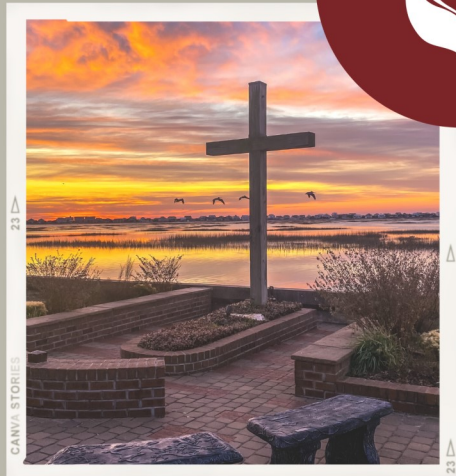


WEDDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

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Belin Memorial United Methodist Church
4182 Hwy. 17 Business
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
843.651.5099

WELCOME

Getting married is one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. You have come to our church for this important and meaningful event. To that end, we join with you in making the occasion one of happiness and joy, as well as an experience of Christian worship. This is a sacred ceremony, instituted of God, regulated by His holy commandments, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and to be held in honor among all people.

Remember, the setting of your wedding is an atmosphere of Christianity. Your home, if founded on the teachings of Jesus Christ, will be stronger and more meaningful. The church stands ready to help you establish your home in love and peace.

You have chosen Belin Memorial United Methodist Church for your religious ceremony. Belin Memorial has beautiful worship spaces in a unique and lovely coastal setting. We respectfully request that you plan your wedding around and in keeping with the décor, architecture and design of your worship setting. We are eager to work with you on your wedding plans and to support you in your marriage experience.

Guidelines for weddings have been set in keeping with the tradition, theology, and doctrine of the United Methodist Church. We trust that the following guidelines will prove helpful in planning your service. This policy simplifies your plans and procedures, protects Belin Memorial, and demonstrates the church's encompassing care for its families.

The guidelines and regulations in this policy must be observed. Please do not ask for exceptions. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in the cancellation of your wedding service and forfeiture of all fees.

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The information and guidelines in this booklet represent the traditions outlined by the United Methodist Church doctrine and have been reviewed and approved by the Belin pastors, wedding directors, Worship team, and Church Council.

WEDDING GUIDELINES

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Services include consultation, counseling session, rehearsal, and wedding service.
2. There is no fee for the use of a worship space when the bride, groom, and/or a parent is an active member (minimum 1-year membership prior to wedding date required).
3. The Wedding Coordinator in the church office schedules the dates/times for rehearsals and weddings as well as handles all fees and payments. Additionally, the Wedding Coordinator provides information concerning Belin Memorial's available services and facilities.
4. A Belin Wedding Director is required for all weddings and assists the pastor in conducting the rehearsal and the wedding service. The Wedding Director has authority over all activities on church property. Outside event/wedding planners **must** defer to the Director.
5. The sanctuary organist/pianist fee is established for the normal ranges of services provided. Use of guest vocalists and instrumentalists (once approved) requires an additional fee.
6. The Belin custodian opens and closes the facilities for all events, sets the HVAC systems, and cleans the facilities and grounds before and after the service.
7. Belin technical support is required for all indoor weddings and is necessary to ensure that sound, lights, etc. are set properly.
8. "In keeping with the Church's historic stand on total abstinence" (the *Book of Discipline* of the United Methodist Church, pg. 124), there will be NO alcoholic beverages on church property. Additionally, Belin Memorial is a tobacco-free campus.
9. Safety precautions prohibit the use of bubbles, birdseed, and rice. No rose petals may be thrown outside. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to ensure that the church property is respected, maintained and not defiled.
10. All floral arrangements and décor must be removed immediately following the service unless prior arrangements are made with the Wedding Coordinator for flowers to remain for use in other church services.
11. The bride is responsible for informing photographers, videographers, guests and the wedding party of all policies and guidelines.

CIVIL PREPARATIONS

A marriage license may be obtained from any county within SC from the Probate Court prior to the wedding. Applications are now available online. <https://ez-filing.net/sc-applications/>
This is a much more convenient way to apply.

A 24-hour waiting period is required before you can secure a license. A wedding service cannot be conducted without a valid license.

The wedding does not need to be held in the same county in which the license is obtained, but it must be obtained in South Carolina.

The license needs to be either mailed or delivered to the wedding coordinator (Belin Memorial United Methodist Church, PO Box 528, Murrells Inlet, SC 29576) NO LATER THAN two weeks before the rehearsal date. The rehearsal and wedding will not proceed without the license.

SCHEDULING THE WEDDING SERVICE

As soon as you have selected a date for your wedding, please call the Belin Wedding Coordinator (843.651.5099) to ensure the date is available. At that time, fees and costs can be discussed. Please inform us if you are a Belin member.

No public announcement of the wedding date should be made before the reservation fee has been received and that specific date is confirmed with the officiating pastor.

In order for the member fees to apply, the bride, groom, and/or a parent must have been an active Belin member for one year prior to the wedding date.

A non-refundable reservation fee secures your rehearsal and wedding dates on the church calendar.

WEDDING DIRECTORS

The Board of Trustees of Belin Memorial requires that a Belin Wedding Director be in charge at all times during a rehearsal and wedding service. The director will instruct the participants concerning their responsibilities so they are comfortable and prepared for the wedding service. Once the rehearsal and wedding dates are confirmed, it is the couple's responsibility to contact the assigned director to review plans, clarify policies, and discuss options.

CLERGY

The clergy of Belin Memorial consider it a privilege to officiate at weddings. The pastors are responsible for interpreting the policies of the church, conducting the rehearsal, and officiating at the wedding service. Belin pastors have the final word on all aspects of the service. At least one current pastor of Belin UMC is required unless otherwise approved. **At least one current pastor must be present unless otherwise approved.** In the absence of a Belin pastor, the Wedding Director will be in charge.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Premarital counseling is required of all couples married at Belin Memorial and is to be performed by the pastor officiating the wedding. An appointment should be made with the pastor for counseling and preparation for the wedding service and marriage. Dates and times are best arranged directly with the pastor. The number and length of the counseling session/s will be determined by the pastor with the first appointment at least six weeks prior to the wedding date.

DECORATING

In the worship setting, there exists a dignity and beauty that speaks of the presence of God. Elaborate decorations are not necessary and are, in fact, discouraged. No decorations should prevent free movement of the pastor and members of the wedding party.

The cross is the focal point and decorations must not obscure or detract from it. Arrangements may not be taller than the altar cross. Altar candles will be lit for the ceremony. The church provides two candelabras and a unity candle stand. Unity candles (two tapers and one pillar candle) must be provided by the bride if doing a unity candle ceremony.

The use of arches and other similar equipment is not permitted inside worship spaces. Additionally, aisle runners are not to be used inside (for insurance purposes). Real flower petals may be dropped inside the worship spaces or **outside on church property**.

CHURCH FURNISHINGS

Sanctuary furniture, furnishings, hymnals, Bibles and stands must remain in their appropriate places. Sanctuary furniture may **ONLY** be rearranged (pastor's chairs, altar, flower stands) by staff.

Decorations may not be hung or suspended from fixtures or furnishings. Ribbon or simple arrangements of flowers may mark reserved pews. No nails, tacks, wires, pins, or tape of any kind may be used on/in the walls, woodwork, pews, railings, furnishings or any part of the building. Only special plastic clips/ribbons available from florists may be used to attach pew markers. Construction of unique or artificial settings is not permissible.

Rice, birdseed, grass seed, artificial petals, bubbles and/or confetti are not to be used on church property.

BRIDE'S ROOM

A room is available for the bride and those assisting her. Please assign a friend who is NOT a part of the wedding party to be responsible for removing all personal items from the rooms used immediately following the service as well as all decorations; otherwise, the decorations will be discarded by church staff.

FLOWERS

Only flowers appropriate for worship services (fresh cut flowers, live foliage and plants) are permitted in stationary arrangements. Only appropriate potted plants or palms may be used for decorating and must be placed in waterproof containers. Please contact the Wedding Director to discuss prior to the service.

It is the responsibility of the florist/decorator to request access to the worship space by contacting the Wedding Director.

Floral arrangements may be used at Sunday worship with a note in the worship bulletin that the flowers are in honor of the marriage. Contact the Wedding Coordinator (843.357.5195) to see if the date is available for that Sunday's worship services.

The bride is responsible for giving the florist a copy of this policy statement at least three months before the service and the florist may contact the Wedding Director BEFORE the day of the wedding to clear up any questions.

MUSIC

All service music must be sacred in tone, classical in style and all lyrics must be scripturally based.

The music desired for the wedding service must be discussed with a Director of Worship, through the assigned Belin Wedding Director. It is your responsibility to contact the appropriate staff person as soon as possible to discuss your music needs.

If there is a vocalist/s, it is the bride's responsibility to see that the vocalist/s contacts the staff musician assigned to the service to arrange a rehearsal. Our Worship Directors can recommend local vocalists, who set their own fees. Solos are acceptable at appropriate places within the framework of the service.

Church musicians are assigned to the wedding unless requested otherwise. A Director of Worship must approve guest musicians. **NO recorded music** is allowed during the service.

AUDIO/VIDEO TECHNICIAN

For indoor services, a staff audio /video technician is required. If you desire, you may also request your indoor service be livestreamed over the internet. A video recording will be made for our archives. You may request a copy.

For outdoor services, you must contract independent technicians for audio and/or video. The Belin Wedding Director can offer guidance in these areas.

PHOTOGRAPHY

NOTE: The wedding begins with the seating of the immediate family (grandparents and/or parents) and ends with the recessional of the immediate family.

Photographers must not interfere with the worship experience of the wedding party and the congregation. There will be NO flash photography during the service and photographers must remain at the back of the worship space. Any movement or noise that distracts from the worship service is not permitted. This MUST be communicated to the photographer prior to the day of the wedding. Also, the photographers must wear proper attire.

Photographs may be taken following the service. Any pictures that include the clergy should be taken first. No one is allowed to stand on any pew or chair.

Photographers are required to follow the timeline set by the Belin Wedding Director. Pre-service photos must be completed at least one hour prior to the service.

VIDEOGRAPHY

Video recording may be done during the service using available lighting and from a position that does not interfere with the wedding. The camera must be on a tripod at the back of the worship space and must not impede the wedding party's entrance or exit.

The videographer must be in place 30 minutes prior to the service and must not attract attention. Any questions or concerns may be discussed with the A/V technician and/or Belin Wedding Director before the service. Also, the videographers must wear proper attire.

REHEARSAL

Typically, the wedding rehearsal is scheduled for the day prior to the wedding service. Because of the commitments of both staff and facilities, it is important that the rehearsal date and time, once set, not be changed.

Please ask all members of the wedding party to be on time for the rehearsal. Remind them that the rehearsal is a time of careful planning for the worship service.

Belin clergy do not allow the use of stand-in brides. They find it helpful to have the bride take part in her own rehearsal.

WEDDING SERVICE

The wedding is a service of worship in which we celebrate God's gift of human love and affirm the covenant between a man and a woman in holy matrimony. Changes or additions to the service must be made in consultation with the clergy and must be consistent with the theology and tradition of the church. Decisions that may need to be considered regarding the service include:

- Use of special scripture verses
- Solos and/or special music
- Unity candle/sand ceremony/tying the knot

The Sacrament of Communion is an act of corporate worship. If the sacrament is desired at the wedding, everyone present should be given the opportunity to partake. NO private communion will be served to the couple during the service.

The printing of programs is the responsibility of the wedding couple. Please provide a proof of your program to the Belin Wedding Director before printing.

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS

Absolutely **NO** alcoholic beverages may be served or consumed on church property. Should the bride or groom appear to be under the influence of any substance, the pastor reserves the right to stop the rehearsal or postpone the wedding service. Should a member of the wedding party appear to be under the influence of any substance, the Wedding Director reserves the right to remove them from the rehearsal/service.

Rooms are available for dressing members of the wedding party. Non-alcoholic drinks and snacks are permissible in these rooms. Please leave the rooms as you found them. NO food or beverages may be brought into the worship spaces.

The church is not responsible for any personal property during or after the service. It is recommended that the bride assign someone to check all rooms after the wedding for items that may have been left.

Belin Memorial United Methodist Church is a tobacco-free campus. Smoking/chewing and vaping are prohibited on church property.

Irreverent or obscene language will not be tolerated.

The clergy and/or Wedding Director may prohibit an attendant or guest from entering the worship space if it appears they will not be respectful of the service.

CHECKLIST

- _____ Reserve the rehearsal/wedding dates with the Wedding Coordinator via deposit.
- _____ Carefully read the policy and ask any questions.
- _____ Contact the clergy to schedule counseling session.
- _____ Contact the Director of Worship to discuss music selections and musicians.
- _____ Contact assigned Wedding Director to make certain all plans are within the church guidelines.

Three months prior to wedding

- _____ Give florist the guidelines for decorating.
- _____ Give photographer/videographer the guidelines for service policies.

One month prior to wedding

- _____ Contact the Wedding Coordinator to review fees and procedures.

Two weeks prior to the wedding

- _____ Submit the completed wedding service form, found on the next two pages, for Wedding Director's use.
- _____ Contact the Wedding Coordinator for names and fees of those assigned to your rehearsal and wedding service, for your final payments. Checks must be made out separately to the assigned staff.
- _____ Submit a South Carolina marriage license to the Wedding Coordinator.
- _____ Confirm that florist, photographer, and videographer have received a copy of service guidelines.

WEDDING COORDINATOR
PO Box 528 • Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
843.651.5099

Belin Memorial United Methodist Church

Wedding Service Form

Bride and Groom Names: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____ Time: _____

Wedding Date: _____ Time: _____

Seating of Grandmothers / Grandfathers

Music: _____

Groom's Grandparents

Paternal Grandmother: _____ Ushered by: _____

Paternal Grandfather: _____ Ushered by: _____

Maternal Grandmother: _____ Ushered by: _____

Maternal Grandfather: _____ Ushered by: _____

Bride's Grandparents

Paternal Grandmother: _____ Ushered by: _____

Paternal Grandfather: _____ Ushered by: _____

Maternal Grandmother: _____ Ushered by: _____

Maternal Grandfather: _____ Ushered by: _____

Seating of Mothers / Fathers

Music: _____

Groom

Stepmother: _____ Ushered by: _____

Father / Stepfather: _____

Mother: _____ Ushered by: _____

Father / Stepfather: _____

Bride

Stepmother: _____ Ushered by: _____

Father / Stepfather: _____

Mother: _____ Ushered by: _____

Father / Stepfather: _____

Wedding Party Processional

Music: _____

Minister: _____

Groom: _____

Best Man: _____

Maid / Matron of Honor: _____

Ring Bearer: _____

Flower Girl: _____

NOTE: PAIR any attendants / ushers who are married or who should be paired together.

(Print "goes by" name)

Bridesmaids: _____

Groomsman: _____

Honorary Bridesmaids: _____

Ushers: _____

Bridal Processional

Music: _____

Bride: _____

Escort: _____

Wedding Party Recessional

Music: _____

Ceremony Details

No. of Guest: _____

Unity Candle: Yes No (Please note that candles are not provided)

Who will be lighting the tapers? (i.e. acolytes, ushers, parents, mothers) _____

Sand Ceremony: Yes No (Please note that sand and containers are not provided)

Will anyone other than the pastors be doing a reading: (i.e. scriptures, poem) Yes No

Musicians(s)/Vocalists(s)

Name(s): _____

Arrival Time: _____

Florist

Name & Phone: _____ Arrival Time: _____

Photographer

Name: _____ Arrival Time: _____

Videographer

Name: _____ Arrival Time: _____

Wedding Party

Arrival Time: _____

Please complete form and return no later than two (2) weeks before wedding date .

Belin Memorial UMC

PO Box 528

Murrells Inlet, SC