



Marriage Policy

The covenant of marriage was established by God who created us for each other. With Christ's presence and power, Jesus graced a wedding at Cana of Galilee, and in his sacrificial love gave us the example for covenant love between two persons.¹

We are grateful that you have chosen Melissa United Methodist Church as a potential site for your marriage celebration. A wedding is one of the happiest and holiest moments in our lives. It does not have to be elaborate to be beautiful. Rather, it is the spirit and attitude of those who gather that contribute to the true beauty of the service.

Purpose of the Policy

- To provide planning and guidance to members and regular attenders during a marriage celebration.
- To outline services offered to community members who are not members of Melissa UMC but would like to have a marriage in our church building.
- To provide clarity of expectations and responsibilities for wedding party, guests, photographers, videographers, florists, caterers, musicians and any others participating in the celebration.
- To define membership in Melissa United Methodist Church.

Membership

Membership in the local United Methodist Church shall include all people who have been baptized and joined the membership of Melissa United Methodist Church or First United Methodist Church of McKinney through profession of faith in Jesus Christ and/or transfer of membership from another congregation of any denomination.

To be considered a member of Melissa UMC for purposes of this policy, a person must:

- Meet the general requirements outlined above and been accepted into membership at Melissa UMC or First United Methodist Church of McKinney.
- Be considered active in the ministries of Melissa UMC (attend worship and/or small group regularly).
- Be a regular contributor to the ministries of the church and to the finances of Melissa UMC or First United Methodist Church of McKinney through tithes, gifts and/or offerings.

Church membership is subject to verification from church staff, pastor, or another designated official.²

¹ Adapted from the United Methodist Book of Worship, page 116-117.

² There are regular attendees of Melissa UMC who both participate in the ministries of the church and contribute financially but have never formally joined the church. The Lead Pastor, church staff or other designated official may at their discretion reduce some of the nonmember fees.

Scheduling & Reservations

To reserve a date for your wedding, contact the office of Melissa UMC to be provided a copy of the Marriage Policy, including the necessary forms to be completed and the list of fees. Before a wedding is scheduled, the applicant must turn in the Wedding Reservation form. Applicant is required to read this policy carefully; sign the signature page; meet with the Pastor for initial consultation and to schedule premarital workshop sessions; and to pay a non-refundable deposit. The wedding date will be reserved on the calendar after approval from the Lead Pastor. An approved copy of the reservation form will be mailed or emailed to you.

Members of Melissa UMC and First United Methodist Church of McKinney have priority in reserving the church for weddings and receptions.

Community member reservations will be accepted no earlier than 12 months before the date of the wedding to ensure priority for members. If the applicant is not a member at the time of inquiry, community members fees apply.

No Sunday weddings will be scheduled.

Fees for Church Use and Personnel³

Your non-refundable deposit is due at time of reservation.

Balance of all fees is due 30 days prior to the wedding.

	Members of Melissa UMC	Community members
Non-refundable deposit	\$250	\$500
Rehearsal in worship space	NO FEE	\$250 (2 hours)
Service in worship space	NO FEE	\$600 (3 hours)
Reception in worship space or commons areas	NO FEE	\$250 (2 hours)
Additional hours scheduled in worship space or commons	NO FEE	\$125 per hour
Overtime fee in both spaces ⁴	\$50 per 15 minutes	\$50 per 15 minutes
Facility setup and cleaning	\$100	\$100
Audio-visual (sound)	\$100	\$100
Audio-visual (livestream)	\$100	\$100
Recording	\$100	\$100
Musician	\$100 per musician	\$100 per musician
Pastor	Honorarium	\$300
Security	\$50/hour, 4 hour minimum	\$50/hour, 4 hour minimum

³ The Resource Team of Melissa UMC may amend the list of fees at any time and at its discretion.

⁴ Melissa UMC's determination regarding whether the time limit was exceeded and the length of overtime is final and not subject to review.

Guidelines for weddings and receptions

1. The worship space seats 250-300 persons. No additional seating will be set in the commons area. Furniture in the commons may be moved but must be returned to its original location.
2. The applicant is responsible for engaging and securing the photographer, florist, caterer, and advising them of all application guidelines. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that guidelines are followed by all contractors and participants.
3. Our church requires pre-marital workshop sessions to prepare for the lifelong commitment that marriage involves. Arrangements for these sessions will be made in conversation with the Lead Pastor and officiating pastor, when applicable.
4. The final draft of the Order of Service must be approved by the Lead Pastor.
5. In the absence of the Lead Pastor, it will be the responsibility of the Lead Pastor to provide a minister for the wedding.
6. If a guest minister is requested by the family, it shall be the responsibility of the family to:
 - a. Contact the Lead Pastor of Melissa UMC for their approval before inviting a guest minister.
 - b. Make the necessary contact with the guest minister.
 - c. Be responsible for an honorarium to the guest minister in addition to the fees outlined in this policy.
7. **Flash pictures and/or video lighting equipment are not permitted during the worship service. Photographers and videographers must remain at the rear of the worship space after the entrance of participants has begun.**
8. Existing decorations or altar items may not be altered or removed for the service. All wedding party decorations and floral arrangements will be removed at the conclusion of the celebration unless previously accepted by the church to remain in place.
9. Do not tape anything on the walls, altar area or other surfaces. At the conclusion of the service, remove all items, place garbage in proper containers, and return furniture that was moved to its proper place.
10. The conduct of all persons attending services at Melissa UMC is expected to reflect respect for a place of worship. Children and youth are always welcome in our spaces. When children and youth are present for an event, they must be always under the supervision of their parents or adults in charge of the activity.
11. The doors are secured by a security system. Do not use anything to hold open doors. Doors will open 1 hour before the service and will lock 1 hour after the service or reception is scheduled to conclude. Arrangements can be made for additional access for caterers and setup and will be charged at the rate for "Additional Hours scheduled." This request should be made with your application if possible.
12. Animals are not allowed within the building, except for guide dogs.
13. No illegal substances, flammable liquids, fire producing chemicals, pyrotechnic devices, smoke generators and/or open flames (except for candles used in a worship setting) may be used.
14. Groups are fully responsible for the cost of all damages based upon actual repair and replacement costs. Replacement and/or repair will be at the discretion of the church.
15. Connections Coffee is a separate corporation that operates within and under Melissa UMC. All groups and activities are to remain out of the coffee bar area as defined by the counters, doors, and walls.
16. Melissa UMC assumes no liability for any personal property brought into the church. Every possible effort will be made to protect personal items; however, the church will not be responsible for items lost, stolen or damaged. It is imperative that money, jewelry, and other valuables not be left unattended.
17. Members and staff of Melissa UMC are not permitted to sign for any outside event related deliveries without prior arrangement.
18. Users are responsible and assume liability for any personal injuries, personal property or damage to the facility or equipment. When damage/accidents requiring cleanup occurs, prompt reporting to the Melissa UMC staff representative is expected.
19. Penalty for violation of any of guidelines may prevent future rental of Melissa United Methodist Church.

Decoration Details

No rice, confetti or any other materials that leave debris may be thrown on church property. Bubbles are acceptable outside.

The use of an aisle cloth or runner of any kind will not be permitted due to safety concerns.

In decorating the church, Melissa UMC expects that the same care will be exercised in protecting church furnishings that you would exercise in protecting furnishings in your own home.

Any decorations that the applicant wishes to place in the church during the ceremony and/or reception must be consistent with the building being a place of worship. The church reserves the right to remove any decorations that it determines to be inappropriate.

The applicant is responsible for the installation and prompt removal of any decorations that they place in the building. As a part of the application process, times will be established for the installation and removal of any additional decorations.

Rehearsal Details

All members of the wedding party should arrive 15-20 minutes prior to the scheduled time. You will have two hours for your wedding rehearsal, and it is important to begin promptly. If a rehearsal exceeds the 2-hour time usage of the space, the overtime fee of \$50 per 15 minutes will be charged.

Please bring all items that are involved in the service, particularly things such as a unity candle. If there is an event in the worship space prior to the service, you will be asked to take these items with you until the day of the wedding.

The rehearsal will be led by the officiating minister. If you have engaged the services of a wedding planner, their involvement will be at the discretion of the officiating pastor for the details of the service. To avoid confusion, no changes will be made after the conclusion of the rehearsal.

Reception Details

If the applicant wishes to use the commons area or the worship space for the reception, the applicant must make their own arrangements for a caterer and for setup/cleaning of the space and materials. Any DJ or other entertainment must be approved in advance by the Lead Pastor.

Changes & Cancellation Policy

After the wedding date has been entered on the church calendar, it can be altered only by direct consultation with the Lead Pastor to ensure a new date and time is available. Any changes without approval from the Lead Pastor cannot be assured that the wedding can take place on a newly scheduled date or time.

If the applicant wishes to cancel an accepted event, the applicant should notify the Lead Pastor or other designated Melissa UMC representative as soon as possible. Your deposit is non-refundable. However, any refund of fees paid is at the sole discretion of Melissa UMC's Resource Team. If premarital workshops have happened prior to the cancellation, the fee due to pastor should be paid upon cancellation.

The return and approval of the Wedding Reservation Form and deposit is regarded as a contract indicating that you have read this policy and intend to abide by it.



Marriage Request Form

Date of request: _____

Name of **APPLICANT 1**: _____

Cell number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Member of Melissa UMC (Y/N): _____ Member of First UMC McKinney (Y/N): _____

If a member of another church, where? _____

Name of **APPLICANT 2**: _____

Cell number: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Member of Melissa UMC (Y/N): _____ Member of First UMC McKinney (Y/N): _____

If a member of another church, where? _____

Preferred Date/time of **SERVICE**: _____ Anticipated attendance: _____

Pastor/officiant⁵: _____

We are requesting:

____ Rehearsal (Preferred date & time: _____)

____ Reception (Check one: ____ Commons ____ Worship Space Preferred time: _____)

____ Recording

____ Livestream link

⁵ See funeral policy guidelines #8.

When this service is scheduled, I agree to pay Melissa UMC the fees for services marked below:

	Members of Melissa UMC	Mark Request	Community members	Mark Request
Non-refundable deposit	\$250	\$250	\$500	\$500
Rehearsal	NO FEE	X	\$250 (2 hours)	
Service	NO FEE	X	\$600 (3 hours)	
Reception	NO FEE	X	\$250 (2 hours)	
Additional hours	NO FEE	X	\$125 per hour	
Overtime fee	\$50 per 15 minutes		\$50 per 15 minutes	
Facility setup & cleaning	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
Audio-visual (sound)	\$100		\$100	
Audio-visual (livestream)	\$100		\$100	
Recording	\$100		\$100	
Musician	\$100 per musician		\$100 per musician	
Pastor	Honorarium	X	\$300	
Security	\$50/hour, 4 hour min		\$50/hour, 4 hour min	
	TOTAL			

I understand that, once my request form is accepted, facilities will be reserved upon payment of the non-refundable deposit. All other fees will be paid no later than 30 days before the day of the wedding. Failure to make these payments will result in cancellation of the event. **Initials:** ____

Applicants agree to meet with the officiating pastor for premarital workshops. These workshops will be outlined and scheduled in conversation with the officiating pastor and will be approved by the Lead Pastor of Melissa UMC. **Initials:** ____

I confirm that I have read and understand Melissa UMC Marriage policy guidelines and fully understand my responsibilities under that policy.

Applicant 1 Signature: _____

Applicant 2 Signature: _____

For office only, get signatures as required to confirm participation:

- *Pastor:* _____
- *Audio-visual (\$100 each):* _____
- *Musicians/vocalists: (\$100 each)* _____
- *Facilities (\$100)* _____
- *Security (\$200 or \$50/hr – Collin County Sheriff's Office):* _____
- *Welcome team/reception:* _____
- *Other:* _____



Marriage Order of Service Planning

Date & time of rehearsal: _____

Date & time of service: _____

Each service is prepared to fit the desires of those getting married. These elements can be changed in conversation with the family/friends and Lead Pastor.

Gathering & Processional Music APPLICANT selects pieces for seating

_____ music for congregation

_____ music for parents

_____ music for bridal party

_____ music for bride's entrance

Greeting PASTOR prepares following United Methodist Book of Worship

Declaration of Intention (I do, I do) PASTOR prepares

Optional: Response of the Families (We do) PASTOR prepares

Prayer PASTOR prepares

OPTIONAL: Musical selection APPLICANT selects

Scripture (appendix A) APPLICANT selects 1-2 scriptures to be read by pastor or guest

Message PASTOR prepares

Exchange of Vows (appendix A)... APPLICANT selects or creates in conversation with PASTOR

Blessing & Exchange of Rings PASTOR prepares following United Methodist Book of Worship

OPTIONAL: Unity celebration & musical selection APPLICANT selects

Declaration & Blessing of Marriage PASTOR prepares following United Methodist Book of Worship

Dismissal PASTOR prepares following United Methodist Book of Worship

Recessional music APPLICANT selects

Wedding planner or coordinator (name & contact information): _____

Applicant 1: _____

Applicant 2: _____

Applicant 1 Attendants	Applicant 2 Attendants

attach another sheet if needed

Applicant 1 Parents _____

_____ Where will they be seated? _____

Applicant 2 Parents _____

_____ Where will they be seated? _____

Applicant 1 Grandparents _____

_____ Where will they be seated? _____

Applicant 2 Grandparents _____

_____ Where will they be seated? _____

Ushers or those who will welcome people _____

Other important people we should know about _____

Choices of Scriptures (1 or 2): _____

Suggestions & a good place to start...

- Genesis 1:26-28, 31
- Song of Solomon 2:10-14, 16; 8:6-7
- Isaiah 43:1-7
- Isaiah 55:10-13
- Isaiah 61: 10-62:3
- Matthew 5:1-10
- Matthew 7:21, 24-27
- Matthew 22:35-40
- Mark 2:18-22
- Mark 10:42-45
- John 2:1-11
- John 15:9-17
- Romans 12:1-2, 9-18
- 1 Corinthians 13
- 2 Corinthians 5:14-17
- Ephesians 2:4-10
- Ephesians 4:1-6
- Ephesians 4:25-5:2
- Philippians 2:1-2
- Philippians 4:4-9
- Colossians 3:12-17
- 1 John 3:18-24
- 1 John 4:7-16
- Revelation 19:1, 5-9

Choices of Vows: _____

#1: In the name of God, I, *name*, take you, *name*, to be my wife/husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.

#2: I take you, *name*, to be my wife/husband, and I promise before God and all who are present here to be your loving and faithful wife/husband as long as we both shall live. I will serve you with tenderness and respect, and encourage you to develop God's gifts in you.

#3: *Name*, in the name of God, I take you to be my wife/husband from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all our life together to be loyal to you with my whole being, as long as we both shall live.