



Bethel United Methodist Church
129 W. Fourth Street
Lewes, DE 19968
302-645-9426

Wedding Policy

Congratulations - you're getting married! With your engagement you have reached an important milestone in your life. Your friends at Bethel United Methodist Church are happy you have chosen to have a Christian Wedding at Bethel and we look forward to helping you plan a sacred and memorable day.

The following guidelines are offered to help you plan your Wedding Service.

Wedding as Worship

The Wedding Service is an act of worship in the life of Bethel Church. By choosing to be married in the sacred space of Bethel's sanctuary, you are not only inviting God's presence into your wedding, but also purposely asking for God's blessing on your marriage.

Setting the Date

In most cases you have already set your wedding date before receiving this document. Once you have cleared the date with the Pastor, and have ascertained that Bethel Church is available; you are clear to go forward with all your other wedding plans. However, your wedding date is not confirmed until you complete the online registration form (bethellewes.org, click Forms & Attachments, Wedding Registration Form) and returned it to the church office.

Experience suggests that 6 months to a year is a good time frame for planning a wedding. Your wedding date is only 'penciled in' the Church Calendar, until the attached form is returned. If there are questions you cannot answer at this time, such as the name of your photographer or florist, please complete what you can and return the form to lock in your wedding date. We can collect the other information later.

Guest Clergy

Bethel welcomes the participation of Pastors who are friends or family of those being married. Clergy ethics requires that Bethel's Pastor extend the invitation for the guest pastor to participate in the service. At your earliest convenience please provide Bethel's Pastor with contact information for your guest Pastor (pastorbaker@bethellewes.org). The extent of the guest pastor's participation will be determined with the bride and groom in meetings before the wedding.

Pastoral Consultation & Liturgy

The Pastor will want to meet with you twice before the Wedding Rehearsal. Every effort will be made by the pastor to fit into your schedule. Those meetings are a time for you to get to know the Pastor, for the pastor to help you know one another better, and to discuss how you would like to customize the wedding service.

The Liturgy or "Order of Service" for your wedding must be dignified, in good taste, and clearly Christian. The Pastor will share both traditional and contemporary wedding liturgies in your meetings. In addition, various ways of personalizing your service to make it uniquely yours will be discussed, along with their placement in the service.

It is always appropriate for Scripture to be read at a Christian Wedding. The Pastor will give you a short list of suggested passages from the Bible for you to consider. Friends and family of the Bride and Groom are welcome to read Scripture at your wedding and should be invited to be present at the rehearsal.

Holy Communion

In your pre-marital discussions with the Pastor you may wish to include Holy Communion as part of your Wedding Service. In sensitivity to those present, Communion may be reserved just for the Bride and Groom or be offered to all who are present.

Wedding Music

All music played or sung before, during, or after a Wedding Ceremony at Bethel should express a Christian message appropriate to the occasion. This includes hymns, music based on Scripture, and/or selections from the sacred-classical or contemporary music repertoires, which seek to glorify God and ask God's blessing on your marriage. Any secular (non-sacred) music or love songs you wish to include in your wedding day, whether vocal or instrumental, should be reserved for your reception.

Bethel's Director of Music Ministries, and Organist, Mrs. Joyce Mentzer (302-542-1656) will help you determine and select what is appropriate for the Wedding Service. She has already reserved the date of your wedding, and you are encouraged to contact her as soon as possible. Depending on your desires a consultation process will be developed with the Director of Music Ministries.

Bethel's Sanctuary is gifted with a majestic pipe organ and baby grand piano. In addition we can recommend instrumentalists and soloists, as well as welcome musicians of your choosing. The Director of Music Ministries can explain the process, and payment arrangements for additional musicians, and rehearsals when you meet with her.

Recorded Music/Accompaniments

No recorded music and/or accompaniments will be allowed.

Wedding Coordinator

Bethel will provide you with a Wedding Coordinator to assist at the Rehearsal and on your wedding day. She will open and close the church for the rehearsal and wedding, as well as make sure the lights are on and the temperature is comfortable. Most importantly she assists in lining up the Bridal Party and letting

each one know when to enter the Sanctuary. If you have engaged a Wedding Coordinator for other aspects of your wedding, she or he will assist our Wedding Coordinator at the church.

Rehearsal

Most weddings benefit from a rehearsal the evening before. It won't take away all your pre-wedding jitters, but it will help you and your Wedding Party feel comfortable and confident in what they will do during the Wedding. A rehearsal can begin as early as 5:00 p.m. and as late as 7:00 p.m.

When setting the time, please allow for people's work schedules, travel time, and the possibility of 'beach traffic.' More often than not 6:00 p.m. works well for the Wedding Party, Bethel staff, and your Rehearsal Dinner venue. As you plan the events of the evening, allow a full hour for the rehearsal.

Possible Restrictions

In The United Methodist Church, and most other churches, all weddings are at the approval of the Pastor. At Bethel we believe the grace of God expressed in Christian Marriage is available to all people. Therefore, previous divorces, differences in faith or race, or other supposed problems are not automatically reasons for our church to refuse a wedding. So called Walk-in wedding with little or no notice, however, will not be performed until adequate preparation for marriage can be made.

Florist

Flowers (real or silk) and decorations enhance the wedding celebration. Please instruct your florist that chancel furnishings are not to be removed or relocated. Flowers may be placed on the Lord's Table, but they must not hide the cross from view. The Lord's Table may also be used for a Unity Candle, Sand Service or other symbolic act added to the Wedding Service.

Bethel has two 7 branch candelabra's which you may use at no cost along with the candles on the altar. Aisle lanterns, ribbons, bows, and other decorations should be ordered through your florist. Experience shows that because our center aisle is somewhat narrow, and it slopes forward an aisle runner is not recommended. Nothing is to be nailed, stapled, tacked or taped to the pews or sanctuary woodwork. Ribbons and pipe cleaners are advised.

The Florist can deliver flowers to the Church as early as 9:00 a.m. the day of the wedding by contacting your Wedding Coordinator.

Photography & Videography

Life's big moments deserve to be preserved for remembrance; and few events are bigger than a wedding. Because the Wedding Ceremony is a sacred event, the use of flash photography and other distractions are not permitted during the Wedding Service. Flash may be used during the processional and recessional, but once the Service begins with the Pastor's Greeting, flash should be turned off. Pictures without flash may be taken during the service provided those taking the pictures remain inconspicuous and are considerate of the guests around them.

Posed pictures of the wedding party and family with flash can be taken before or after the wedding service. No added lighting for photos or videos is allowed during the service.

Videography is an increasingly popular social medium. Many of your guests are likely to record all or part of your Wedding Service on their phones. Seated guests should be mindful not to be a distraction to those around them. Guests who wish to record all or part of the service standing must be in the back of the room; inconspicuous, and stationary (tripods are recommended) so as not to take away from the sanctity and dignity of the Wedding Service.

Reception

Bethel's Fellowship Hall is available for receptions at additional cost. In keeping with The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church, no alcoholic beverages (including champagne), illegal drugs, or smoking is permitted. For a complete list of additional fees, please see the Fee List found on the final page of this policy.

Miscellaneous

- The seating capacity of Bethel's Sanctuary is 200, and expands to 250.
- For the purpose of Invitations, Bethel's address is: 129 W. Fourth St. Lewes, DE 19958.
- Bethel is handicap accessible with an elevator to all levels, and ramp from the Upper Level to the Sanctuary, as well as accessible rest rooms on the upper and lower levels of Fellowship Hall. If a guest will need special assistance please alert the Wedding Coordinator no later than the rehearsal so arrangements can be made.
- The Bridal Party may dress in the Church Lounge or Nursery; and the Groom's Party may dress across the street in the Parsonage Meeting House (130 W. Fourth St.)
- Experience tells us that for developmental reasons Flower Girls should be at least 3 years old, and Ring Bearers at least 4 years old at the time of the wedding.
- Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs on church property before the wedding is prohibited, and may cause a delay or even cancellation of the wedding. If either the Bride or Groom appears to be high or intoxicated; by law, they cannot be married.
- Etiquette requires that you not assume that the Pastor and spouse or the Organist and spouse will attend the wedding reception unless you extend to them the same invitation that your other guests receive. As a rule Pastors and Organists are not commonly invited to Rehearsal Dinners.
- In the unlikely event it is determined that Building Security is needed for the rehearsal and/or wedding, the level of security required will be determined in conversation with the Bride and Groom, Pastor, and Bethel's Emergency Preparedness Team; and the expense if any will be borne entirely by the bridal couple.

Check List to Get Ready

1. Purchase your wedding license
 - a. Clerk of the Peace in any Delaware County
 - b. Both the Bride and Groom must appear
 - c. Proof of Identification : Driver's License
 - d. \$70 cash or debit/credit

2. Provide your florist and photographer with copies of Bethel's Wedding Policy so that they can review the Florist/Photography & Videography sections of the policy.
3. Contact Bethel's Organist; Joyce Mentzer (302-542-1656) 6-8 weeks before the wedding to discuss the music for your service.
4. Bring the Wedding License and the Fees to the Church Office the week before the wedding
5. Confirm the time the Florist wants to deliver the flowers and let your Bethel Wedding Coordinator know.
6. Remind your Wedding Party of the rehearsal time, and the importance of everyone arriving promptly. We will need one hour after everyone arrives.

Marriage License & Fees

We ask that all Fees and the Marriage License be delivered to Bethel's Church Office one to two weeks before the Wedding. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday (Labor Day through Memorial Day) and 8:00 a.m. to Noon (Memorial Day through Labor Day.)

Below are the fees for Members* of Bethel and their children:

Please make the check payable to the individual persons who will provide services for your wedding. The checks will be held until after the wedding, and then be distributed.

Sanctuary	No fee for Bethel members	
Wedding Coordinator	\$150	Suzanne Baxter, 302-448-0176 or Laura Knutsen, 302-644-8745
Custodian	\$100	Tammy Serman
Organist	\$200	Joyce Mentzer
Pastor	\$200	Earle Baker

If the Fellowship Hall is used, the following fees will be applied:

Fellowship Hall	\$150	Paid to Bethel UMC
Fellowship Hall Coordinator	\$100	(if sound system and/or screen is <u>not</u> required)
	\$150	(if sound system and/or screen <u>is</u> required)
		Name to be provided
Kitchen Usage fee	No fee for Bethel members	
Kitchen Attendant, if used:	\$75	Name to be provided
Additional Custodial fee	\$50	Tammy Serman

*A member constitutes one who prior to scheduling the wedding has joined Bethel by Transfer, Confirmation, or Profession of faith, and has actively participated in the life and ministry of Bethel by their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness as declared in their membership vows.