

## Preamble

This policy has been put together to provide clarity and guidelines for solemnisation of couples by Bartley Christian Church (thereafter known as “BCC” or “the church”). The policy reflects the church’s view that marriage is a sacred lifelong commitment between one man and one woman and this commitment is a covenant made before God and other witnesses.

As such, there may be some points in the policy that may appear restrictive but the intention is to convey the church’s high view of marriage and our commitment to facilitate marriages which we feel reasonably confident will last for life.

## Requirements

1. A couple who wish to be married by BCC must satisfy the following requirements:
  - a. They must be baptised Christians.
  - b. At least one of them must be a member of BCC and the couple intends to make BCC their spiritual home.
    - i. The party who is yet to become a member should endeavour to attend the next membership class and become a part of BCC
  - c. They are actively involved in a Missional Cell in BCC for at least 6 months prior to giving notice to the church.
  - d. They have completed all sessions of the Marriage Preparation Course in BCC satisfactory.
  - e. Prior to the solemnisation of the marriage, the couple shall strictly continue to live and behave as separate individuals, and shall not engage in any conduct which suggests they are a married couple: e.g. cohabitating, staying over at each other’s homes, travelling overseas together or engaging in intimate physical contact.

**Note: See Annex A for a detailed explanation of points 1a to 1e.**

2. Neither party should have a living ex-spouse. Exceptions:
  - a. When the previous marriage has been terminated on the basis of the ex-spouse’s adultery
  - b. When the ex-spouse is an unbeliever and has taken the initiative to end the previous marriage
  - c. The previous marriage was terminated when the party and the ex-spouse are both unbelievers.
3. Couples who cannot fulfil the requirements will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
4. The church may, for valid reasons, recommend that a couple postpone their wedding or not conduct a solemnisation.

## Procedure

5. Couples must give notice of their intention to get married by submitting the Wedding Application Form **at least 6 months** in advance to the Family Life Pastor ([family@bartley.org.sg](mailto:family@bartley.org.sg)), regardless if the couple intends to hold it in church or in another venue.
6. Couples should check with the licensed solemnisers in BCC for their availability on the desired wedding date before submitting the Wedding Application Form.  
**Note: See Annex B for the list of licensed solemnisers in BCC.**
7. Solemnisation of a wedding shall be conducted only by a licensed solemniser. The Registry of Marriages (ROM) does not allowed a third party to do the solemnisation on behalf of the licensed solemniser.
8. Should the couple decide to hold their wedding in BCC, they should check with the Facilities Executive for the availability of the church on the desired wedding date before submitting the wedding application.
9. Booking of the church is on a first-come-first-serve basis and must be submitted at least 6 months in advance. Church members are given the privilege to book church facilities 1 year in advance subject to availability.
10. Wedding couples should contact the Facilities Executive at 6285 4322 or email [booking@bartley.org.sg](mailto:booking@bartley.org.sg) if they do not receive a reply 1 month after submitting their booking of church venue in the Wedding Application Form.

**Note: For an overview of the whole wedding application process, see Annex C.**

## **ANNEX A**

### **1a. Couple must be baptised Christians.**

- Baptism is a public declaration of one's faith in Christ and every believer should obey the Lord's command in being baptised. (Mk 1:9; Matt. 28:19-20; Rom. 6:3-4)
- The church believes it is important that couples who intend to be married should profess their faith in God publicly. This is important for their personal spiritual growth as well as their spiritual walk as a married couple.
- Therefore, couples ought to be baptised before they make their marriage vow before God in the wedding ceremony.

### **1b. At least one of the party must be a member of BCC and the couple intends to make BCC their spiritual home.**

### **1c. Couple are actively involved in a Missional Cell in BCC for at least 6 months prior to giving notice to the church.**

#### **Regarding points 1b and 1c:**

- The church believes that marriages thrive best in the context of a community (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:22-33)
- The community includes the larger church as well as Missional Cells where couples will find support, encouragement and admonishment for them to thrive as a Christian family.
- Therefore it is important that a couple gets married in a local church which they identify with, worship in and where they will serve and bring up their family.
- For this reason, the church will only solemnise couples who have made Bartley their home church or who intended to do so.

### **1d. Couple have completed all sessions of the Marriage Preparation Course in BCC satisfactory.**

- The Marriage Preparation Course prepares a pre-marital couple to lay strong foundations for a lifelong Christian marriage.
- Besides the lesson content, marriage preparation mentors are assigned to mentor pre-marital couples using the Prepare Enrich Assessment to prepare them well.
- A couple who does not attempt to complete the course in a satisfactory manner shows they are not taking Christian marriage seriously. For this reason, the church will not solemnise the couple.

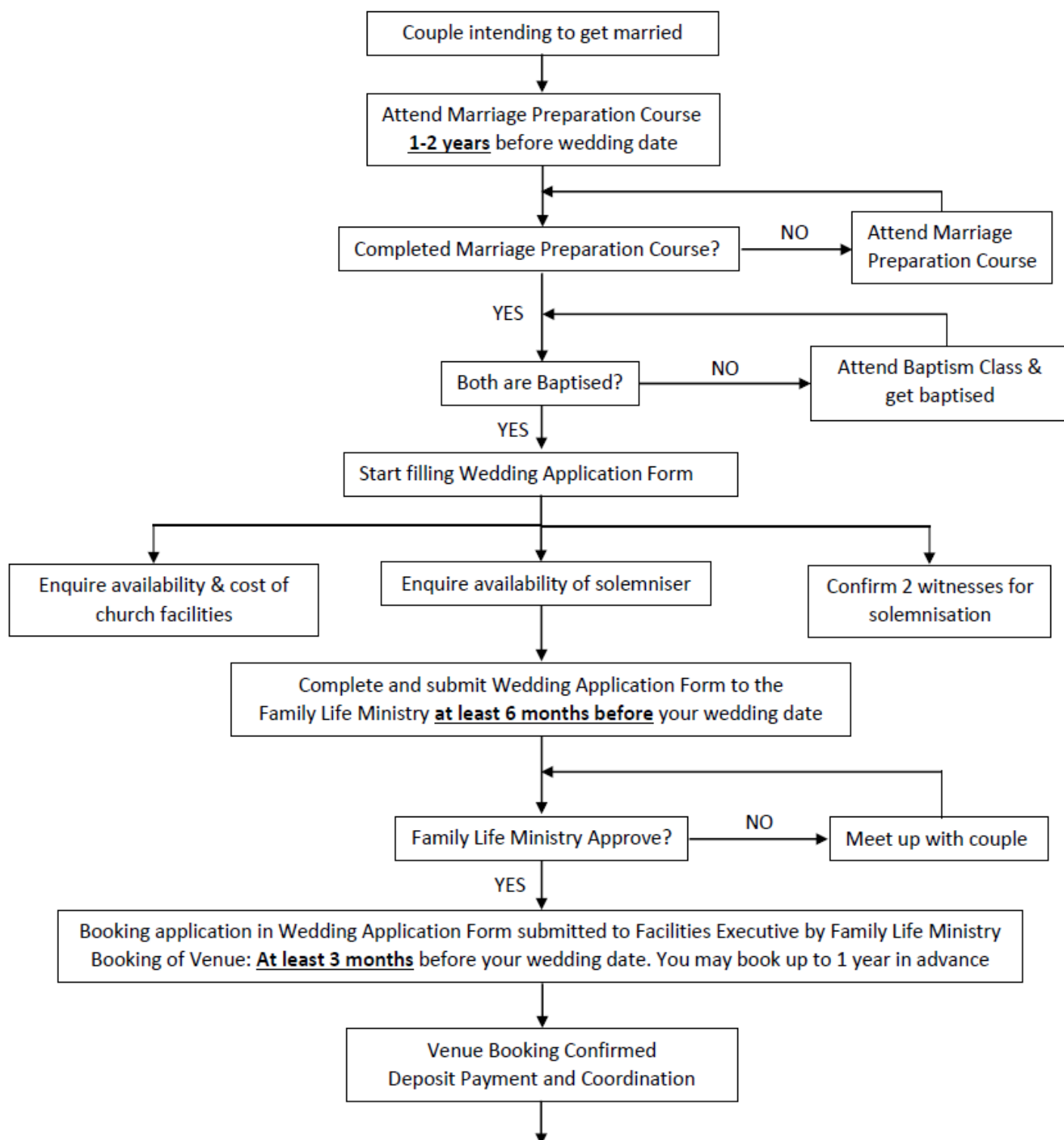
**1e. Prior to the solemnisation of the marriage, the couple shall strictly continue to live and behave as separate individuals, and shall not engage in any conduct which suggests they are a married couple: e.g. cohabitating, staying over at each other's homes, travelling overseas together or engaging in intimate physical contact.**

- We believe it is important for every couple to honour and glorify the Lord in making sure they do not mock the marriage vow and stumble others by giving the impression that they are already married (Matt 5:16; 1 Cor 8:9-13; Heb 13:4).
- Couples should take Scriptural warnings regarding sexual temptations seriously and exercise godly wisdom in keeping to healthy boundaries before marriage. This includes abstaining from pre-marital sex and from any physical activities that is of a sexual nature. (e.g. heavy petting, mutual masturbation) (1 Cor 6:18; 1 Peter 5:8-11; 1 Cor 10:12)
- This glorifies the Lord for it is His will that couples abstain from sexual immorality as God has designed sex to be only consummated within marriage (1 Thess 4:3-5; Heb 13:4).
- Walking in God's ways and in holiness prepares a couple to put God in the centre of their lives and to be led by the Spirit as they walked towards becoming one flesh in marriage (Gal 5:22-25).

Annex B – Licensed Solemnisers in Bartley Christian Church

<b>Solemnisers</b>	<b>Email Contact</b>
Senior Pastor Alvin Tan	alvintan@bartley.org.sg
Pastor Mah Yeow Beng	ybmah@bartley.org.sg
Pastor Jason Lee	jasonlee@bartley.org.sg

## Annex C – Wedding Application Process



1. Arrange to meet your solemniser at least 1 month before your wedding date to go through the program
2. Remember to E-file your Notice of Marriage with ROM online. Make sure you get your dates right. ([www.rom.gov.sg](http://www.rom.gov.sg))
3. Complete the rest of the information in your Wedding Application Form if need be. E.g. Name and contact of Caterer, name and contact of Speaker etc.
4. Have your wedding coordinator liaise with the church's Facilities Executive for coordination or changes.