

Bethel Church Wedding Handbook

YOUR WEDDING OUR TEAM FOR GOD'S GLORY



Congratulations on your engagement!

We share in your excitement as you journey through one of the most exciting and significant experiences of your life... preparing to be married. We are delighted to assist you and trust you will find this Wedding Handbook informative.

Your wedding date will be reserved after you have completed the wedding application, returned it to the Bethel Care Ministry, one of our pastors has agreed to marry you, and your \$300 deposit has been received.

Please read through this Wedding Handbook before submitting your wedding application. We trust this will be a joyful and God-honoring experience for you and your families.

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Scheduling Your Wedding

- Read this **Wedding Handbook** thoroughly. Many of your questions will be answered within its pages.
- Complete the **Wedding Application** and return it to the Care Ministry Department.
- The Care Ministry Team will connect you with a Pastor for a **Pre-Marital Interview**.
- Upon final approval from your Pastor and the receipt of your \$300 deposit, you may **schedule** your wedding date and on-site reception with the Care Ministry Team. We will outline your **pre-marital mentorship** plan at this time as well.
- Your **Wedding Coordinator** will be assigned to you. You should meet with her three to six months in advance of your wedding.
- If your reception will be held at Bethel Church, you will need to meet with your **Reception Coordinator** three to six months in advance of your wedding as well.

Guidelines & Policies

The Ministry Leadership Team of Bethel Church has established the following policies regarding preparation for marriage, planning of your wedding, and usage of facilities, equipment, and staff. Please read this page prior to completing and signing the wedding application.

Preliminary Considerations

The Ministry Leadership Team and Board of Elders at Bethel Church believe marriage to be a lifetime commitment between a man and a woman deserving the highest esteem, effort, and integrity. Our approach is that marriage is an important expression of the community, honor, and holiness of the Triune God. Furthermore, marriage is not merely about the man and the woman being together in covenant relationship; it is about them desiring to leave a legacy of godliness and nobility for generations they may never actually see. The Bethel Church Marriage and Homosexuality Policy details our beliefs on biblical sexuality and is attached. All couples being married at Bethel Church must agree to this statement.

In addition, couples that will be given consideration at Bethel Church will only be those couples: 1) where both the man and the woman recognize Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; 2) who are not currently cohabitating or are sexually active; 3) about whom it can be said that any previous marriage-divorce scenarios can stand the test of the Scriptures; 4) who are willing to participate fully in Bethel Church's pre-marital mentoring process or similar pre-marital preparation; and 5) who are willing to abide completely by the logistical guidelines included within this Wedding Handbook.

Couples in agreement with the Marriage and Sexuality Policy and these five considerations are invited to review the Wedding Handbook in its entirety and complete the wedding application. When the Wedding Application is returned to Care Ministry at Bethel Church, arrangements will be made for one of our pastors to meet with the couple. No wedding date will be reserved or scheduled on the church calendar until the pastor is satisfied that the couple is indeed prepared to proceed.

Should a couple determine their unique circumstances merit an exception to the above requirements, they should communicate this to the Director of Care Ministry, who will review the situation with the Senior Pastor.

Premarital Mentoring Process

So much is at stake when a man and a woman come together for marriage, and it is vital that couples commit to an in-depth equipping process that will better ensure success within the marriage relationship. While the pastor conducting the wedding will engage in the initial consultation, and will also spend time with the couple to prepare for the wedding ceremony itself, the equipping process involves a partnership with a pastor, mentor couple or counselor assigned by Bethel Church. The couple to be married will work through a variety of resources focusing on matters like spiritual maturity, communication, sexuality, and home organization. This process may take several months, requires a handful of designated meetings and homework, and is most productive when the couple to be married engages with it as honestly and authentically as possible.

Bethel Church Scheduling

Bethel Church hosts a wide range of ministries throughout the week, including multiple weddings on given weekends and multiple worship services on Sundays. The Care Ministry Team will work with the couple to determine the best date for the wedding ceremony based on facility and officiating pastor availability. Bethel Church reserves the right to have other ministry events throughout the facility on the dates of any wedding rehearsals, ceremonies, and receptions.

Ceremony Venues

Two large worship areas are available for weddings. The main venue is the Worship Center, which seats 850 people on the main floor, and the Family Life Center which can seat 300 white or 200 padded chairs. Both of these venues require the presence of one of Bethel Church's Technology Team members as well as one of Bethel Church's Wedding Coordinators. Bethel Church reserves the right to have events take place in both venues simultaneously.

Bethel Church Wedding Coordinator

The Care Ministry Team will connect you with a Wedding Coordinator for the entire wedding event. The Wedding Coordinator will assist you with procedures, church facilities, any appropriate furnishings, etc. The coordinator will work with the officiating pastor to direct the rehearsal and the ceremony so the couple can focus on enjoying the activities.

Wedding Day Arrival Time

The wedding party may arrive at Bethel Church four hours prior to the wedding ceremony. We have two dressing rooms available for your use at that time.

Decorating

Typically, you may have access to your wedding ceremony venue at 12:00 noon on the day of your rehearsal. Please confirm this time with your Wedding Coordinator prior to making plans for decorating.

You will need to provide your own unity candle and unity candle tapers. Lit candles are allowed on the platform only.

Flower Petals

If you choose to have a flower girl drop fresh flower petals, you are required to use an aisle runner. The aisle in the Worship Center is 92' and the aisle in the Family Life Center is 68' long, so you will want to purchase a 100' aisle runner for either location.

Not Allowed

Alcoholic beverages and smoking are strictly prohibited inside Bethel Church.

Bethel Church does not permit the throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, glitter, etc. within our facility or on church grounds.

We are not able to provide childcare facilities or a nursery for the use of any children present.

Technology Support

A trained Technology Team member will handle set-up on the platform in either of the two larger venues, including arranging of any necessary equipment such as microphones and lighting, and will facilitate all other technology needs. This person will be present at both the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.

Technology Planning

- Please provide an Order of Service to your Wedding Coordinator no less than two weeks prior to rehearsal.
- Please provide all video and all digital music to your Wedding Coordinator or Technology Team member no later than one week prior to your wedding.
- Technology equipment and instruments may NOT be moved on the platform by anyone other than the Technology Team member.
- The instruments Bethel provides for your use are piano and organ.

Order of Service

The following is a general outline for a wedding ceremony from which there are many variations you may choose. This sample is provided simply to help you consider your preferences for the elements common in most ceremonies.

- Musical Prelude (30 minutes prior to the ceremony)
- Candle Lighting
- Seating of Grandparents
- Seating of Parents
- Processional
- Giving of the Bride/Welcome
- Special Music
- Scripture Reading
- Message
- Vows/Rings/Pronouncement
- Unity Candle Lighting/Special Music
- Prayer
- Presentation of Couple
- Recessional

Receptions

Bethel Church's Gymnasium and Family Life Center, along with their respective kitchens, may be available for receptions. Receptions at Bethel Church require a Reception Coordinator who will work with the couple or their representative to plan the reception. It is required that the couple hire an outside caterer. The couple is responsible for decorating, finding volunteers to serve during the reception, and clean-up of the reception venue. The Gymnasium accommodates 46 tables with a maximum seating of 368. The Family Life Center has room for 25 tables with a maximum seating of 200.

Guest Officiants

Couples wishing to have a man from outside of Bethel Church perform the ceremony and/or pre-marital counseling must communicate this upfront. This individual will be required to sign a Statement of Faith Agreement and Bethel's Marriage and Sexuality Policy certifying a shared commitment with Bethel Church to essential biblical orthodoxy.

Additional Wedding Related Events

We may be able to provide space for your rehearsal dinner if space is available. Book this event with the Care Ministry Team following the Bethel Church Facility Use Guidelines. The rooms that may be available to meet your needs are:

- Family Life Center
- Solid Grounds
- Rooms 112, A, B, C, D, E

Wedding Fees

Wedding Fee:

Includes: Facility Use, Wedding Coordinator, Technology Support, and Officiating Pastor.

- Worship Center: \$900
- Family Life Center: \$900
- Off-site Ceremony: \$300 Includes: Officiating Pastor.

Reception Fee:

Includes: Facility Use and Reception Coordinator.

- Family Life Center: \$700
- Gymnasium: \$700

Deposit & Payment Information

A \$300 deposit is required to confirm your wedding date, and payment is due upon pastoral approval of your wedding. The \$300 deposit will be applied to your total balance due. Full payment should be made no later than two week prior to your wedding.

Officiating Pastor

The fee for pastoral services includes guidance in wedding planning, sermon preparation, rehearsal, and officiating the wedding ceremony.

Our Team

Officiating Pastors

- Pastor Jonas Bundy
- Pastor Anthony Hubin
- Pastor Craig Johnson
- Pastor Gary Siefers
- Pastor Andy Veith

Wedding & Reception Coordinators

- Rachelle Allen (701) 388.2902
- Robin Logan (701) 388-6355
- Nancy Rossland (701) 388.3124
- Kristi Stroud (701) 388.9049

Technology Support

A member of our Bethel Technology Team will be assigned to do your wedding.

Bethel Church Marriage & Sexuality Policy
(Approved by Elders on August 4, 2015)

Purpose

This document is intended to provide the congregation of Bethel Church of Fargo, ND with Scripturally-based presentation on where our local church stands on the issues of marriage and sexuality.

Sexuality is a beautiful, God-given gift. It was designed by Him for use within a committed marriage relationship between a man and a woman and was intended for the good of the human race. However, throughout history people have abused this gift and used it in God-forbidden ways (Ex. 22:19, Lev. 18:6-23; 20:15-19, Deut. 27:21, Rom. 1:26-27), willfully engaging in all types of sexual sin as evidenced in both the Old and New Testaments (Num. 25:1-2, 1 Cor. 5:1; 7:2; Matt. 5:27,28, Col. 3:5, 1 Pet. 4:3).

Marriage is the original and foundational institution of human society, established by God as a one-flesh, covenantal union between a man and a woman that is life-long (until separated by death), exclusive (monogamous and faithful), and generative in nature (designed for bearing and rearing children), and it is to reflect the relationship between Christ and the Church.

We believe the following:

- Our views of this issue flow from our commitment to God (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-38) and to His Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17; cf. Deut.32:45-47; Matt. 4:4), as expressed in our Statement of Faith.
- God created human beings in His image as male and female (Gen. 1:27). The complementary, relational nature of the human race as "male and female" reflects the created order given by God when He created human beings "in His image."
- Scripture grants two life-enhancing options for sexual behavior: monogamous marital relations between one man and one woman (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:18, 21-24; Matt. 19:4-6; Mk. 10:5-8; cf. Heb. 13:4) or sexual celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7; Matt. 19:12). Either is a gift from God given as He wills for His glory and the good of those who receive and rejoice in His gift to them.

- In Scripture monogamous heterosexual marriage bears a significance which goes beyond the regulation of sexual behavior, the bearing and raising of children, the formation of families, and the recognition of certain economic and legal rights, all of which are important. Marriage between a woman and a man signifies the mystery of the union between Christ and His body, the Church (Eph. 5:22-33).
- All of human existence, including our sexuality, has been deeply damaged by the fall into sin (Gen. 3; Rom. 3:23; 5:12; 8:23). We all are sinners, broken in some measure by this fall.
- Temptation, including sexual attractions, is not sin. Sin is yielding to temptation. Jesus himself was tempted, yet was without sin (Matt. 4:1-11, Heb. 4:15).
- All homosexual behavior is specifically condemned as sin in both the Old Testament and the New Testament (Gen. 19:4-11 [cf. 2 Pet. 2:6-7; Jude 7]; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Judg. 19:22-25; Rom. 1:24-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:8-11). This includes both male and female homosexual activity, both the more passive and more active roles in homosexual practice, and all varieties of homosexual acts.
- The gospel is full of grace and truth. It is an offer of grace and forgiveness to sinners as well as a call to live a holy life. It empowers us in the struggle to resist sin, including the sin of homosexual practice (Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Eph. 4:20-24; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; Tit. 2:11-13).

Policy Implications

Based on these biblical principles, we live and minister with the following pastoral and practical implications:

We Christians who attempt to follow biblical mandates on sex and marriage are not immune to expressing our own sexuality in sinful ways, for "all have sinned and fall short of God's glory" (Rom. 3:23). We must always be mindful of this and humbly relate to others accepting that we all are fallen creatures.

At the same time, all human beings deserve to be treated with dignity and respect because each of us bears the image of God. Any lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) person deserves this dignity and respect no less than any other, and we, as Christians, should demonstrate this in our thoughts, speech, and behavior. Speech, including humor, which demeans LGBT people has no place in the Christian community. Likewise, this means we oppose any bullying or violence directed against those who identify as LGBT.

We mourn with those who struggle with same sex attractions, and with their families, but as we grieve, we encourage behavior that follows the clear divine teachings of Scripture.

We must carefully distinguish between self-selected identification, areas of temptation, and sexual behavior. It is not a sin to be tempted in the area of same gender sex. Jesus sympathizes with our weaknesses, and he promises to provide a way of escape in every temptation (1 Cor. 10:13).

In some cases it is not necessarily sinful for a person to self-identify as LGBT. This may be a way for the person to acknowledge the struggles she or he faces with same-sex attraction. However, such self-identification may in fact be sinful if it includes an insistence upon behaviors that express that attraction. Moreover, a believer's fundamental identification is a person "in Christ" (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:4-10; cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

Some heterosexual acts are sinful and all homosexual acts are sinful according to Scripture. One may not equate morally a committed heterosexual relationship within marriage with a committed homosexual relationship.

We in the Church must seek ways to minister to and support those among us who struggle with same-sex attractions and those who have family members or others close to them who identify as LGBT.

We in the Church must seek ways to reach out in love to those in our society who identify as LGBT.

We regard marriage as a good creation of God and marriage within the Church as a rite and institution tied directly to our foundational belief of God as creator who made us in His image, male and female. We also regard marriage as a sacred institution which images the mysterious and wonderful bond between Christ and His Church. To us, then, marriage is much more than merely a contract between two persons. We therefore will only authorize and recognize heterosexual marriages between two believers in Jesus Christ.

Only such marriages which fit the definition above may be conducted on Bethel Church property and/or officiated by members/staff of this congregation.

Bethel Church holds a definition of marriage that is intimately connected to other foundational matters of our faith as stated in our Statement of Faith. Therefore we regard any restrictions and definitions we apply in our church concerning marriage to be an exercise of the freedom of religion clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Notes



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