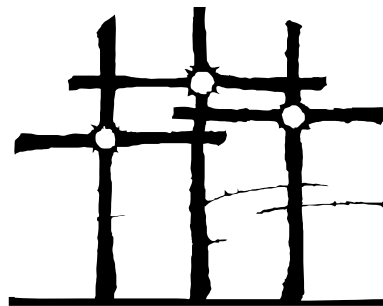


A SERVICE OF  
CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE



**BELLE MEADE**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Belle Meade United Methodist Church  
121 Davidson Road  
Nashville, TN 37205  
615-352-6210

[bellemeadeumc.org](http://bellemeadeumc.org)

## **Introduction**

Christian marriage is a life-long covenant between a man and a woman. At the center of the covenant is Jesus Christ. Christ's love for his church is the same love that a husband and wife are to have for each other. Covenant, in contrast to contract, involves the giving of oneself unreservedly in love to the other. The service of Christian Marriage is an act of serving God and proclaiming the lordship of Jesus Christ for the new family in the household of faith.

The Service of Christian Marriage is a service of worship before God. This is the reason weddings are conducted in church sanctuaries. Thus, reverence is expected on the part of all present. The officiating pastor will direct the service with the assistance of the Wedding Coordinator.

Since the Service of Christian Marriage is a service of Christian marriage, it presupposes that one of both of the parties involved is Christian. There will be couples for whom this service is inappropriate.

## **Officiating and Premarital Counseling**

A Belle Meade UMC pastor will participate in every wedding. Outside pastors are welcome to join the BMUMC pastor in officiating.

Wedding ceremonies will follow the basic form of "A Service of Christian Marriage." It may be found in The United Methodist Hymnal, (pp. 864-869).

All persons marrying at Belle Meade UMC will be required to participate in premarital counseling with one of the church's pastors. Appointments should be scheduled by calling the church (352-6210).

## **SERVICE POLICIES**

### **Music**

Because the Service of Christian Marriage is a worship service, God is the central focus. Music, instrumental or vocal, should be reverent. Music written especially for the church is encouraged.

The Director of Music Ministries/church organist plays for all weddings at Belle Meade UMC. He/She will help you select appropriate music. The organist will arrange for all vocal/instrumental soloists or ensembles. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make an appointment with the organist to discuss service music.

1. In the event that the church organist is unavailable to play for the service, he/she will arrange for a substitute.
2. No taped or recorded music shall be used.

### **The Sanctuary and Chapel**

The sanctuary and chapel of the church are designed for worship and incorporate symbols of the Christian faith and tradition. They shall not be removed or moved from their normal location.

1. Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should not be unduly elaborate. Excessive expense and ostentation should be avoided.
2. One flower arrangement for the altar/communion table is permitted. It shall be one vase or container.
3. Families must leave wedding altar flowers for use in worship on the Sunday following a Saturday wedding in the sanctuary.
4. There may be a small amount of greenery in the windows. No flowers are permitted in the windows.
5. Floral arrangements are permitted in the narthex only on the guest book table or stand.
6. The candelabra and hurricane lanterns may have a small amount of greenery attached. No flowers shall be attached. No tape may be used. Only florist wire is permitted.
7. The use of rented candlesticks or other equipment is not allowed.
8. Protective cloths must be placed under all plants containing moisture.
9. No candles or arrangements are to be placed on the organ console, pulpit, lectern, baptismal font, or table.
10. Aisle runners are not allowed.
11. The following are prohibited inside or outside the building (including parking lot):
  - rice
  - flower petals
  - bubbles
  - fireworks
  - alcoholic beverages
12. Time for decorating the church must be arranged with the Wedding Coordinator at least a week in advance. The building can be opened no sooner than four hours prior to the wedding. The entire church facility must be vacated by 10:00 PM.

## **Photography and Videos**

1. Photography in the sanctuary is prohibited after the music starts. Time exposure photographs may be taken in the narthex. No photographs may be taken during the ceremony.
2. Following the wedding, photographs in the sanctuary may commence after the last member of the wedding party has recessed.
3. A photograph of the bride may be taken in the narthex prior to her entrance. One of the bride and groom may be taken as they enter the narthex following the ceremony.
4. All photography must be completed within one hour following the ceremony.
5. All photography equipment must be removed at that time. No equipment may remain in the building overnight.
6. Video cameras must be set up behind the last seated guest.
7. A small remote video camera may be used in the chancel area provided it is hidden from view. The plant manager will direct placement of the equipment near the piano.
8. At no time during the ceremony shall any photographer, videographer, or assistant be in the chancel.
9. No extra lighting shall be used by the photographer or videographer from the time the music starts prior to the ceremony until the last member of the wedding party leaves the sanctuary after the service.
10. These policies apply to all guests as well as those invited or hired by the wedding party.

## **Other Considerations**

1. The Pastor and Wedding Coordinator will be responsible for directing the wedding rehearsal. A "Rehearsal Information" form will be filled out by the bride and groom prior to the rehearsal. This information will enable the rehearsal to be conducted in an orderly and timely manner. If the wedding party is punctual, a rehearsal will usually last about 45 minutes.

### 2. Scheduling:

Reservations for weddings are scheduled in the order requests are made. Call the church Administrative Assistant at 352-6210 to check the availability of the church.

The church building may be reserved for a wedding only after approval by the ministers. All weddings for both members and non-members must be approved by a pastor before it can be officially added to the church calendar.

Weddings will not be scheduled on the following:

- Sunday
- The month of December (unless approved by pastor(s) and staff)
- The week of Christmas Eve through New Year's Day.
- Holy Week
- Easter
- The week of Thanksgiving

3. Because the church cannot safeguard personal property, wedding attendants must remove all personal possessions from dressing areas before the wedding begins.

4. Fees: Members: \$1000                      Non-members: \$1500

- The services of the organist, wedding coordinators and plant manager are covered by this fee. Organist services include music consultation, contracting of additional musicians, rehearsal, and the wedding.
- Additional fees will be charged for contracted soloists and ensembles. A separate check will be given to the organist to cover these expenses.
- All fees must be paid to the church 30 days prior to the wedding.

5. The church is not responsible for print publications for weddings.