

*The Service  
of  
Christian Marriage*



*Bethany United Methodist Church*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Service of Christian Marriage in the church is a worship service. It is one of the most sacred rites, which the Pastor performs under the ordination, and the authority of the church. All wedding ceremonies performed in this church have the blessings of the church.

In order that you may have a sacred and dignified wedding, you are urged to make thorough preparations, spiritual as well as temporal. The Pastor and Staff of Bethany wish to extend every possible assistance to you toward the end that your wedding in the church will be a memorable experience.

Therefore, serious study and careful judgments have gone into the preparation of the church's wedding policies and regulations. They are the result of many years of experience with weddings on the part of the Pastors, the Staff, and the church. They have been reviewed and approved by the commission on Worship and have become the official policies and procedures related to weddings. They are not here to create difficulties for you, but to ensure that your wedding is as beautiful and meaningful as possible. You are urged to read the following material carefully and cooperate fully with the church in upholding the high standards, which the church desires. You are responsible for becoming familiar with this policy and will be expected to comply with the policies and regulations contained in it. If you have any questions concerning the policy, please feel free to ask the Pastor or the Altar Guild Wedding Coordinator.

For the purposes of this policy manual, the word "Pastor" shall refer to the officiating pastor (senior or associate) of Bethany United Methodist Church. The word "sanctuary", uncapitalized, shall refer to either of the two worship spaces. When capitalized, "Sanctuary" shall refer specifically to the larger room, as opposed to the "Chapel".

# Bethany United Methodist Church Houston, Texas



## DECLARATION OF INTENTION

We,

\_\_\_\_\_

and

\_\_\_\_\_

desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

We believe that the union of husband and wife, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for the mutual joy: for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity: and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. It is our intention to establish our home as a Christian home and to undergird this decision through an active relationship with the Church and regular participation in the means of grace.

And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Groom

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Bride (Maiden Name)

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ A.D. \_\_\_\_\_

WEDDING DATA SHEET

Date of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Sanctuary *OR*  Chapel  Member *OR*  Non-member

Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_ Altar Guild Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

BRIDE:

GROOM:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_) age

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_) age

Marital Status:  single  divorced  widowed

Marital Status:  single  divorced  widowed

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Street

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Street

\_\_\_\_\_ City state zip

\_\_\_\_\_ City state zip

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home work

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home work

Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Religious Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Religious Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF ATTENDANTS: Bridal Attendants: \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsmen: \_\_\_\_\_ Ushers \_\_\_\_\_

PHOTOGRAPHER: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

VIDEOGRAPHER: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

FLORIST: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Will flowers be left at the church? \_\_\_\_\_ Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_

Where will the bride dress? \_\_\_\_\_

Reception at the church? YES or NO If not, where? \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Wedding Policy of Bethany United Methodist Church and agree to abide by the provisions contained therein.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bride's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Groom's Signature

Copy: Pastor  
Wedding Coordinator  
Organist  
Church Office



### MUSIC DATA SHEET

Please complete the box below and bring the form to your conference with the organist. The organist fee is \$150.00 payable to the organist at this music conference.

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE!

Date of Wedding: _____	Time: _____
Date of Rehearsal: _____	Time: _____
Bride's Name _____	Groom's Name _____
Bride's Phone: Home: _____	Groom's Phone: Home: _____
Officiating Pastor: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sanctuary <i>OR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Chapel <input type="checkbox"/> Member <i>OR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Non-member	
Will there be a soloist?    Yes    or    No	
If so: Soloist's Name: _____	
Soloist's Phone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____	
Will there be an instrumentalist?    Yes    or    No	
If so: Instrumentalist's Name: _____	
Instrumentalist's Phone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____	

Processional \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ Last: \_\_\_\_\_ Flowers? \_\_\_\_\_

Recessional \_\_\_\_\_

Solos: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**FACILITIES AVAILABLE – COSTS**

**NON-MEMBERS**

Member weddings are those in which the bride or groom or their parents or guardians are members of Bethany at the time of the wedding. Scheduling of all other weddings will be considered to be non-member weddings.

Two areas of the church are available for weddings, subject only to prior schedules and limitations. The church cannot accept responsibility for seating more people in each of the spaces than is indicated below.

Sanctuary Seating Capacity	854
Chapel Seating Capacity	200

Air-conditioning or heating and custodial service will be provided for both the rehearsal and the wedding. For the rehearsal, it will be provided for two (2) hours; for the wedding, it will be provided for four (4) hours. Any additional time will be charged on a cost-per-hour basis. The fees are as follows:

Sanctuary	\$500.00
Chapel	\$300.00
Security Deposit	\$200.00
Additional Hours	\$100.00 per hour

The Security Deposit is refundable after the wedding upon verification that no damage to church property has taken place and no additional hours are to be billed.

No facilities are available for wedding receptions at Bethany.

The Board of Trustees has approved the fees above. The charges quoted are for use of the facility, cost for electricity, heating or air-conditioning, and on-site custodial time for opening the facility, setting up before and cleaning up after the wedding, and closing the facility.

**PAYMENT OF ALL FEES FOR THE USE OF THE CHURCH FACILITY IS REQUIRED AT THE TIME A DATE IS CONFIRMED.**

## MAKING THE RESERVATION

A reservation will confirm when the following conditions have been met:

1. A Pastor has agreed to officiate at the wedding.
2. All scheduling guidelines (found elsewhere in this section) have been met.
3. The “Wedding Data” sheet has been signed by both the bride and the groom and turned in to the church office.
4. All necessary fees have been paid.

The exact hour of the rehearsal and wedding must be fixed at the time the Sanctuary, Chapel, or any other room is reserved. This is necessary to avoid conflicts between your wedding and any other church event.

Member weddings are those in which the bride or groom or their parents or guardians are members of Bethany at the time of the wedding. Scheduling of all other weddings will be considered to be a non-member weddings. A new member must be active in the church for **90 days before** a wedding can be placed on the calendar as a “member wedding.”

Tentative dates may be cleared by telephone; however, it will be necessary for the bride and groom to have at least one personal conference with the Pastor in the church office before a date can be confirmed. **WEDDING DATES SHALL NOT BE ANNOUNCED UNTIL THIS CONFERENCE IS HELD.** This is to reduce to a minimum the possibility of misunderstanding or error on the part of any of the persons involved. **(The Pastor will not agree to officiate at any wedding with less than two weeks notice.)** If either or both parties are divorced, a minimum of one year shall have elapsed from the date of the final divorce decree. Both of these stipulations are made in order to provide adequate time for pastoral care to be provided in preparation for Christian marriage.

**WEDDINGS AT BETHANY WILL NOT BE SCHEDULED DURING HOLY WEEK OR ON SUNDAYS.** Also, because of difficulties in securing adequate help, we do not schedule wedding rehearsals or weddings on the following days:

- ◆ New Year’s Eve/Day
- ◆ Memorial Day weekend
- ◆ Independence Day
- ◆ Labor Day weekend
- ◆ Thanksgiving weekend
- ◆ Christmas Eve/Day

If these days fall adjacent to weekends, the weekend should be avoided as well. Weddings will not be scheduled during the week between Christmas and New Year’s Day. Certain other days may not be available for weddings due to conflicts in the church calendar.

No evening weddings shall be scheduled to begin later than 8:00 p.m. A one hour rehearsal is normally scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on the day preceding the wedding ceremony except when more than one rehearsal is scheduled on a given date. When this is the case, rehearsals are scheduled at the time set by the officiating Pastor involved.

## **INFORMAL WEDDINGS (NON-MEMBERS)**

For the purposes of this policy, the term “Informal Wedding” is unrelated to the degree of formality of a particular wedding ceremony. A wedding is considered an “Informal Wedding” when the following conditions are met:

1. No rehearsal is required.
2. Floral decorations, if any, are limited to a maximum of the altar arrangements.
3. The wedding party is limited to the bride and groom and one attendant each, who walk into the chapel and stand before the Pastor for the wedding ceremony.
4. No music is required.
5. Wedding guests are limited to family and, possibly, a few close friends.

The fee for this type of service to cover custodial duties and utilities is \$100.00. **The Pastor’s honorarium for an informal wedding should be a minimum of \$200.00.**

With the exceptions of those items listed above, all policies and procedures found in this booklet apply to Informal Weddings.

## **PRE-WEDDING CONFERENCE**

The Pastor performs the Service of Christian Marriage only after a conference with the bride and groom. It is necessary for this conference to be held at least two months before the wedding, and all couples are urged to make every effort to make an appointment for the conference at least that far in advance. Decisions regarding the content of the ceremony will be made only between the church staff and the bride and groom.

**The Pastor’s honorarium for weddings should be a minimum of \$250.00 and should be paid directly to the Pastor prior to the rehearsal.**

## **GUEST MINISTERS**

Ordained clergy from another United Methodist Church or another denomination are welcome to officiate at the Service of Christian Marriage, upon invitation of the Pastor. Bethany’s Pastor shall be considered the final authority in the conduct and content of these ceremonies.

## MUSIC

The purpose of the music in a wedding ceremony, like the ceremony itself, is to glorify God. Bethany United Methodist Church insists upon music that is in good taste, is theologically sound, and is suitable for a service of Christian worship. Music that might be proper during the reception may be unsuitable in the service itself. Likewise, solos that may have beautiful sentiments or that may be currently popular are not necessarily acceptable in a Christian wedding.

In particular, most secular “love songs” are not appropriate for a service of Christian worship, as they emphasize the love of two people without consideration of God’s love. Even such innocent phrases, as “You’re the only one I need . . .” can become objectionable in the context of Christian worship.

In general, the “Sunday Morning Worship” rule prevails: if a piece of music is of the type one might expect to hear in Sunday morning worship, then it is probably suitable for the wedding service; if not, then something else should be chosen. If you desire musical selections that are meaningful to you but inappropriate for the wedding service, you may wish to have them sung and/or played at your reception where you can enjoy them.

The usual processional music used at Bethany is *Trumpet Voluntary* (sometimes known as *The Prince of Denmark’s March*) by Jeremiah Clark (sometimes attributed to Henry Purcell). While this is not the only option available for the processional, it is one of the best available pieces for this purpose. **Please note that the *Bridal Chorus* from *Lohengrin* by Richard Wagner is not used at Bethany.**

**PLEASE CHECK WITH THE ORGANIST BEFORE MAKING ANY FINAL DECISIONS ABOUT THE MUSIC FOR YOUR WEDDING!**

The organist of Bethany United Methodist Church is in charge of the music for all weddings. In the event of a schedule conflict, he/she will arrange for a qualified substitute. The bride or the groom need to schedule a conference with the organist to select music. This conference should be held as soon as possible after you have your first conference with the Pastor, but not later than six weeks prior to the date of the wedding. The farther in advance of the wedding that this conference is held, the more options will be available for your wedding music.

You will need to fill out and bring the Music Data Sheet, with you to this conference. **PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ANY FINAL MUSIC DECISIONS OR ARRANGEMENTS BEFORE THIS CONFERENCE!** This will help to avoid possible confusions and disappointment. All decisions regarding music for the wedding service must be made no later than one week prior to the wedding.

The organist of Bethany United Methodist Church is well trained and experienced in providing music for the wedding service. Your suggestions are welcomed. You may be assured that through cooperative efforts, good choices will be made which will enhance the service and respect the guidelines of good taste and solid theology.

If a soloist is to participate, please discuss this with the organist before making final plans. The organist will be happy to recommend an excellent soloist to you, or you may use a guest soloist of your own choosing. Soloists are expected to be competent singers. Please bear in mind that relatives, co-workers, or friends, for all their good intention, may not be your best choice as a soloist. Close family members in particular, because of the emotions involved, frequently have difficulty performing at their best.

Soloists should know their music prior to the rehearsal with the organist. It is the organist's responsibility to accompany the soloist, not to rehearse the soloist in unfamiliar music. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom, or the soloist, to supply solo music to both the soloist and the organist, unless other arrangements are made. The organist has copies of some of the most frequently sung solos. In those cases, only the soloist will need the music. Please check this with the organist.

**PHOTOCOPYING MUSIC IS A VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW! SOLOISTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO SING WITH PHOTOCOPIED MUSIC, EITHER FOR THE SOLOIST OR THE ORGANIST!**

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to furnish the soloist and guest musician(s) with a copy of the "Instructions for Guest Musicians" (found at the back of this booklet). If you need additional copies of this sheet, please contact the church office.

It is suggested that soloist(s) and musician(s) wear a choir robe furnished by the church. They may be secured through the organist. Guest musicians who will be part of the processional music must attend the rehearsal in order to participate in the wedding ceremony.

If the congregation is large enough and has a Christian background, it is entirely fitting to use a congregational hymn during the wedding ceremony. List of appropriate hymns can be found at the back of this booklet. The organist or Pastor will be happy to advise you in your selection.

No recorded music will be permitted in the wedding ceremony for any reason.

## MUSIC FEES

Organist \$150.00

Please note that the above fees are for the organist only. Soloist's fees should be arranged individually with the soloists. Organist's fee should be paid directly to the organist at the time of the music conference.

## **THE REHEARSAL**

The rehearsal shall begin promptly at the time scheduled. Delay in beginning consumes the time of the Pastor, organist, Wedding Coordinator, and custodian, and adds to the expense of lighting and air conditioning or heating. At certain seasons, because of the number of weddings booked in the church, rehearsals are scheduled close together, and promptness in the beginning of the rehearsal is a must. The bride and groom, therefore, should insist that all members of the wedding party be prompt for the rehearsal as well as for the wedding. If the rehearsal is delayed for more than 15 minutes for non-emergency reasons, it may be cancelled and the wedding held without a rehearsal.

The following persons should be present for the rehearsal:

1. The bride and groom.
2. The maid (or matron) of honor and the best man.
3. All bridesmaids and groomsmen.
4. All children who will be part of the wedding party (i.e. flower girls, ring bearers, junior bridesmaids, etc.).
5. All ushers.
6. All parents of the couple who will be at the wedding.
7. Any guest musicians who will be part of the processional music (unless other arrangements are made with the organist).
8. Any wedding consultant who will be present at the wedding.

The following suggestions will help guide you as you prepare for your rehearsal:

1. The Pastor and the wedding coordinator will be in charge of the rehearsal.
2. Each rehearsal, unless otherwise agreed upon, will begin at 6:30 p.m. the day before the wedding. You should allow a maximum of one full hour for the rehearsal.
3. The marriage license shall be delivered to the officiating Pastor at the rehearsal.

When you arrive for the rehearsal, please be prepared to answer the following questions and furnish the following information:

1. Who will light the candles?
2. Who will seat the mothers?
3. How many family pews need to be reserved and who will sit in them?
4. In what order do you wish your attendants to stand? Have a list ready for the Pastor of the attendants in the order in which you wish them to stand.

Please remember that the rehearsal is a time for familiarization and minor adjustments. Major alterations to your wedding ceremony should not be made at the rehearsal. These should all be accomplished ahead of time in consultation with the Pastor, the organist, and the Wedding Coordinator.

Please remember that alcoholic beverages are prohibited anywhere on church property (including the parking lots) and that smoking is prohibited inside the building.

## **THE CEREMONY**

The wedding ceremony is the official Service of Christian Marriage of the United Methodist Church found in the *United Methodist Hymnal, 1988*, and in the *United Methodist Book of Worship, 1993*. This policy reflects our understanding that the Service of Christian Marriage is not a private ceremony, but one part of the corporate worship life of the Family of God. We do not permit couples to write their own vows.

If the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be celebrated in connection with the wedding, it should be done in the ceremony itself. If the bride and groom wish to receive Holy Communion privately, this should be scheduled with the Pastor to take place at a time other than the wedding ceremony. It is not appropriate to celebrate Holy Communion within the context of the Service of Christian Marriage unless a general invitation to all present can be extended.

If a bulletin is to be used, the Pastor must approve it before it is printed. If you wish, the church office for an additional charge can produce the bulletin. One month's advance notice is necessary for this service. All information for the bulletin must be supplied in writing no later than two weeks prior to the wedding. For more information and fees, please contact the church office.

It should be understood that the roles of the flower girl(s) and ring bearer are strictly symbolic. Flower girls are not to scatter flower petals (real or imitation) in the aisle and any rings attached to the ring bearer's pillow should be imitations. The actual rings should be in the keeping of the best man and/or the maid (matron) of honor.

Members of the wedding party, florist, photographers, etc., may have access to the church facilities two hours before the time of the wedding. Please do not arrange for deliveries to be made before this time. Florists and photographers need to be finished in the Sanctuary or Chapel and be clear of those rooms no later than thirty minutes prior to the time of the wedding.

Please remember that alcoholic beverages are prohibited anywhere on church property (including the parking lots and dressing rooms) and smoking is prohibited inside the church buildings.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Tuxedos, dresses, flowers, etc., delivered to the church prior to the wedding should be in the keeping of a representative of the wedding party. The church does not have the storage facilities available to keep any of these items overnight, and cannot, under any circumstances, assume responsibility for them. The church likewise cannot assume any responsibility for personal items while at the church.

Wedding parties are requested to be especially careful that all personal items are removed from the rooms in which they dress. These rooms will be used for church functions the next day and should be left as neat as possible.

## **THE WEDDING CONSULTANT**

The Wedding Coordinator of the Altar Guild of Bethany will be assigned to your wedding and will be available to answer your questions and assist at the rehearsal and at the wedding. If there is to be an outside wedding consultant, that person must attend the rehearsal, but they must understand that their authority ends at the door of the church. The Pastor and the Wedding Coordinator are in charge of the rehearsal and of the wedding. The consultant's duties at that point consist strictly of overseeing the decoration of the Sanctuary or Chapel within the guidelines of this policy. It is the bride's responsibility to furnish any outside wedding consultant with a copy of this policy, which that person is responsible for reading and following.

## **ADORNMENTS FOR THE SANCTUARY**

The basic adornments of the sanctuary are to remain in place. If there are any questions concerning the adornments, the bride and groom will discuss this with the Wedding Coordinator assigned to their wedding. Please note that at certain times of the year, particularly (but not only) during the month of December, there will be extra decorations in the sanctuary. These likewise are to remain in place. Due to fire regulations no aisle runners or aisle candles may be used at Bethany. Under no circumstances will the pews be blocked from either end, nor will access to the center aisle be restricted.

Care should be used in the decoration of candelabra(s) to avoid damage to the equipment and to minimize the risk of fire. If you have questions about the placement of candelabra(s), please ask the Pastor or the Wedding Coordinator.

There are several options for the paraments that cover the altar, pulpit and lectern. These should be discussed with the Wedding Coordinator.

This subject is covered in greater detail in the "Instructions for the Florist".

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR:  
THE FLORIST  
THE PHOTOGRAPHER  
THE VIDEOGRAPHER  
SOLOIST AND GUEST MUSICIANS**

These instructions can be found on the following pages of this booklet. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to review these instructions themselves and with their Florist, Photographer, Videographer, and Musician(s) in making plans for the wedding, so that there will be no misunderstanding or deviation from these established rules and policies. Each of these instruction sheets are provided in duplicate – one for the specific professional involved, and one for the bride and groom to retain as a reference. If you need additional copies of these sheets, please contact the church office. The church accepts no responsibility for inconvenience and/or disappointment resulting from failure to comply with these policies. The bride and groom **MUST** give copies of these instructions to the Florist, Photographer, Videographer, and Musician(s), even if they have done weddings at Bethany before!

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE FLORIST

The wedding is a worship service; therefore all aspects of the wedding should reflect this. These guidelines for the florist approved by the Commission on Worship are to maintain the sacred integrity of The Service of Christian Marriage.

The basic adornments of the sanctuary are to remain in place. No change may occur without the consent of the Pastor or the Altar Guild Wedding Coordinator assigned to the wedding. Decorations pertaining to the congregation's observance of certain seasons will not be removed or altered to accommodate weddings.

The usual placement of floral arrangements in the Sanctuary is at the sides of the altar. Bethany provides two brass stands with small (approximately 10-inch square) platforms for vases. Arrangements placed on the platforms should not be too top-heavy or they will tip. The floor in the altar area is terrazzo and fragile containers will break if they fall. If one floral arrangement is desired in the Chapel, it should be placed on a stand behind the altar. Floral arrangements may not be placed on or over the Altar Table, the organ console, the communion rail, or the choir screen. Floral arrangements should not be placed in front of the Pulpit or Lectern. If there is any question about the placement of flowers, the Altar Guild Wedding Coordinator should be contacted.

The florist should check with the Altar Guild Wedding Coordinator on placement of the candles. No candles shall be placed on the altar, the organ console, the piano, the communion rail, or the choir screen. Plastic must be placed under all candelabra to keep the wax from marring the carpet or floor. In the Sanctuary, candles should not be placed farther back than the rear edge of the altar, due to air currents from the heating/air conditioning system. Altar candles are to be lighted first before any other candles.

**THERE ARE ONLY TWO WAYS TO ATTACH BOWS AND FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS TO THE ENDS OF THE PEWS: WITH PADDED PEW CLIPS OR BY TYING THEM ON WITH RIBBON.** Decorations attached in any other way **WILL BE REMOVED** by a representative of the church. **NO TAPE, THUMB TACKS, NAILS, WIRE, STAPLES, PINS, FLORAL CLAY, SPRAY ADHESIVES, or SCREWS** are to be used to attach decorations to furniture, walls, floors, or any other part of the church. Under no circumstances will the pews be blocked from either end, nor will access to the center aisle be restricted. Scented aerosol sprays are not to be used. Due to fire regulations aisle candles and aisle runners are prohibited. The Pastor, organist, and soloist will be wearing vestments and will not need a boutonniere or corsage.

All decorations shall be promptly removed by the florist immediately after the ceremony. The florist and the wedding party shall leave the church in the same condition in which it was found. This, of course, does not include routine custodial cleanup that the church will provide.

The florist shall be required to contact the church office well in advance to set the time of delivery of flowers and to review these guidelines. The church reserves the right to refuse to allow floral decorations that are not in harmony with these policies. The florist assumes full responsibility for any damage to the church buildings and/or furnishings resulting from the florist's handling or placement of flowers, candles, or other decorations.

The church accepts no responsibility for any inconvenience and/or disappointment resulting from any departure from this policy!

**Bethany will not be responsible for personal items and other equipment left at the church.**

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Since the wedding ceremony is a religious service, all photographers (amateur and professional) are asked to show reverence for the ceremony and the place. Friends and family members are also requested to observe these rules. The following guidelines for the photographer are approved by the Commission on Worship to help retain the liturgical integrity of The Service of Christian Marriage.

The photographer may take pictures before or after the ceremony in any part of the building. Pictures taken in the Sanctuary or Chapel before the ceremony must be completed and all equipment removed from that place no less than thirty minutes before the time of the wedding.

The photographer is permitted to take pictures of the sanctuary from the Narthex; however, no flash shall be used after the bride starts down the aisle. No pictures shall be made during the ceremony, whether it is in the Sanctuary, the Chapel, or elsewhere in the church, except time exposures from the Narthex (outside the Narthex doors) or from the balcony. Attendants' pictures must be taken in the Narthex.

Because of space and schedule limitation, studio-type pictures should be made in the studio. It is important to remember that the Sanctuary and Chapel are places of worship. "Novelty" pictures (such as those involving the bride's garter or the groom "buying" the ring from the best man) must be taken elsewhere. The photographer is cautioned to make sure that no noise is involved in the making of time exposures, changing of film, etc., during the ceremony.

Pictures are permissible during the recessional. The photographer may stand in the Narthex doorway, leading from the sanctuary, for these pictures. Please note that this does not mean inside the sanctuary. The photographer is cautioned not to block the way of those who are recessing. The bridal party may reassemble in the sanctuary after the ceremony and re-pose for any parts of the ceremony. Twenty minutes is adequate time for after-ceremony photographs. It is important that the photography time be as brief as possible in order that the wedding party can arrive at the reception promptly to greet their guests. The bride and groom can facilitate this process by providing the photographer with a detailed list of desired poses and encouraging the members of the wedding party to be as attentive and cooperative as possible.

The photographer is cautioned about marring furniture by standing on pews or by placing camera equipment on the pews or furniture in the church. The photographer will be held responsible for any damage so caused.

The photographer is asked to comply with any instructions given by the Pastor or Wedding Coordinator. Failure to comply with written or verbal instructions may result in a request that the photographer cease taking pictures and leave the church immediately. The church accepts no responsibility for inconvenience and/or disappointment resulting from failure to comply with this policy.

**Bethany will not be responsible for personal items and other equipment left at the church.**

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE VIDEOGRAPHER**

Since the wedding ceremony is a religious service, all videographers (amateur and professional) are asked to show reverence for the ceremony and the place. Friends and family members are also requested to observe these rules. The following guidelines for the videographer are approved by the Commission on Worship to help retain the liturgical integrity of The Service of Christian Marriage.

The Pastor or Wedding Coordinator in charge of the wedding will show the videographer the location(s) in the Sanctuary or Chapel where a video camera may be placed. Video cameras must be mounted on tripods and must remain in place for the entire ceremony. Cameras may not be moved from location to location once the service has begun. The videographer is asked to comply with any instructions given by the Pastor or Wedding Coordinator of the church. Failure to comply with written or verbal instructions may result in a request that the videographer cease taping and leave the church immediately. The church accepts no responsibility for inconvenience and/or disappointment resulting from failure to comply with this policy.

The videographer is cautioned about marring furniture by standing on pews or by placing camera equipment on the pews or furniture in the church. The videographer will be held responsible for any damage so caused.

Video equipment must be completely set up thirty minutes before the ceremony. Any equipment not set up by this time may not be permitted to be set up. The video operator must wear appropriate clothing for worship. This shall be understood to mean a coat and tie for gentlemen and comparable attire for ladies.

**Bethany will not be responsible for personal items and other equipment left at the church.**

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOLOISTS AND GUEST MUSICIANS**

The wedding is a worship service; therefore all aspects of the wedding should reflect this. The purpose of the music in a wedding ceremony, like the ceremony itself, is to glorify God. Bethany United Methodist Church insists upon music that is in good taste, is theologically sound, and is suitable for the Christian worship service. Music that might be proper during the reception may be unsuitable in the sanctuary. Likewise, solos that may have beautiful sentiments or may be currently popular are not necessarily acceptable in a Christian wedding.

In particular, most secular “love songs” are not appropriate for a service of Christian worship, as they emphasize the love of two people without consideration of God’s love. Even such innocent phrases, as “You’re the only one I need . . .” can become objectionable in the context of Christian worship.

In general, the “Sunday Morning Worship” rule prevails: if a piece of music is of the type one might expect to hear in Sunday morning worship, then it is probably suitable for the wedding service; if not, then something else should be chosen. No final music decisions should be made before consultation with the organist. The church accepts no responsibility for inconvenience and/or disappointment resulting from failure to comply with this policy.

Soloists should know their music prior to the rehearsal with the organist. It is the organist’s responsibility to accompany the soloist, not to rehearse the soloist in unfamiliar music. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom, or the soloist, to supply solo music to both the soloist and the organist, unless other arrangements are made. The organist has copies of some of the most frequently sung solos. In those cases, only the soloist will need the music. Please check this with the organist.

**PHOTOCOPYING MUSIC IS A VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW! SOLOISTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO SING WITH PHOTOCOPIED MUSIC, EITHER FOR THE SOLOIST OR THE ORGANIST!**

It is suggested that soloist(s) and musician(s) wear a choir robe furnished by the church. They may be secured through the organist. Guest musicians who will be part of the processional music must attend the rehearsal in order to participate in the wedding ceremony.

**NO RECORDED MUSIC WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE WEDDING CEREMONY FOR ANY REASON.**

The organist of Bethany United Methodist Church is in charge of the music for all weddings. Please contact him/her as soon as possible after the bride and groom engage you. Any questions you may have regarding these instructions can be answered at that time.

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## SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

### Old Testament

Genesis 1:26-28, 31a	The creation of man and woman
Song of Solomon 2:10-14, 16a; 8:6-7	Love is strong as death
Isaiah 43:1-7	You are precious in God's eyes
Isaiah 55:10-13	You shall go out in joy
Isaiah 61:10 – 62:3	Rejoice in the Lord
Isaiah 63:7-9	The steadfast love of the Lord

### Psalms

23 (Hymnal 137, 754)	The Lord is my shepherd
33 (Hymnal 767)	Rejoice in the Lord
34 (Hymnal 769)	I will bless the Lord
37 (Hymnal 772)	Trust in the Lord and do good
67 (Hymnal 791)	May God be gracious to us
100 (Hymnal 74, 75, 821)	Make a joyful noise to the Lord
103 (Hymnal 66, 139, 824)	Bless the Lord, O my soul
112 (Hymnal 833)	Happy are those who fear the Lord
145 (Hymnal 857)	The Lord is gracious
148 (Hymnal 861)	Praise the Lord from the heavens
150 (Hymnal 139, 862)	Praise the Lord

### Epistles and Other New Testament

Romans 12:1-2, 9-18	The life of a Christian
1 Corinthians 13	The greatest of these is love
2 Corinthians 5:14-17	In Christ we are a new creation
Ephesians 2:4-10	God's love for us
Ephesians 4:1-6	Called to the one hope
Ephesians 4:25 – 5:2	Members one of another
Philippians 2:1-2	The Christ-like spirit
Philippians 4:4-9	Rejoice in the Lord
Colossians 3:12-17	Live in love and thanksgiving
1 John 3:18-24	Love one another
1 John 4:7-16	God is love
Revelation 19:1, 5-9a	The wedding feast of the Lamb

### Gospels

Matthew 5:1-10	The Beatitudes
Matthew 7:21, 24-27	A house built upon a rock
Matthew 22:35-40	Love, the greatest commandment
Mark 2:18-22	Joy in Christ as at a wedding
Mark 10:42-45	True greatness
John 2:1-11	The marriage feast of Cana
John 15:9-17	Remain in Christ's love