

Guidelines for Worship Spaces including Sanctuary and Assembly Hall

The proper use of all worship spaces sets the church apart, creating a holy environment unique among the many places we may find ourselves and unlike the secular world. It should be treated with all due respect and reverence.

The primary area in which the symbols and colors of our faith and the Christian year are displayed is in the worship space. In this area, the three primary pieces of sacred furniture, the altar-table, baptismal font, and pulpit, work together to present the fundamental core of our faith. They, like the Cross, are fully capable of standing alone and unadorned. Swansboro United Methodist Church follows the Official United Methodist Program Calendar.

The area surrounding the worship space should also reflect the sacredness of the celebration of worship and our relationship with God. With that in mind, nothing should be placed in the Narthex or entrance to the Assembly Hall that does not directly relate to the life of the Church. This includes, but is not limited to, the selling of tapes and books, signs of advertisement, etc.

Specific Items

- All worship spaces have been designated with a standard Room Set-up. This includes furniture, wall color, wall decorations and any other decorative items. Any setup changes, requested by the group, are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees and the Worship Committee.
- The use of Decorations, the changing of furniture, attachment of materials to walls, and items of a similar nature shall only be done with the consent of the chairperson of Trustees and Worship Committee. Please do not mar, deface or make holes in walls. All candles must be oil based or have a base/reservoir so as not to damage tables or carpet. The use of glitter and/or confetti is discouraged. All areas and/or equipment shall be returned to their original condition following use, including, but not limited to, cleaning of the area, returning tables and chairs to their previous positions, securing equipment, and turning off lights.
- Permission to use the Organ or Piano must be granted by the SUMC Director of Music Ministry. Pianos cannot be moved except by permission from the Director of Music Ministry or chairperson of Board of Trustees. No decorations shall be placed on the church organ or piano.
- Pew markers must be attached with ribbon or plastic holders that will not scratch the wood finish or paint on the pews.
- Flowers, palms, plants, etc. shall be carefully placed so as to not hide or conceal the altar, altar rail, cross, etc.
- The church entrances and exits are not to be cluttered with floral or other decorations - these must remain open and clear due to fire code regulations.
- No live flower petals may be strewn on the carpet.
- There is no church policy prohibiting artificial flowers, however, according to the principle of integrity for worship, no appointments in the worship space should appear to be something they are not. All altar flowers shall be live.
- Food and drink, other than the elements for Holy Communion, are not permitted in any area of the Sanctuary except for those used in the Moravian Love Feast.
- Photographs may not be taken during a church service or wedding ceremony. Families may return to the sanctuary after the ceremony if pictures are desired.