

# Bethesda Presbyterian Wedding Guide

To Persons Interested in Planning a Wedding Ceremony at Bethesda,

Bethesda has its own wedding guild, which is knowledgeable and experienced in wedding services. The Wedding Guild representative will contact the wedding couple after the date is placed on the church calendar. The Guild representative is an official representative of the church. The representative will arrange to meet with the couple prior to the wedding to discuss and confirm wedding details and will be present for the rehearsal and the wedding. They will arrive two hours prior to the wedding to unlock the building and assist the wedding party.

## CONTACT PERSONS FOR WEDDINGS

Minister: Rev. David Priddy email: [revdpriddy@gmail.com](mailto:revdpriddy@gmail.com) 910-944-1319

Administrator: Julie Formanski email: [bethesdapres@ncrrbiz.com](mailto:bethesdapres@ncrrbiz.com) 910-944-1319

Music Director: Earlene McLamb email: [velmc49@yahoo.com](mailto:velmc49@yahoo.com) 910-281-3231

## SUMMARY OF STEPS IN PLANNING A WEDDING AT BETHESDA

- Initial consultation with Church Administrator. Tentatively choose a date for the wedding.
- Receive wedding policy packet, wedding information forms, and the Order of Worship handout. The Church Administrator will provide this to the bride.
- Return wedding information forms and deposit to the church to the attention of the Church Administrator.
- A meeting with Minister is necessary at least 1 month prior to wedding. Applicant sets up pre-marital counseling conferences with the Minister at the meeting.
- Applicant consults with music director and/or organist prior to wedding.
- Applicant submits music to Wedding Director and Music Director for approval at least 2 months prior to wedding. Meetings with music personnel made upon request.
- The marriage license must be secured within (and not before) 60 days prior to the wedding. ***The license should be delivered to the Minister as soon as it is obtained or at the rehearsal.***
- The balance of all fees is due 30 days prior to the wedding.
- Rehearsal and wedding take place.

## **GENERAL SCHEDULING NOTES**

The wedding date and time are set in consultation with the church office and the officiating Minister and must be approved by the Session, the governing board of the church. In scheduling a wedding, the church staff will make every effort to respond to the needs and desires of the wedding party. However, use of the facilities for church-wide religious services must take precedence over wedding services. No wedding may be scheduled on Sundays, during Holy Week, Homecoming weekend, or on staff holidays.

## **SERVICES OF PERSONS RELATED TO THE WEDDING**

### **MINISTER**

The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church USA places upon the Minister of the church several responsibilities regarding a wedding and the covenant of marriage. These include discussion of:

- the nature of the couple's Christian commitment assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,
- the legal requirements of the state,
- the nature and form of the marriage service as well as its vows and commitments,
- the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,
- the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments, and
- the importance of conducting the wedding service in such a way that reverence by all in the house of God will be observed.

Only the ordained pastor of Bethesda Presbyterian Church may officiate at Weddings in our facilities. Other ministers may be invited to share in the wedding service with the consent and invitation of the Minister and the Session.

At least one pre-marital conference (and possibly more depending upon circumstances) is ordinarily scheduled between the Minister and the couple to be married. This conference provides an opportunity for the minister to get to know the couple better and discuss the nature of Christian marriage. The Minister's commitment to conduct the wedding is confirmed at this conference. Planning the wedding service will also be completed.

The church's Wedding Guild, Administrator, Music Director, and others assist the Minister in these responsibilities. The bride and groom or their facilitators should not make plans relating to the order of worship of the wedding service without consulting the Minister and his/her assistants. Ordinarily, this will be done during the conference in preparation for the wedding.

### **WEDDING GUILD**

Bethesda is fortunate to have a wedding guild available to persons planning to be married in the church. A Wedding Guild Member is required for all weddings at Bethesda/Old Bethesda unless the Minister makes an exception, when there is no rehearsal, or when the number of invited guests is less than

twenty. A Wedding Guild Member is not only for the benefit of the wedding party but also serves as a representative of the church to assist in those matters that affect the church's interests since the wedding service is a worship service of the church.

When an inquiry is made regarding a wedding, the Church Administrator will check the availability of the date for the wedding on the church's calendar. However, no date can be reserved until the Wedding Information Forms and Fees have been submitted to the church and until the Minister, in conjunction with the church's calendar, have made a review of this information.

The Wedding Guild Member has the responsibility of assisting the bride and groom in their planning, assisting the Minister in directing the wedding, and assuring that the details of the service are conducted in a manner appropriate to the church and to a Christian service of worship. The member is familiar with the policies of Bethesda Presbyterian Church and the minister as well as most matters of wedding etiquette. The member will be present for the rehearsal and the wedding. The member will arrive two hours prior to the wedding to unlock the building and assist the wedding party.

### **MUSIC DIRECTOR AND/OR ORGANIST**

Ordinarily, the church Organist is expected to play for all services in the church including weddings. If unavailable, the church Organist will be responsible for securing an approved substitute. A guest organist may be invited to participate upon consultation with the church Organist or Music Director. The guest organist must receive instruction from Bethesda's organist for instructions for the pipe organ.

Because the wedding ceremony is a sacred and holy worship service of the church, appropriate music for a wedding should be selected according to the standards for church worship. All music must be approved by the Organist or Music Director. Any questions concerning the selection of music that may require special attention will be answered by our minister.

### **SOLOIST OR INSTRUMENTALIST**

It is the responsibility of a soloist or instrumentalist to take the initiative in arranging rehearsal time with the Organist. Direct payment to an additional soloist or instrumentalist is the responsibility of the wedding party.

### **SEXTON/CUSTODIAN**

The services of the church's sexton shall be used in connection with all weddings. The services that will be provided involve complete oversight of the building and facilities, opening and locking the building for the rehearsal and wedding, advance preparation and cleaning of the church and equipment, providing heat or air-conditioning as necessary and clean-up of the facilities afterward. Since these are over and above duties, a standard fee is charged. Should additional time be required in restoring the church facility to its normal use, an overtime charge will be made and billed after the wedding. Staff services do not include work in the kitchen at a reception, except by special arrangement where an additional charge will be made. (See Fee Schedule)

## **SOUND SYSTEM**

If sound other than a lapel microphone is required, the services of Bethesda's sound personnel must be used. (See Fee Schedule)

## **FLORIST/FLOWERS**

Professional florists are generally familiar with church policies relating to weddings though each church has its own stipulations. If a non-professional florist or one who is not familiar with the policies of Bethesda is to decorate for the wedding, the Wedding Guild Member will see that they have agreed to all florist-related policies of the church. Also see the next section on DECORATING GUIDELINES.

Flowers in the chancel area may be left in the Sanctuary or Chapel after the wedding for the following Sunday's worship barring any conflict with the church's flower calendar. This should be cleared with the Wedding Guild. Otherwise, ALL wedding flowers must be removed from the sanctuary on the day of the wedding. In some cases, the wedding flowers may be placed in the narthex. Acknowledgment of the flowers and your wedding will be printed in the Sunday bulletin. Please advise the Wedding Director regarding your wishes.

For Example: The flowers in the sanctuary (or narthex) are given in celebration of the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. (*Brides who wish to leave their flowers should inform their Wedding Director who gives the specific wording to the Church Administrator for the Sunday bulletin.*)

## **DECORATING GUIDELINES**

Bethesda Presbyterian Church has been blessed with a beautiful sanctuary and chapel as well as a lovely older facility constructed in 1860 commonly called Old Bethesda. Decorations should be restrained and tasteful respecting the existing architectural beauty of the worship spaces. The paraments used during the wedding service are white.

- The pulpit, communion table, and baptismal font are not to be moved.
- No flower arrangements of any kind are allowed on the Communion table or may be allowed to obscure the view of the cross.
- Hymnals and Bibles are not to be removed from pew racks and must be left in order following the ceremony.
- The use of nails, thumbtacks, screws, and tape is forbidden. This includes the use of hardware or tape for securing pew ribbon markers. The use of felt is recommended to prevent scratching of the pews.
- When potted plants or greens are used, floors and furniture must be protected from stains or drips.
- Floral/greenery decorations with candles may be used in the sanctuary windows; however, the candles must be shielded by hurricane lamp-type glass shades as a fire safety precaution. Candles shall be of proportional height of the shades or shorter (10" dripless).

## NO BURNING CANDLES ARE ALLOWED IN OLD BETHESDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OR IN THE CHAPEL.

- Do not place anything on top of the grand piano in the sanctuary. The piano may be moved only by Bethesda personnel.
- The wedding party shall remove all decorations following the wedding unless prior arrangements have been made by the bride for flowers to be left for Sunday service.
- During the Christmas season and Holy Week, weddings (including rehearsals and receptions) will have to be scheduled around special church functions taking place during those times. Decorations already in place in the sanctuary during these seasons may not be moved. Additionally, no accommodation will be made to color coordinate church decorations for a wedding.
- The couple, or their representatives, will be held responsible should any damage occur as a result of the decorations or as a result of any rule violation.
- The throwing of rice is not permitted. Birdseed should be substituted.

## PHOTOGRAPHER

A professional photographer with experience in working with weddings is recommended for the greatest efficiency at the wedding and for the quality of pictures. Photographers new to Bethesda Presbyterian Church will read and agree to the photography-related policy for the church. The bridal couple is responsible for contacting and hiring a photographer for the wedding. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to inform the photographer (as well as the guests) that no flash pictures are to be taken in the sanctuary, chapel or at Old Bethesda during the wedding from the time the bride enters until she and the groom leave. Photos from the rear of the sanctuary or the narthex of the chapel using existing light and a noise-free camera are allowed. Photographers may not move up or down the aisles in any fashion during the service. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in forfeiture of the security deposit. Every effort will be made to cooperate fully with the bridal party and the photographer(s) before the service and after the benediction. Photographers must wear appropriate dress.

A video camera may be used discreetly to record the service only if the equipment is stationary, does not obstruct the view of worshippers, and no lights are used. Videos may be made only from the balcony with the permission of the minister. Videographers must wear appropriate dress. Videographers new to Bethesda will read and agree to the photography and videography-related policies of the church. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in forfeiture of the security deposit.

## RECEPTIONS

Receptions may be held in the fellowship hall. All facilities should be restored to their proper cleanliness and order when the reception is over. Any dishes or serving trays used shall also be cleaned, dried, and returned to their proper cabinets.

## **WEDDING PROGRAMS**

Wedding programs can be provided by the church, pricing can be discussed. If you will be providing wedding programs, please consult with the Minister about the order of service to be printed. Also, please add a note on your program that states "Please refrain from taking pictures during the wedding service."

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**No alcoholic beverages are allowed** in any part of the church or on the grounds and will result in forfeiture of the security deposit. Under no circumstances will anyone under the influence of alcohol be permitted to take part in the wedding rehearsal or ceremony. The bride and groom are under obligation to make this expectation known to all members of the wedding party.

No food or beverages are allowed in the Sanctuary, Chapel, narthex, or at Old Bethesda.

All food, clothes, supplies should be removed from the bride's and groom's area following the ceremony. You may wish to appoint a family member to help with this.

The church is not responsible for valuables left unattended during or after the wedding.

Smoking is not permitted inside any of Bethesda's facilities.

As there is no electrical lighting in Old Bethesda nor is artificial lighting permitted, only daylight events may be scheduled. In addition, there are no heating and cooling sources in Old Bethesda; therefore, consideration of the season of the year must be given before scheduling a wedding.

As this is a ceremony to be sanctified by God, we request that all wedding party attire be appropriate to a worship service. Ladies' garments should afford the proper coverage as well as be adequately lined. Should you have any questions regarding appropriate dress, please contact the church.

Please arrange to have at least one usher or groomsman for each 50 guests.

Members of the wedding party are expected to honor the church as the House of God and will conduct themselves in a manner of respect as a place of worship.

We sincerely hope that your wedding day will be special and God will fill your future with many blessings.

## ROOM CAPACITIES

### SANCTUARY

Seating downstairs: 270

Balcony seating: 48  
Center Aisle Length: 40 Feet

Pews: 30 (15 per side)

### CHAPEL

Seating: 60

Pews: 12 (6 per side)

Aisle Length: 15 Feet

### OLD BETHESDA CHURCH

Seating downstairs: 120 + 20 in choir lofts Balcony seating: 80 Pews: 30 main floor, 8 choir lofts, 10 balcony  
2 Side Aisles: 30feet long x 40 inches wide

### FELLOWSHIP HALL

Seating: 150 (round and rectangular tables available)

## FEES AND HOW TO PAY

### SANCTUARY

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-Member</u>
Sanctuary Use	No Fee	\$500
Minister	Voluntary	\$200
Wedding Guild Member:	\$200	\$200
Custodian	\$75	\$75
Organist (optional)	\$200	\$200
Sound System Operator (opt)	\$75	\$75
Wedding Bulletin Design/Print	To be determined at consultation	

### CHAPEL

Chapel Use	No Fee	\$100
Minister	Voluntary	\$200
Wedding Guild Member:	\$200	\$200
Custodian	\$25	\$25
Wedding Bulletin Design/Print	To be determined at consultation	

### OLD BETHESDA

Old Bethesda Use	No Fee	\$500
Minister	Voluntary	\$200
Wedding Guild Member:	\$200	\$200
Custodian	\$50	\$50
Wedding Bulletin Design/Print	To be determined at consultation	

### FELLOWSHIP HALL

Fellowship Hall Use	No Fee	\$250
Custodian	\$50	\$50

Please discuss with the administrator which facilities and services you wish to use so a detailed budget may be drawn up.

**A \$50 non-refundable fee is to be paid at the time the wedding date is fixed on the church calendar. Checks should be made payable to Bethesda Presbyterian Church. The balance is to be paid in full within 30 days of the wedding date. Fees are refunded (less the \$50 deposit) if plans are canceled. We can only accept cash or check.**

**BETHESDA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
WEDDING RESERVATION FORM**

**WEDDING PARTY**

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

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

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

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

**WEDDING INFORMATION**

Rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Facility (Mark One): Sanctuary Chapel Old Bethesda

Ceremony Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Facility (Mark One): Sanctuary Chapel Old Bethesda

Reception: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTENDANTS**

Matron of Honor: \_\_\_\_\_

Maid of Honor: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Man: \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaids: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Groomsmen: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Ring Bearer: \_\_\_\_\_

Flower Girl: \_\_\_\_\_

Who will escort the bride (if anyone): \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Grandparents you wish listed if Bethesda is doing the wedding bulletin: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**MUSIC**

Please list any musicians and their contact information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Will you use the sound system? (Sanctuary Only)    YES                    NO

**PASTOR**

Bethesda Officiant:

Co-Officiant Name and Contact info(optional): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Photographer Name and Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Florist Name and Contact Info: \_\_\_\_\_

Caterer (if reception in Fellowship Hall)\_\_\_\_\_

Will you leave flowers in the sanctuary for Sunday Service?                    YES                    NO

Will you use the church wedding banner?                    YES                    NO

Any other information you wish to share:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_