

Old Bethel United Methodist Church



Wedding Manual

**Old Bethel
United Methodist Church
7995 East 21st Street
Indianapolis, IN 46219
317.359.9651**

(edited October 2023)

Welcome

Recognizing the sacredness of the marriage relationship, we are pleased you are considering having your wedding at Old Bethel United Methodist Church.

We believe marriage is God's plan. God made us for relationship. We pray that you not only seek God's blessing for the wedding ceremony, but seek God's presence daily.

Marriage is established by God as a covenant and not a contract.

- A Covenant is based on trust between parties; a contract is based on distrust.
- A Covenant is based on unlimited responsibility; a contract is based on limited liability.
- A Covenant cannot be broken if new circumstances occur; a contract can be voided by mutual consent.

What The Bible says about Marriage:

Genesis 2:18-24:	Marriage is God's idea
Genesis 24:58-60:	Commitment is essential to a successful marriage
Song of Solomon 4:9-10:	Romance is important
Jeremiah 33:10-11:	Marriage holds times of great joy
Malachi 2:14-15:	Marriage creates the best environment for raising children
Matthew 5:32:	Unfaithfulness breaks the bond of trust, the foundation of all relationships
Matthew 19:6:	Marriage is permanent
Romans 7:2-3:	Ideally, only death can dissolve marriage
Ephesians 5:21-33:	Marriage is based on the principle practice of love, not feelings
Ephesians 5:23 & 32:	Marriage is a living symbol of Christ and the church
Hebrews 13:4:	Marriage is good and honorable

Jesus said: "Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one?' So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder." -Matthew 19:4-6

Old Bethel United Methodist Church Wedding Policy

Congratulations on your engagement! We are delighted that you are considering Old Bethel United Methodist Church for your Christian wedding ceremony. We hope the beauty of the Sanctuary will be just the sacred setting that you are seeking for your wedding covenant. The members and staff welcome the privilege of sharing in this profound experience in your life. A Christian wedding is a covenant relationship between the bride and groom and God. For this reason, we welcome and encourage you to participate in the life of the Old Bethel congregation.

The following policy has been prepared to give you as many details as possible as you plan for your wedding ceremony. **This policy must be read in full prior to booking your wedding as these policies outline the ways in which you, your vendors and the church will work together.**

I. SCHEDULING

- Contact the church Administrative Assistant at 317-359-9651 to schedule your wedding. Availability of the church and clergy will be determined within five business days of the initial contact. After availability is determined the wedding coordinator will be in contact with the couple and the church will hold the confirmed date for 10 days.
- Upon receipt of the \$200.00 non-refundable deposit, made out to Old Bethel United Methodist Church, your wedding date will be secured on the wedding schedule.
- A wedding date should not be set, receptions arranged or invitations printed until confirmation with the wedding coordinator.
- OBUMC will schedule Saturday weddings, with the latest start time being 5:30pm.
- The wedding party will have a maximum of 4 hours use of the church; **2 hours before the ceremony and 2 hours following the start of the wedding service.**
- Rooms will be assigned for use by the wedding coordinator in consultation with the administrative assistant. Requests for use of additional rooms may be arranged, for an additional fee, prior to the wedding rehearsal through the wedding coordinator. All rooms must be picked up prior to departure.

II. PERSONNEL

It is expected that a pastor from Old Bethel UMC will officiate at your wedding ceremony. Ordained United Methodist clergy may officiate at the invitation of the lead pastor of Old Bethel. Inviting a guest pastor to participate in your wedding with the pastor from Old Bethel must be done **within 30 days of booking your wedding** and cleared with the pastor assigned to your wedding. **The Old Bethel pastor will do vows, rings and declaration of marriage.** The guest pastor will do everything else.

- The church wedding coordinator will be present for the wedding rehearsal and wedding ceremony.
- All wedding rehearsals will take place at 5:30pm on the evening prior to the wedding, unless the officiating pastor schedules a different time with the couple.
- The bride must notify the church wedding coordinator if you are using a bridal consultant or wedding planner.
- The church wedding coordinator and pastor are in charge of all aspects of the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.
- The church organist will play at all weddings and will work with other soloists and ensembles.
- The church custodian will set up prior to and clean up after your wedding. All items that appear to be disposable will be cleared from the dressing areas of the bride and groom as well as the Sanctuary. Should the clean-up time exceed three and one-half hours, the bride and groom will be charged an additional fee of \$25.00 per hour. Any items that appear to not be disposable will be held for 1 week. If not picked up within that week, the items will be disposed of.
- The attached fee schedule outlines the staffing costs paid by the wedding party.

III. PREMARITAL COUNSELING/WEDDING PLANNING

Upon confirmation of wedding date, couples must participate in premarital counseling. We take marriage seriously and believe that premarital work helps continue a firm foundation. The cost is \$35 for the inventory assessment and 3-4 sessions at \$65 per session.

At the Lead Pastor's discretion and with their approval, the couple may schedule premarital counseling, with a certified counselor, personal pastor/clergy member, or other premarital class offered through another church or counseling service. A signed document of completion is required one month prior to the wedding date. If premarital counseling is not completed Old Bethel reserves the right to postpone wedding. If cost is prohibitive, OBUMC will work with couple to accomplish this essential step towards marriage.

Thirty days prior to wedding date the officiating pastor meets with couple to plan the wedding. Wedding bulletins **MAY NOT** be sent to print until the couple and pastor determine the order of ceremony. If the bulletin must be sent to print more than 30 days prior to the wedding, the wedding order must be set by pastor via email.

IV. SMOKING, ALCOHOL, DRUGS

The use of any tobacco product, alcoholic beverage or chemical substance is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED** in the church building and on its premises. **Upon detection of the presence, use, or symptoms of use of alcoholic/drug products by members of the wedding party (including family), the officiating pastor has the discretion to refuse to perform the wedding, and/or ask participants to not participate. If this is the case, all fees paid will NOT be refunded.**

V. MUSIC FOR YOUR CEREMONY

Many couples want to include the singing of appropriate hymns of joy, prayer and blessings. Some couples wish to use personal music selections rather than traditional selections during the processions and recessions. Old Bethel is truly blessed with talented musicians and they can assist you with these choices. Only Old Bethel Staff musicians will play the organ for your ceremony. If OBUMC staff musician are not available, they will secure a qualified musician. The piano cannot be moved.

- Music should be appropriate for the worship setting
- Popular music may be suitable for the rehearsal dinner or reception
- Some popular music may be acceptable if used in the pre-processional time frame
- All music must be approved by an Old Bethel musician
- Instrumental music of all types is welcome
- Old Bethel's musicians will not be present for the wedding rehearsal, but will gladly meet with couples by advance appointment
- Music should be sent to the accompanist two months in advance
- Soloist are responsible for scheduling rehearsal time with our staff musicians
- Sound technicians will assist with prerecorded music and sound system for your ceremony music. Audio files must be delivered either by flash drive or by sharing them with the sound technician via email or cloud storage, in either .mp3 or .wav format at least 1 month in advance. They are not present at the rehearsal
- All fees must be paid 30 days prior to the wedding.

VI. DECORATIONS

Flowers, candles and other decorations are welcome for the ceremony with the following restrictions:

- No tape of any kind is to be used in affixing or hanging decorations from the end of the pew. The attachment of bows, greenery and any other floral pieces shall be attached with cloth ribbon or elastic.
- The cross and candlesticks will remain in place.
- Unity candles or sand ceremony items may be used.
- The use of aisle runners is not allowed
- The bride and groom may provide memorial candles for the altar.
- Immediately following the wedding ceremony, removal of all pew decorations, unity candles, sand ceremony items, guest book, extra programs etc., is required. A florist or family member should be assigned this task. Items left behind will be discarded.
- Liturgical decorations used by the church during Advent, Lent or other special times of the year will remain in place and may not be removed for the wedding. The altar cloth will be white for all weddings. No furniture may be moved in the Sanctuary.
- Artificial petals are to be used by a flower girl in the Sanctuary.
- There are 15 pews on each side of the center aisle. (3 on each side are wheelchair accessible)
- Old Bethel has 12 wooden pew torches with glass globes. As a fire safety concern, flowers must be attached to the bottom of the torch.
- Two straight candelabra may be used. Greenery or flowers may not be attached to the candelabras.
- No balloons in the Sanctuary or Narthex.
- As the couple exits the church following the ceremony, bubbles and fresh flower petals are allowed. Balloons, rice, confetti, fireworks, glitter products or any product that is not biodegradable is not permitted.

VII. PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

***Please download and take the following information to your photographer/videographer, you are required to share these guidelines with your photographer prior to wedding.**

Photography and videography may be executed of the processional from a position no further forward than the sixth to eighth pew from the rear of the sanctuary. The simplest idea of positioning of either person is to remain behind the last pew in which guests are seated. If the photographer/videographer is experiencing the first time to shoot or record a wedding at Old Bethel, it is recommended that he/she visit the church prior to the wedding to make preparations and plan the areas where they may perform their service.

- Please advise friends and family that guests will not be allowed to stand up and take cellphone pictures during ceremony
- No photography is permitted up the steps towards the altar.
- Video-recording may be done only from the choir area or side-aisles.
- Videographers and photographer must coordinate the spaces they will be using.
- All equipment must be in place, "focused" and ready to operate at least 40 minutes prior to wedding.
- All equipment, containers, carriers, etc. must be stowed under the back pew and not block any aisle.
- The church assumes no liability for damage or loss of equipment.
- No **flash** photography may be undertaken once the processional is completed, i.e. when the bride has arrived at the stairs.
- Photographer may only shoot from the main aisle during the processional, and this will be done from behind the last row of guests. **Photographer may not remain in the main aisle during the ceremony.**
- Flash photography may resume upon the presentation of the bride and groom to the guests at the end of the service.
- If you lose a particular item, please contact the wedding coordinator to determine if it has been returned to the office.
- Both OBUMC Wedding Coordinator and officiating pastor will touch base with the photographer about these guidelines prior to wedding.
- We will be glad to cooperate and answer any questions that you might have concerning aspects of photography or videography any time before, during or after the ceremony. All questions should be directed to the wedding coordinator.
- If you cannot abide by guidelines and respect sacred nature of ceremony the photographer will not be invited back.

VIII. CHANGING/DRESSING ACCOMMODATIONS

Members of the wedding party who wish to dress in wedding attire at the church are welcome to do so. The wedding coordinator will discuss with you the rooms to be used for such changing. No additional rooms are to be used except at the discretion of the wedding coordinator. The bride and bridesmaids will have access to Wesley Hall. Mirrors will be provided. Groomsmen usually arrive at the church in wedding attire. If groomsmen choose to dress at the church a meeting room will be made available.

All personal belongings must be removed from the dressing areas prior to the start of the ceremony. Please place valuable items in the trunks of the vehicle which you will be using. Please designate a person not in the wedding party to remove items from the rooms. Items left in the changing rooms deemed as having no further use or purpose, will be disposed of by the custodian. Wedding party is required to tidy any areas they used, prior to start of ceremony.

Old Bethel UMC IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LOST, DAMAGED OR STOLEN ITEMS.

IX. REHEARSAL

PLEASE BE ON TIME FOR YOUR REHEARSAL!

Rehearsals are normally scheduled at 5:30 p.m. (or earlier) the night before the wedding.

It is encouraged that only members of the wedding party and other participants be present at the rehearsal. It is important to have all participants present. We recognize that it is a joyful time for all concerned. The rehearsal is expedited by having only the aforementioned present. We appreciate your cooperation concerning this matter.

Pre-ceremony meetings with the wedding coordinator and the officiating pastor result in the details being in place and hence are subject to only minor modifications. The officiating pastor is in charge of all aspects of the ceremony and the wedding coordinator of the church is in charge of all other aspects. All planning will be brought together in the process of the rehearsal.

On the evening of the rehearsal, you may bring with you any items that might expedite setup for the wedding, otherwise bring these on the day of the wedding, i.e. programs, decorations, unity candles, bubbles for exit etc. We ask to have programs available at the rehearsal for church personnel to aid in coordination purposes. For reasons of security and lacking appropriate storage space, we request that all wedding attire be brought or worn to the church on the day of the wedding. Please make sure all apparel changed from is removed from the dressing area to your vehicles.

X. MARRIAGE LICENSE/OTHER

- The bride and groom must meet with the wedding coordinator 1 month prior to the wedding. The "Wedding Worksheet" received from the wedding coordinator must be completed in full at the time of this meeting. The details on this worksheet will be discussed with the wedding coordinator during this meeting. Details include seating of family members, positions of wedding party at the chancel rail, unity candle procedures, music selections, dismissal of guests, and final exit of the bride and groom from the Sanctuary.
- The couple is responsible for securing the Marriage License and must bring it to the church at least 2 weeks prior to the wedding. The Marriage License will be given to the officiating pastor or wedding coordinator. The rehearsal will not take place without this document.
- Please visit this website for information regarding how, where and when to obtain your marriage license - <http://www.in.gov/judiciary/2605.htm>
- The couple is responsible for mailing the signed marriage license to the County Clerk's Office of the county from which you obtained the license.
- Private weddings may be requested. A date for the ceremony and the determination of the officiant will be arranged through the coordinator. No plans should be made until the preceding two items are determined. The fees assessed by the church will remain the same as presented in Part XII.

XI. CANCELLATION POLICY

It is never anticipated that there would be a cancellation of a wedding, however, it is understood that there are times when a cancellation is unavoidable. In the event that the wedding has to be cancelled a cancellation fee will apply. A cancellation 3 month or less prior to the wedding date, will result in a \$150.00 cancellation fee. A refund of all monies/deposits paid up to the date of the cancellation, less the cancellation fee, will be returned to the parties involved as directed.

Continue for review of Wedding Fees & Contract.

XII. FEES

Church fees (Non-Members):

Initial Deposit	\$200.00
Use of Sanctuary or Chapel	\$150.00
Church Personnel - includes:	
Pastor	\$250.00
Organist	\$200.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$200.00
Custodian	\$100.00
Sound Tech	\$200.00
TOTAL:	\$1300.00

Initial deposit of \$200.00 due at time of booking church
2nd (final) payment of \$1100.00 due 1-month prior to wedding

Church Member Rates (Member rates apply to members who are currently active):

“Active” is defined as those who have participated in the life of Old Bethel United Methodist Church through worship, service, and offerings for a minimum of 6 months.
Children, grandchildren, other relatives of Old Bethel members will not be considered for the member rate.

Initial Deposit	\$150.00
Church Personnel - includes:	
Pastor	\$150.00
Organist	\$150.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$150.00
Custodian	\$75.00
Sound Tech	\$200.00
TOTAL:	\$875.00 new total

Initial deposit of \$150.00 due at time of booking church
2nd (final) payment of \$725.00 due 1-month prior to wedding

Please make checks out to Old Bethel UMC. Checks, **along with signed Wedding Contract**, can be dropped off at the church office or mailed directly to the church. Sorry, we do not accept credit cards.

Required Premarital Counseling	\$35 for inventory assessment \$65 per session x 4
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*Counseling fees to be paid directly to the pastor/counselor by non-members.
Active church members receive pastoral counseling at no charge.

Wedding Contract must be signed and submitted at time of booking.

Wedding Contract

Bride: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Groom: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

WEDDING DATE: _____

Lessee shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless Old Bethel UMC, its employees and volunteers from and against any and all damages, claims, suits, actions, or liabilities for or by any injury or death of any person, or for loss or damage to Lessee's property, which arises out of Lessee's use of Premises, or from the conduct of Lessee's business, or from any activity, work or thing done, permitted, or suffered by Lessee and/or Lessee's guest in or about the Premises, except only such injury or damage as shall have been occasioned by the sole negligence of Old Bethel UMC.

We have read the Old Bethel United Methodist Church Wedding Policy and agree to the fees and guidelines set forth in this contract.

Signatures:

Bride: _____ Date: _____

Groom: _____ Date: _____

OBUMC Wedding Coordinator: _____

Date Received: _____

Receptions

Our hall can accommodate up to 100 guests in 2 sections with additional space for buffet, cake and gift tables. Each additional section (2 total) can accommodate an additional 50 guests each. (Be sure to check the church calendar for hall availability prior to finalizing Old Bethel as the reception location.)

- Receptions are held in our Fellowship Hall (minimum of two sections) \$300
- Additional sections of Fellowship Hall \$100
- Kitchen (counters, ice makers, stove, oven, dishwasher and refrigerator use) \$150
- Custodian (use of two sections) \$200
- Custodian Charge per additional section \$50
- Refundable security deposit \$200

If your reception is being held at Old Bethel, one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the total reception fee and the security deposit is due at the time of booking. The balance is to be paid 1 month before the date of the wedding.

Professional caterers are welcome. Kitchen usage can be arranged. They are expected to return tables and chairs to their original position, and are required to show proof of a \$1 million liability insurance policy. You may cater your own reception. Additional charges will incur if trash and waste is not gathered and disposed of properly.

No alcoholic beverages or smoking are permitted on these premises.

- **Rice, confetti, glitter and Crazy String are not allowed. Bells and bubbles are permitted and must be distributed OUTSIDE.**
- No items are to be hung on Fellowship Hall walls.
- Basic House Sound system and Technician are available for a base fee of \$250.00 for up to three hours plus \$50/hour for each additional hour. The Technician will not serve as a DJ or Master of Ceremonies.

Ask the Wedding Coordinator for Building Use Policies if you are interested.