

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ENGAGEMENT AND PLANS TO BE MARRIED! A church wedding is a joyful religious service of Christian worship in which the service of Holy Matrimony is conducted in an atmosphere of reverence for God. This ceremony is the beginning of the covenant relationship of Christian marriage.

We believe that Christian marriage is a sacred covenant relationship, between one man and one woman, designed and ordained by God from the creation of the world, and its significance is emphasized repeatedly in Scripture (e.g. Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18, 21-24). In Mark 10:6-9 Jesus said, *"...at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."* (See also Matthew 19:4-6) In this passage our Lord Jesus clearly affirms God's design for the religious covenant of marriage as being a holy covenant between a man and a woman in relationship with God. In illustrating the deep relationship of Christ with His bride, the Church, God also chose the analogy of the marriage relationship (Ephesians 5). Therefore, Immanuel will only perform or host weddings, marriage ceremonies, or any ceremonies of union that fit our understanding of the sacred covenant of marriage.

We believe that the vows you take during the wedding ceremony are promises not only to one another, but also to God who joins with you in this holy covenant. In light of the biblical significance and responsibilities intended by God for marriage, it is essential that the church take seriously its participation in a marriage, as well as its responsibility in helping couples in preparation.

As a first step, you must read the following principles of our premarital process as you consider planning a wedding ceremony at Immanuel. We believe these principles are consistent with God's Word, and they reflect the high standard to which God will hold one man and one woman as they commit themselves to marriage.

Principles that we are committed to in the premarital process:

1. As a Christian church, we are committed to help Christian couples engage in a worshipful wedding and a Christ-centered marriage. Therefore, weddings at our church are reserved for Christian couples only. Other conditions may also need to be met to be faithful to biblical expectations related to the covenant of marriage.
2. Immanuel UMC will consider couples who wish to take advantage of our premarital program on a case-by-case basis. All couples seeking to be married under the auspices of Immanuel UMC, by approved pastors of Immanuel, must first complete and be approved through the premarital process. This process is intended to provide the first step in an ongoing context for the nurture of Christian marriages at Immanuel.
3. Weddings will be scheduled for Immanuel members and their families.
4. All couples who desire to be married at Immanuel must complete at least 3-5 hours of premarital counseling conducted by a member of the Immanuel Pastoral staff (guest pastors may also be approved by the Senior Pastor to perform the required counseling - see "guest pastor" section of this policy). This counseling will include completion of an online assessment tool – approximate cost of \$30 to be paid by the couple directly to a third party source.

We will do all that we can to help you create a wedding ceremony that is centered in faithfulness to God, and one that celebrates the special love God has for you and that you have for each other. Most importantly, we hope to help provide a good beginning for a lifelong commitment to the covenant of Christian marriage.

If you are interested in planning a wedding ceremony at Immanuel (or one of our ministry centers) please carefully review this Handbook of Wedding Policies which has been adopted by the Church to assist couples in preparing for this holy and happy event. May God bless you and guide you in these important and joyful days.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Scheduling and Reserving the Church	
Reasons that Requests may be Denied or Delayed.....	3
Criteria for “Member” Weddings.....	3
Scheduling the Wedding and Reserving the Church.....	3
Dates Excluded.....	4
Wedding Staff	
Pastor.....	4
Guest Pastor.....	4
Wedding Coordinator.....	5
Organist.....	5
Sound and Light Technician.....	5
Custodian.....	5
Suggested Wedding Donation Information	
Wedding Facility Donations.....	5
Wedding Staff Donations.....	6
Donations.....	6
Cancellation.....	6
Ceremony Information	
Premarital Counseling.....	7
Planning the Ceremony.....	7
Marriage License.....	7
Wedding Bulletins.....	7
Photography and Videography.....	7
Communion.....	8
Receiving Line.....	8
Rehearsal.....	8
Decorations Guidelines	
Candles.....	8
Flowers.....	8
Aisle Runner.....	9
Decoration Guidelines.....	9
Sanctuary Adornments.....	9
Building Use Regulations	
Immanuel Sanctuary.....	9
Immanuel Chapel.....	9
New Hope Ministry Center Sanctuary	9
Immanuel Wesley Hall (Members Only).....	10
New Hope Fellowship Hall (Members Only).....	10
General Guidelines	10

Liturgy.....	10
Service of Christian Marriage.....	11
Contact Information.....	14

SCHEDULING AND RESERVING THE CHURCH

Reasons Requests may be Denied or Delayed

Listed below are some of the reasons that requests for weddings may be denied or delayed. If upon reviewing this list, you recognize your situation to be represented here, or you believe there may be a problem in moving forward in your planning, please feel free to discuss the issue with us as soon as possible. Please note “member” criteria below.

We Will Not:

1. Marry a Christian (believer) and a non-Christian (nonbeliever) [See 2 Corinthians 6:14ff]. By definition, a “Christian marriage” is comprised of one man and one woman who have individually committed their lives to Jesus Christ. We are not willing to perform, or host, the marriage ceremonies of couples who have not made this commitment.
2. Marry a couple if they do not satisfactorily complete the premarital counseling program requirements, or if counselors in the premarital program recommend against the marriage in the course of the counseling process.
3. Marry a couple if they are found to have represented themselves untruthfully regarding their relationship or premarital issues during the process.

We May Not*:

1. Marry a couple if we believe the maturity level of either partner is not such that he or she can fully accept the responsibilities of marriage at that particular time.
2. Marry a couple if they have not allowed themselves time to build the pattern of a stable relationship.
3. Marry a couple if they currently practice cohabitation (living together outside of marriage) and are unwilling to abstain from a sexual relationship for a period of time determined by a pastor; or if they have, in the immediate past, led a lifestyle which does not represent biblical purity.

*Exceptions to one or more of these three conditions will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the pastor performing the premarital counseling and/or wedding ceremony.

FACILITY ISSUES: The Immanuel facilities are constantly in use as we seek to fulfill our ministry and mission for Christ. Many dates will be automatically excluded as possible dates because of this use. Please see the list of typically excluded dates; please note that other dates may also be excluded due to preexisting or anticipated ministry uses.

Criteria for all Weddings and definition of “Member”

One or more of the following must be a member of Immanuel for at least six months prior to the wedding: the bride, groom, parents of the bride or parents of the groom. The church may, upon request to, and at the discretion of the Senior Pastor, make its facility available to Christians from other United Methodist churches in the Covington District of the Kentucky Annual Conference, and other Christian couples who agree to abide by all provisions of our wedding policy.

Scheduling the Wedding and Reserving the Church

It is important that the date and time of your wedding be scheduled on the church calendar and that reservations for the use of the facilities be made through the wedding coordinator at the earliest possible date in order to avoid conflicts. A wedding reservation can be made twelve (12) months prior to the preferred date.

Confirmation of a wedding reservation is only considered final after the following conditions have been met:

- The Senior Pastor has approved the wedding and a qualified member of the clergy is available and has consented to conduct the wedding ceremony.
- The wedding coordinator has received the following: confirmation of Pastoral approval, clearance from the church office that the date is available, and the Wedding Reservation Application.
- An organist is available and has consented to approve the selection of music, musicians, soloists, etc.
- The wedding coordinator, custodian and sound technician are available and have consented to provide their services during the wedding.
- It is requested that all Saturday weddings be scheduled no later than 7:30 p.m.

Dates Excluded

No weddings will be scheduled during holidays and holiday weekends as follows:

- Thanksgiving Weekend
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day (no decorations may be removed during Advent season)
- Holy Week (Palm Sunday – Easter) - chapel weddings only
- Other dates may be excluded

Weddings may be scheduled for the holidays listed below **only** if staff is available:

- Memorial Day Weekend
- Independence Day Weekend
- Labor Day Weekend
- Weddings held on Sunday Afternoon/Evening

FACILITY ISSUES: The Immanuel facilities are constantly in use as we seek to fulfill our ministry and mission for Christ. Many dates will automatically be excluded as possible dates because of this use. Please note that other dates may also be excluded due to preexisting or anticipated ministry plans.

WEDDING STAFF

Pastor

It is generally expected that one of the Immanuel United Methodist Church pastors will officiate at each wedding held in Immanuel facilities. If the bride and groom request a specific Immanuel pastor, the wedding coordinator will contact that pastor first for information about his or her availability. Otherwise, the Senior Pastor will direct the choice of pastor. An ordained pastor from another church may assist or officiate only if approved by Immanuel's Senior Pastor. The pastor must be properly ordained in a recognized Christian church and licensed to perform weddings in Kentucky (the Senior Pastor must approve the status of church affiliation for guest pastor and couple).

Guest Pastor

If any couple chooses to have a pastor from another church assist or officiate the wedding ceremony, the following criteria must be met:

- Our Senior Pastor must approve all "guest clergy" including former staff members of Immanuel.
- The man and woman to be married must both be Christians. See principles section.
- The pastor must be properly ordained in a recognized Christian church and licensed to perform weddings in Kentucky (the Senior Pastor must approve the status of church affiliation for guest pastor and couple).
- The pastor and couple must agree to participate in three or more hours of premarital counseling.

- The wedding coordinator and staff must be available and willing to serve.
- All aspects of the Handbook of Wedding Policies must be adhered to completely.
- The Senior Pastor has the sole authority to approve exceptions to these criteria.

Wedding Coordinator

The Immanuel United Methodist Church wedding coordinator is the direct church representative for all weddings held at the Immanuel facilities. She is the liaison between the wedding couple and other church staff to ensure all areas of the wedding are properly managed in a timely manner. She will make contacts at several points in the planning process to discuss details of the wedding service and will be present at the rehearsal and wedding to ensure that the ceremony proceeds with a dignity befitting the religious setting of the church. (Please note: the church wedding coordinator does not make arrangements for apparel, flowers or any other needs beyond those concerning the church and worship service.)

Organist

The Immanuel United Methodist Church organist will oversee the selection and performance of music for each wedding held in the church. The organist must approve all music, musicians and soloists regardless of his/her personal involvement at the wedding. The wedding couple must discuss their music selections with the organist at least eight weeks prior to the wedding date. Any prerecorded music must be reviewed by the organist and sound technician for appropriateness, sound quality and clarity at least two weeks prior to the wedding date. Appropriate sacred, classical, contemporary Christian or traditional selections may be used. A list of recommended music selections will be provided by the wedding coordinator to use as a reference.

Sound and Light Technician

The sound and light technician is present to provide sound and lighting to the specifications of the wedding couple and wedding coordinator. He or she will be present at the rehearsal upon request or as needed and ensure that all microphones, music stands, and other church sound and lighting equipment are set up properly before the wedding. He or she will also operate the equipment during the rehearsal and wedding and will coordinate with the organist to schedule a sound check with all musicians involved.

Custodian

The custodian will be present at the rehearsal and wedding. Any specific needs for custodial assistance must be communicated to the wedding coordinator.

SUGGESTED WEDDING DONATIONS

Typical Average Donations

A typical suggested donation package is \$680-\$980 which includes use of the sanctuary and all donations for staff.

Included in the donation for a wedding ceremony:

- Use of worship center during wedding rehearsal and ceremony
- Dressing room for the bride/bridesmaids
- Dressing room for the groom/groomsmen
- Brass unity candle stand (candles not included)
- Two brass candelabras including taper candles (Immanuel sanctuary and chapel only)
- Ten glass hurricane gloves (Immanuel sanctuary only)
- Two brass and wooden flower stands (Immanuel sanctuary and chapel only)
- Seasonal floral arrangements currently placed in the sanctuary

Suggested Donations for Wedding Staff

• Immanuel Pastor	Honorarium at your discretion paid directly to pastor
• Guest Pastors	Honorarium at your discretion paid directly to pastor
• Premarital Assessment (Immanuel Pastors)	\$30 (approximate – price set by 3 rd party online service)
• Organist	\$175
• Wedding Coordinator (sanctuary wedding)	\$300
• Wedding Coordinator (chapel wedding)	\$150
• Sound and Light Technician	\$75
• Custodian	\$125
• Custodian (holiday weekends)	\$150

*There are no sound and light or custodial staff donations for a wedding held in Immanuel’s chapel.

Donations

A \$300 donation is requested of all couples reserving a wedding date for one of the worship facilities. The donation will be deducted from the total suggested wedding donation package. After the donation is received, the wedding coordinator will send an email confirming the date is officially on the church calendar. The wedding coordinator will suggest the total amount of wedding donation package after all the details of the wedding have been determined. The final donation is requested two weeks prior to the date of the wedding.

Cancellation

In the unfortunate event of a cancellation, donation refund consideration will be given on an individual basis. Wedding coordinator donations are non-refundable.

CEREMONY INFORMATION

Premarital Counseling

Premarital counseling is required of all couples to be married at Immanuel United Methodist Church. The officiating pastor will provide the counseling. An additional short meeting with the officiating pastor may also be required, in order for the pastor and couple to finalize plans for the order of worship of the wedding service. Contact the church office as soon as you know whom your officiating pastor will be in order to schedule these meetings. The wedding coordinator does not schedule premarital counseling.

Planning the Ceremony

The officiating pastor will have complete authority over the wedding ceremony. He or she will discuss the order of worship with you. The official Liturgy of the United Methodist Church will serve as the standard for weddings held at all Immanuel facilities. That Liturgy is found at the end of this document. The Senior Pastor at Immanuel must approve the ceremony outline for all weddings officiated by a guest pastor.

Marriage License

The marriage license may be obtained by the bride and groom at the Kenton County Clerk's Office located at the Covington or Independence Courthouse within thirty (30) days of the wedding date. The couple is not required to be a previous or current resident of Kentucky but must be eighteen (18) years of age or older to marry without parental consent. A birth certificate may be necessary at the clerk's office to show proof of age. The marriage license must be brought to the rehearsal and given to the wedding coordinator or pastor.

Wedding Bulletins

Wedding bulletins, if desired, must be provided by the wedding party and approved by the officiating pastor. The following phrase is to be included: "Please no flash photography during the ceremony".

Photography and Videography

Photographs and videos are an important way to remember a wedding day. However, neither should be recorded in a manner which is disruptive, intrusive or disrespectful to the ceremony.

Church weddings are worship services; therefore, photographers, friends and relatives should be instructed that no flash pictures may be taken during the ceremony (from the time the pastor begins speaking until the recessional music begins). During the ceremony, the photographer is strictly prohibited from taking pictures in the chancel area of the sanctuary and he/she is not allowed to stand in the center aisle or anywhere that is likely to distract the pastor or other persons who are viewing or participating in the wedding ceremony. Time exposures / silent shutter photographs from the balcony or narthex, without flash, are permitted during the ceremony.

Photography sessions with the wedding party must be completed 45 minutes prior to the wedding ceremony and 30 minutes after the wedding ceremony.

Video cameras must be stationary and use natural light. The video camera operator should consult with the wedding coordinator for the best place to work. A remote controlled video camera may be located on a tripod in the balcony or in the rear of the sanctuary but must not obstruct the view of the congregation.

The wedding coordinator will speak with the photographer prior to the ceremony to review these guidelines and to ensure they are enforced. However, it is the responsibility of the couple to make sure that the photographer / videographer observes all these conditions prior to the wedding. Failure to do so may result in the ceremony being suspended until the photographer or videographer has ceased or until he or she has left the facility.

Communion

If you desire to have the sacrament of Holy Communion in your wedding, please know that in the United Methodist Church, open Communion is always observed. This means that when Communion is to be celebrated, it must be offered to the entire congregation present. An ordained elder of the United Methodist Church (or equivalent in other denominations) must preside over the communion ceremony. Upon request, the sacrament of Holy Communion may be offered as a part of the rehearsal or for the bride and groom, or bridal party and any others present.

Receiving Line

If the couple chooses to hold their receiving line at the church, the wedding coordinator will make the appropriate recommendations based on the location of the wedding ceremony.

Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal will generally take place the evening before the wedding and will be led by the presiding Pastor with the assistance of the wedding coordinator. All participants of the wedding party should be present. This includes the parents, ushers, attendants, ring bearer(s), flower girl(s), accompanists, etc. At the rehearsal, the ceremony is explained so that all persons involved will know their parts. The positioning of the wedding party members, lighting and sound levels for the ceremony, and the processional and recessional will be decided and practiced. When possible the sound and light technician will obtain a sound check from soloists just prior to the rehearsal.

DECORATIONS

Candles

A brass unity candle stand is available at all worship facilities. One three-inch pillar candle and two taper candles are to be provided by the wedding couple.

Two seven-branch candelabras are available for the Immanuel sanctuary and chapel. The church also provides two altar candles.

Ten fourteen-inch-tall glass hurricane globes and bases are available for the windows in the Immanuel sanctuary. Candles to fit in these globes must be provided by the wedding couple and measure three inches in diameter and no taller than ten inches.

Dripless candles are strongly recommended. All candles should be brought to the rehearsal and given to the wedding coordinator. She will be responsible for the placement of all candles and stands.

Flowers

Two brass and wooden flower stands are available for floral arrangements in the Immanuel sanctuary and chapel. Please inform the wedding coordinator if you wish to leave your arrangements for the Sunday worship services to ensure that a dedication of the flowers can be added to the Sunday bulletin.

Flowers may be decorated in all areas of the sanctuary except on the organ, piano or in the outside aisles. Any floral decoration placed on or around candles must be fire-safe.

Arrangements for the florist's delivery and/or pick up of flowers and equipment need to be made with the wedding coordinator. All flowers and decorations must be removed immediately after the ceremony.

Aisle Runner (Cloth Only)

To ensure the safety of the wedding party, Immanuel United Methodist Church strongly discourages the use of aisle runners, as many problems have been associated with them. Listed below are the aisle lengths for each facility.

- Immanuel Sanctuary – 100 feet
- New Hope Sanctuary – 60 feet

Decoration Guidelines

All flowers, candles, candlesticks, aisle runners, kneelers, etc. are to be arranged so that the furniture, carpeting and woodwork are not marred in any way. Under no conditions shall any flowers or other decorations be attached to pews, walls, or furnishings with tape, pins, tack, glue or nails. Nothing sharp, sticky or metal may be used to attach decorations to the pews, or to hold a decoration. Violation of this policy may result in request for payment of damages. You may use ribbons, tulle, very large rubber bands (available through your florist), or plastic pew clips to attach flowers or decorations. Flower girls are prohibited from scattering live flower petals (only silk).

Sanctuary Adornments

It is expected that a worshipful atmosphere will be maintained for the ceremony. Therefore, no church symbols or furniture may be removed or rearranged in the worship spaces without prior approval of the wedding coordinator or senior pastor. Any church decorations related to the season of Easter and Christmas shall remain in place. No flowers, candles, or other decorations are to be placed on the piano, organ, or in the outside aisles.

BUILDING USE REGULATIONS

Immanuel Sanctuary

The sanctuary seats up to three hundred people comfortably, with a maximum of three hundred fifty. There are eighteen pews on each side of the main aisle; four of these are shortened for wheelchair access and six and a half pews in the balcony. The pipe organ and grand piano are located in the chancel. Musicians may also be seated in the chancel.

Immanuel Chapel

The chapel seats up to thirty people comfortably, with a maximum of forty. There are fifteen pews; one of these is shortened for wheelchair access. There is a grand piano located in the front of the chapel. Musicians are to be seated in the pews with the congregation.

New Hope Ministry Center Sanctuary

The sanctuary has 100 chairs for seating. The grand piano is located in the chancel.

Immanuel Wesley Hall

Receptions and/or rehearsal dinners may be considered. Please contact the Church Administrator or Wedding Coordinator for more information.

New Hope Ministry Center Fellowship Hall

Receptions and/or rehearsal dinners may be considered. Please contact the Church Administrator or Wedding Coordinator for more information.

Other GENERAL GUIDELINES

- No smoking is allowed anywhere inside the church buildings or on church property.
- No alcoholic beverages are allowed anywhere in the church buildings or on church property. At the discretion of the Presiding Pastor and/or Wedding Coordinator the rehearsal or wedding may be cancelled or postponed if alcohol or illegal drugs are being used on church property by any member of the wedding party. If any member of the wedding party is under the influence of alcohol and or drugs they will NOT be permitted to participate and the ceremony will be suspended until they have left the facilities. Please do not allow any member of your wedding party to potentially ruin this special day by forcing us to stop the ceremony or other proceedings.
- No food or drink is allowed within the worship areas at any facilities.
- The throwing of rice, confetti, birdseed, sunflowers seeds, flower petals, leaves or palm branches is not permitted. It creates hazardous walking conditions on the sidewalks and in the hallways. Bubbles are permitted outside the facilities.
- Spraying with glitter hairspray anywhere in the church building is not permitted.
- Heating or air conditioning will be turned on at a reasonable time prior to the wedding or rehearsal. Contact the wedding coordinator if you have any concern about the environmental controls.
- Please do not leave valuables, purses, money, or personal belongings unattended in the church. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom or those they designate to arrange to care for the property of the wedding party before, during and after the wedding. Since the church cannot be responsible for personal belongings, we request that you remove everything from the church immediately following the wedding.
- Any damage to the building will be at the expense of the wedding party. An additional fee may be charged if the wedding party fails to comply with the policies set forth in this guide.
- ALL policies and guidelines of the wedding handbook are subject to change (at any time) at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and/or Church Administrator.

STANDARD UNITED METHODIST LITURGY (Order of Worship for Wedding Ceremony)

In all services conducted by Immanuel Clergy members the standard United Methodist liturgy will be used – see below “Service of Christian Marriage.” In all weddings the traditional vows must be used (see ‘Declaration of Intention’ and “Exchange of Vows.”) Couples are welcome to use other vows, personally written or from another source, but only in addition to the traditional vows, and at the discretion of the presiding pastor. Some additional flexibility regarding the liturgy and vows used will be considered for visiting pastors. Visiting pastors, who are not planning to use the standard UM liturgy and / or vows, should submit a copy of the proposed liturgy and vows to the Senior Pastor for approval prior to the wedding.

SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

GATHERING (Many call this the Prelude)

While the people gather, instrumental or vocal music may be offered. Special family members are seated at this time.

GREETING

Pastor to people:

Friends, we are gathered together in the sight of God to witness and bless the joining together of *Name and Name* in Christian marriage.

The covenant of marriage was established by God, who created us male and female for each other.

With his presence and power Jesus chose to perform His first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and in his sacrificial love Jesus gave us the example for the love of husband and wife.

Name and Name come to give themselves to one another in this holy covenant.

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

Pastor to the persons who are to marry:

I ask you now, in the presence of God and these people, to declare your intention to enter into union with each other through the grace of Jesus Christ, who calls you into union with Himself through your baptism and profession of faith.

Pastor to the woman:

Name, will you have *Name* to be your husband, to live together in holy marriage?

Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

Woman: I will.

Pastor to the man:

Name, will you have *Name* to be your wife, to live together in holy marriage?

Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

Man: I will.

BLESSING OF FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

Pastor to people:

The marriage of *Name and Name* unites their families and creates a new one. We rejoice in their union, and pray God's blessing upon them.

Will all of you bless this marriage and, by God's grace, do everything in your power to uphold and care for these two persons in their marriage? If so please say together, "We will."

People: We will.

Pastor: Who presents this woman in marriage? (Father or other designated person(s) present the bride)

PRAYER - God of all peoples, you are the true light illumining everyone. You show us the way, the truth and the life. You sustain us with your Holy Spirit. We rejoice in your life in the midst of our lives. We praise you for your presence with us, and especially in this act of solemn covenant; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

- Scripture Readings by Pastor, for example - 1 Corinthians 13 (selected verses), 1 John 4 (selected verses)
- Optional: If you have a friend or family member with a reading it may be offered here
- Optional: Other Readings, Testimonies, or Sermon may be offered here
- Optional: Special music / solos are appropriate at this time

PRAYER

Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all life, author of salvation, Giver of all grace:

Bless and sanctify with your Holy Spirit *Name and Name*, who come now to join in marriage.

Grant that they may give their vows to each other in the strength of your steadfast love.

Enable them to grow in love and peace with you and with one another all their days, that they may reach out in concern and service to the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

The wife and husband face each other and join hands. (Bride and groom are prompted, line by line, by the pastor):

Man to woman:

In the name of God,

I *Name*, take you, *Name*, to be my wife,

to have and to hold

from this day forward,

for better, for worse,

for richer, for poorer,

in sickness and health,

to love and to cherish,

as long as we both shall live (or 'until we are parted by death').

This is my solemn vow.

Woman to man:

In the name of God,

I *Name*, take you, *Name*, to be my husband,

to have and to hold

from this day forward,

for better, for worse,

for richer, for poorer,

in sickness and health,

to love and to cherish,

as long as we both shall live (or 'until we are parted by death').

This is my solemn vow.

BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS

The pastor, taking the rings, says:

The wedding ring is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, signifying to us the uniting of *Name and Name* in holy marriage.

Let us pray. *Bless, O Lord, the giving of these rings that they who wear them may live in your peace and continue in your favor all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

While placing the ring on the third finger of the recipient's left hand, the giver says (Bride and groom are prompted, line by line, by the pastor):

Name, I give you this ring
as a sign of my vow,
and with all that I am,
and all that I have,
I honor you;
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE

The wife and husband join hands.

Pastor to husband and wife:

You have declared your consent and vows before God and this congregation. May God confirm your covenant and fill you both with grace.

Pastor to people:

Now that *Name and Name* have given themselves to each by solemn vows, with the joining of hands, and the giving and receiving of rings, I announce to you that they are husband and wife; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those, whom God has joined together, let no one separate. **Amen.**

UNITY CANDLE – *If a unity candle is used, the two side candles representing the husband and wife are lighted first, and the center candle representing the marriage is lighted at this or some later point in the service. The side candles are not extinguished because both husband and wife retain their personal identities and connection to families.*

- SPECIAL MUSIC / Solos are recommended at this point in the service

BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE - *The presiding pastor will lead a prayer asking God to bless this union. This prayer will typically conclude with the congregation saying the Lord's Prayer together. It is also appropriate to have a soloist sing the "Lord's Prayer" as a conclusion to the blessing of the marriage.*

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Pastor to wife and husband:

God the Eternal keep you in love with each; so that the peace of Christ may abide in your home. Go to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do. Bear witness to the love of God in this world, so that those to whom love is a stranger will find in you generous friends. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion and power of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always. **Amen.**

Pastor says to couple: Now I invite you to celebrate your marriage with a kiss.

PRESENTATION

Pastor to people: I am now pleased to present to you, for the first time as husband and wife,
First name – First name – (Married Last Name)

RECESSIONAL MUSIC

POSTLUDE

Once again, we congratulate you on your decision to enter into the covenant of Christian Marriage. We invite you to pray with us that God will guide you in your preparations and bless you with peace and joy in this wonderful time in your lives. Most importantly, we pray that you will grow closer to God through Christ even as you grow closer to each other in the months and years ahead. May the blessings of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about weddings at Immanuel United Methodist Church, please contact the church wedding coordinator.

Gayle Stanek

Cell: 859-750-7261 gaylestanek@gmail.com

Appointments must be made with the wedding coordinator to view and tour the facilities. Unannounced visits cannot be accommodated due to staff schedules that require their attention relating to other duties.