 16841

Wedding Guide

The current pastor at Howard United Methodist Church is open to discussing your desire to be married. The following information should help you determine if Howard United Methodist Church is the right place for you to celebrate this special day.

Our sanctuary is a beautiful place. It holds many memories of joyful ceremonies and brings us together to worship. We hope you will respect this sacred place as you prepare for your wedding. The guidelines that follow are to protect this place and to provide a safe environment in which to create your memories.

The sanctuary has no center aisle. Below is a rough schematic of the worship area.



Your next step, after reviewing this document, is to fill out the Wedding Info Sheet and send it to the address below (the Wedding Fee Summary sheet will be filled out at the first meeting with the pastor):

*Howard United Methodist Church
Attention: Wedding Request
P.O. Box 257 – 144 W. Main Street
Howard, PA 16841*

Pre-Wedding Preparations

- **Counseling** – A *minimum* of three hours of counseling with the pastor should be anticipated by the couple. Some circumstances require additional time. The sessions are typically three one hour sessions. Counseling should be completed at least one month prior to the wedding day.
- **Marriage License** – Your marriage license can be obtained at any county courthouse at the Clerk of Orphans Court. It typically takes three days for a license to be processed. The fee is \$50. Both parties must be present to apply for a license. If you were previously married you must present a copy of the divorce decree or a death certificate at the time of your application for a marriage license.
- **Rehearsal** – Rehearsals are usually scheduled on the evening before the service at 6:00 p.m. Rehearsals last one hour. Everyone who has a responsibility in the service should be present at the rehearsal.
- **Service Fees** – Members of the congregation are not expected to make any payment to the church for use of the facility. Non-members pay \$100. Other fees applicable to all couples include: \$80 for custodian; \$100 for church organist; \$100 for church pianist. Half of the fees are to be paid one month prior to the wedding date, with the balance paid at the rehearsal. Checks can be made payable to “Howard United Methodist Church” with a notation of which wedding it is for. Please pay the entire fee to the church, and we will distribute checks for the custodian/organist/pianist. If you have invited others to participate in the service, payment for services rendered are determined independently of Howard United Methodist Church.
- **Church Policies and Guidelines** – The following policies and guidelines are in place for the safety of those present and in response to our faithful disciples of Christ:
 - ✓ **Alcohol or Illegal Drugs** are not permitted on the premises. Anyone under the influence of such drugs at the time of the wedding ceremony will not be permitted to participate in the service. *Brides and/or grooms who arrive under such influence will risk the cancellation of the ceremony.*
 - ✓ **Smoking** is not permitted anywhere in the building.
 - ✓ **Decorations** used in the building must be secured with pipe cleaners, ribbon, or tacky-tac. No tape, nails, thumbtacks, or other potentially damaging products should be used.
 - ✓ **Flower Arrangements** can be placed on the communion table, around the Unity Candle, across the communion rail, on window sills, and on stands. However, no flower stands can be placed along the aisles.
 - ✓ **Candles** can be placed on the communion table, on window sills, and on stands. However, no candles can be placed along the aisles.

Wedding-Day Considerations

- **Arrival Times** – All members of the wedding party (including parents) should arrive at the church one hour before the start of the service. If you are planning to dress at the church, you should arrive one and a half to two hours before the start of the service.
- **Bridal Party** – Your attendants and groomsmen will be standing for the entire service. For this reason, inclusion of children in the service is discouraged, although not restricted.
- **Bulletins/Programs** – Many couples purchase wedding bulletins for their service. These bulletins typically list the order of the service, any special music, and the names of the bridal party, parent and grandparents, and the officiating clergy. Some couples include their address and a note of appreciation.
- **Ceremony** – The marriage ceremony is yours to create. There are only a few requirements that must be included in the service, however, all services must be discussed and approved by the pastor. Following are some ideas that couples have included in their marriage ceremony:
 - ✓ Reading of a special poem
 - ✓ Reading of a scripture (*I Corinthians 13* is one popular selection)
 - ✓ Special song or musical selection
 - ✓ Congregational hymns (*When Love Is Found* or *O Perfect Love* are popular choices)
 - ✓ Reading of how the couple met
 - ✓ Roses given to mothers-in-law
 - ✓ Blessing on the new family (if it includes children from previous relationships)

The length of the service depends on the number of attendants and the additions to the ceremony. The basic service is less than 30 minutes. It includes a greeting and introduction to the service, a declaration of intent, several prayers, a scripture reading, the marriage vows, the exchange of rings (if you choose to do this), and the pronouncement of the marriage to the gathered people.

- **Communion** – Communion can be served as part of your marriage ceremony. It is not required, however. If you are interested in receiving communion, please discuss this with the pastor during one of the counseling sessions.
- **Music** – The music you select for your wedding should reflect the emotions and words that are meaningful to you. Secular and sacred music are both appropriate. However, no music that includes derogatory language (even if the words are not being sung) should be included in the service. A list of music requests should be presented to the pastor for approval.
- **Musicians / Soloists** – Only individuals who have prior experience with organ music and electronic keyboards will be permitted to play these instruments at the service. Musicians

are a welcomed addition to the service, as are soloists. Please make sure to discuss your plans with the pastor during one of your counseling sessions so that any technical and logistical details can be addressed.

Fees for musicians and soloists, beyond those previously identified in the “Pre-Wedding Preparation” section, are to be negotiated by the couple.

- **Persons with Disabilities** – The sanctuary and all first floor areas are handicap accessible – including an ADA compliant restroom with a changing station. Please take into consideration the seating of any guests who may require special arrangements to fully participate in the service.
- **Pre-Wedding Guests** – Prior to the service guests attending the wedding ceremony are not permitted in the areas where the bride and groom (and their attendants) are located. Although intentions are good, visitors generally add to the stress and tension of the day. Congratulations may be expressed in the receiving line.
- **Rice, Balloons, and Bubbles** – We do not permit the use of rice or balloons in the church or outside of the building. These items are environmentally unfriendly. Bubbles, whistles, and other safe items may be used. If you have any questions or are uncertain about a particular item, please talk with the pastor.
- **Unity Candle** – The Unity Candle is a common addition to today’s wedding services. If you plan to include it in the service or would like to discuss the Unity Candle in more detail, please ask the pastor. If you choose to include the Unity Candle in your wedding ceremony you will need to purchase the set of candles and stands. These are available at most craft stores and book stores.



Howard United Methodist Church

Main and Grove Streets

Howard, PA 16841

Wedding Fee Summary

Member of the Church?.....no fee

Not a member of the Church?.....\$100

Janitor fee.....\$80

Church organist?.....\$100

Church pianist?.....\$100

Total.....

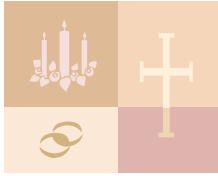
50% of service fees are expected to be paid by 30 days prior to the wedding date, with the balance due at the rehearsal date. Checks can be made payable to "Howard United Methodist Church" with a memo notation of "fees for the (name)/(name) wedding." Please pay the total to the church, and the church will distribute checks to the organist, pianist, and janitor (if applicable). If you have invited others to participate in the service, payment for services rendered are determined independently of Howard United Methodist Church.

signature

date

WEDDING INFORMATION SHEET

Please send this completed form to the address below. The pastor will be in touch with you soon.



Howard United Methodist Church
Attention: Wedding Request
P.O. Box 257 – 144 W. Main Street
Howard, PA 16841

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

LOCATION: _____

REHERSAL TIME: _____

BRIDE'S INFORMATION

Full Name: _____

Phone _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Have you been baptized? YES or NO

Mother's Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

Maid/Matron of Honor: _____

Bridesmaids: _____

Flower Girl: _____

GROOM'S INFORMATION

Full Name: _____

Phone _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Have you been baptized? YES or NO

Mother's Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

Best Man: _____

Groomsmen: _____

Ring Bearer: _____

Photographer's Name: _____

Videographer's Name: _____

Florist's Name: _____

Soloist's Name: _____

Accompanist's Name: _____