

The Sanctuary on Main



venue spotlight

Article by **Stephanie Malench**
Photos submitted by **Julie Purnell**

In October 2019, Julie Purnell and Jennifer Faulker purchased a Methodist church built in 1872 in Troy, Illinois, located at 114 South Main St. and they turned it into a non-denominational event venue. Julie and Jennifer, also agents for Gori Realtors in Edwardsville, Illinois, decided to purchase the building in the town they grew up in and turn it into an event venue to provide a service to the community. They loved the look of the old church and knew they wanted to revive it and bring it back to life. The Sanctuary on Main was born.

After nearly five months of extensive renovations and repairs, The Sanctuary on Main was scheduled to open in March of 2020. Then, COVID hit, and everything was put on hold. Julie runs the day-to-day operations of the business and Jennifer runs the business end. In addition to weddings and receptions, the space is also available for any type of group gathering, including memorial services, baby and bridal showers, class reunions, meet and greets, holiday parties, anniversary parties, family reunions, pop-up events, and more. The historic 1,245 square foot chapel seats between 80 for an event with a dance floor and up to 150 for a wedding ceremony.

Last year, they held their first annual Santa Claus event where they collected canned food and personal care supplies for two local food pantries, the Glen-Ed Food Pantry in Edwardsville and the Ministries Unlimited Pantry in Troy. They collected enough items for the two pantries to fill both of their SUVs. Now that COVID has lifted, Julie and Jennifer hope to have more fundraisers so they can give back even more to Troy.

While researching event venues for weddings, the owners noticed that most venues do not offer packages. One of the features of booking a wedding at The Sanctuary on Main is the price includes



packages for the florals and cake from trusted partners. Bundling in these amenities to the rental package allows the soon-to-be newlyweds and their families to focus on other aspects of their big day. The couple selects their own wedding planner, caterer, photographer, and DJ. Base price for a wedding is \$1200 on Sunday and \$1500 for Friday and Saturday for a wedding, and \$1800 for a wedding reception on a Sunday, and \$2500 on Friday or Saturday with additional costs and extra time requested. The couple will also have their own dedicated staff person that will help them choose the look of the venue to meet their specific needs.

Every wedding that has been held at The Sanctuary on Main has had special and personalized touches due to the white, neutral décor and vaulted shiplap ceiling. The church has an old church feel without being associated with any particular denomination.

When describing the space, Julie explained “We can have bigger weddings, but they aren’t so big they don’t feel intimate. The couple really gets to spend time with their guests.” In addition to dressing rooms in the lower level, there are sitting areas for the family to gather and relax prior to the ceremony.

Although The Sanctuary on Main targets clients in the St. Louis metropolitan areas in both Illinois and Missouri, the farthest away people have traveled to have their event there was a couple who came from Kentucky to get married and a baby shower for a couple from Florida whose family lives in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

The most rewarding part of the job for Julie comes after the wedding when the couple sends thank you cards. Julie cautions anyone wanting to open an event facility to “start out slow- it’s busy, demanding, and expensive.”

To schedule an appointment to discuss your event, email info@the-sanctuaryonmain.com or call (618)505-0496.