

**Worship Committee**  
**Bethel United Methodist Church**  
**Wedding Policy**

January 2014

**I. Purpose**

The Wedding is an event of fundamental importance in the lives of two people and is of deep concern and importance to the church. Although it may have its social aspects, a wedding ceremony is primarily a service of worship where vows are taken, prayers offered, and the blessing of Almighty God invoked. Being mindful of this reason Bethel United Methodist Church (BUMC) is happy to offer full use of facilities and grounds for her members and family members to enhance the experience of this most holy union. This policy is to establish wedding guidelines for BUMC, Forest Acres South Carolina.

**II. Authority**

This Document is authorized by the Worship Committee and any variations or exceptions to this policy must first be approved by the Worship Committee and when appropriate by the Church Council.

**III. General Policy Statement**

This policy set forth by the Worship Committee establishes guidelines and management for weddings to be held on the BUMC campus property including buildings, grounds, parking lots and equipment owned, leased, or access granted for BUMC use. *“The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church”*, the *“Social Principles of the United Methodist Church”* and the Mission Statement of BUMC provide the basis of this policy.

**IV. Annual Review**

It shall be the responsibility of the BUMC Board of Trustees and the Worship Committee to appoint at least two members from each committee annually to review this policy and update as required.

**V. General Information**

- a. Careful consideration shall be exercised when requesting the date for the ceremony. Note there shall be no wedding ceremonies scheduled from the week of Thanksgiving (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in November) through New Years (January 1<sup>st</sup>) and from Palm Sunday weekend through Holy Week to Easter Day.
- b. Premarital counseling is offered to members of BUMC by contacting the minister prior to the marriage ceremony to establish times mutually convenient.
- c. All participating clergy outside BUMC shall receive invitation via the minister of BUMC.
- d. BUMC shall use a ceremony rich in tradition, meaningful, and full of beauty known as the “Order of the Service of Marriage” governed by the United Methodist Church. Any variations to the interpretations of this ceremony shall be discussed with and approved by the BUMC minister.
- e. Music for the ceremony will be coordinated via BUMC’s organist and shall be similar in character to all other BUMC holy services. Secular “love songs”

shall not be considered and in the event of a guest organist all music shall be reviewed and approved by BUMC minister and organist.

- f. The simple Christian elegance of BUMC does not warrant the need for elaborate decorations and thus are not authorized leaving those sacred symbols of faith central during the ceremony.
- g. Chancel furnishings to include seasonal symbols such as the Lenten Cross or positioned flags, add to the elegance of BUMC's sanctuary and shall not be moved or removed during the wedding ceremony. The Holy Communion Table shall not be adorned with decorations. In the event additional chancel items are requested there shall be no more than eight (8) arranged in two styles. The first accepted method of arrangement is 2 stands of flowers, 2 candelabras and 4 palms or the second recognized arrangement is 4 candelabras and 4 palms. Flowers adorning the "ledge" just below the Holy Cross shall not exceed 33" in height. All other arrangements/decorations shall be discussed and approved by BUMC minister and wedding director.
- h. If the wedding party desires for the church to utilize flowers for the following Sunday service the wedding party shall coordinate with BUMC office 45 days in advance of the ceremony.
- i. In the event the ceremony should include kneeling a request shall be made to use the BUMC kneeling bench.
- j. All efforts shall be utilized to protect furniture, furnishings, and flooring from wax drippings due to candles and dampness from floral arrangements and palms. To further protect furniture, furnishings, and flooring only floral, painters, or gaffer tape shall be used to affix approved decorations.
- k. Outside rental items used for the wedding ceremony are the responsibility of the wedding party and shall be removed no later than two hours after ceremony. Any outside rental items lost or damaged are the sole responsibility of the wedding party.
- l. The use of non-seeding bird food or bubbles is authorized outside the sanctuary. The use of rice and/or confetti is prohibited on BUMC campus.
- m. All outside music, video and/or technical presentations shall be provided to SWAT (Sound Wiring and Technology) 3 business days prior to rehearsal for review.
- n. To initiate reservations, requestor shall understand this policy and adhere to the BUMC Facility Use Agreement Policy.
- o. There shall be no consumption of alcohol on BUMC campus or in BUMC buildings.

## **VI. Direction of the Wedding**

All weddings shall be directed by one of BUMC's designated wedding directors. In the event these persons are not available, the BUMC minister will approve a substitute. **MEMBERS OF THE WEDDING PARTY ARE STRONGLY URGED TO BE ON TIME FOR RESHEARSAL.** The officiating minister is always in charge of the directions at the chancel. The bride, best man, maid or matron of honor, and the officiating minister will go inside the chancel at the direction of the officiating minister.

**VII. Candle Lighting**

Members of the wedding party or the ushers may be asked to light the candles at the beginning of the ceremony.

**VIII. Photography/Cell Phones**

The holy union of two people in the presence of God is a sacred service of worship, strict adherence to the rules below shall be followed.

- a. No pictures shall be taken in the sanctuary during the wedding ceremony, only before or after the wedding ceremony.
- b. No video recording requiring additional lighting affects shall be used.
- c. Timed exposure (no flash) photography may be used from the rear of the sanctuary.
- d. Video recording devices shall be stationary and located only in the balcony leaving a clear view of the center aisle for the organist.
- e. All photographers shall observe reverence during organ music before, during and after the wedding ceremony.
- f. ALL PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS SHALL NOT BLOCK THE ORGANIST'S VIEW OF THE CENTRAL AISLE AT ANY TIME.
- g. ALL CELL PHONES SHALL BE TURNED OFF DURING THE ENTIRE WEDDING CEREMONY.

**IX. Reception**

The full facilities of BUMC are available for use; arrangements shall be made well in advance of the wedding ceremony for the Poole Activity Building (PAB). The family of the bride shall be responsible for the use, cleanliness, damage or breakage of the PAB kitchen and equipment therein. No equipment, dishes, etcetera shall be removed from the PAB. There shall be no consumption of alcohol on BUMC campus or in BUMC buildings.

**X. Fees**

Appropriate fees shall be charged for the use of BUMC sanctuary and/or Pool Activity Building. Fees are subject to change without notice; however, every effort will be made to notify wedding party. Reservations will be made 60 business days prior to the event and shall include a \$100 deposit applicable to overall fees. All reservations are active once the Facility Use Agreement form and applicable deposits have been received by BUMC Secretary or minister. All fees will be paid 45 business days prior to scheduled event. Failure to pay applicable fees on time will result in possible cancellation of event and loss of all deposits. Cancellation of event fewer than 3 business days prior will result in forfeiture of all applicable fees and deposits. See chart below listing current fee schedule:

Facility/Service	BUMC Member	Non-BUMC Member
<b>Security Deposit</b>	\$0.00	\$100.00
<b>Sanctuary / Pool Activity Building (PAB)</b>	\$0.00	\$500.00
<b>Memorial Room (PAB)</b>	\$0.00	\$25.00/hour
<b>Other Services to Consider</b>		
BUMC Minister	*	\$250.00
BUMC Wedding Director	\$150	\$200.00
Pianist/Organist	\$200.00	\$300.00
Musical Accompaniment	\$50.00	\$50.00
SWAT (Sound Wiring And Technology) Technical Support	\$25.00/hour	\$25.00/hour
A/V Equipment with SWAT Assistance	\$50.00/hour max \$100.00	\$50.00/hour max \$100.00
Recording Event	\$25.00/hour & \$10.00/CD	\$25.00/hour & \$10.00/CD
Use of Kitchen	\$0.00	\$100.00
Cleaning Fee	\$0.00	\$200.00

\*It is customary for members to provide an honorarium

\*\*\*Setup/Takedown is NOT included in fees\*\*\*

## **XI. Safety Considerations**

- a. In the event of a Fire emergency all persons shall exit the building in a calm manner and proceed to a common area for accountability. No one will be permitted to return to the building until BUMC representative announces re-entry.
- b. Phones are located in all buildings, sanctuary in the narthex, PAB kitchen beside the stove, education building in main hallway; the Scout Hut does not have a phone. Local 911 from any building phone calls Forest Acres Police Department and you are located at Bethel UMC 4600 Daniel Drive.
- c. Fire Extinguishers are available in the sanctuary in the room adjacent to the Pulpit, in the hallway to the office area, the education building has two - one upstairs and one downstairs, the PAB has one in the kitchen area; the Scout Hut has one.
- d. There is one Automated External Defibrillator on campus and is located in the hallway adjacent to the office area.
- e. First Aid kits are located in the office hallway for the sanctuary, the education building has one in the nursery, and one upstairs, and the PAB has a kit located in the kitchen drawer next to the kitchen entrance.