Chapel Attendance
Chapel attendance issues are handled in the Student Development office.

Unexcused Absences: Each student who has a chapel attendance requirement is given an allotment of unexcused absences which they can use in the event of sickness, medical or dental appointments, personal business, emergencies, or other circumstances of this nature. Students are encouraged to use their allotment of unexcused absences wisely.

- Students who are required to attend all three weekly Chapel services are allowed up to nine (9) unexcused absences per semester.
- Students who are required to attend only two of the three weekly Chapel services are allowed six (6) unexcused absences per semester.
- Students who are required to attend only one of the three (3) weekly Chapel services are allowed three unexcused absences per semester.

Excused Absences: When a student has used their allotted number of unexcused absences for a semester, requests for excused absences may be granted by the Student Development office for illness, family emergencies and events of such serious nature. Problems inevitably surface when students choose to interpret the allotment of unexcused absences as personal privileges with the expectation that emergencies, sickness and unexpected inconveniences should be granted beyond the allotted absences. Such management of allowed absences is not compatible with the attendance policy.

- Requests to have a Chapel absence excused beyond their allotment of unexcused absences should be submitted by the student in writing prior to the service being missed.
- Requests to have a Chapel absence excused beyond their allotment of unexcused absences should be submitted by the student in writing within 7 calendar days of the service missed.
- Requests to have a Chapel absence excused beyond their allotment of unexcused absences should be accompanied by documentation (doctor’s note, receipt of office visit, etc.) where appropriate.
- No additional absences will be granted before the allotted absences have been used.
- Vespers attendance will always be required as the means of making up excessive Chapel absences if at all possible.

Vespers Attendance Credit: Attendance at any Vespers service will count toward a student’s overall Chapel attendance requirement.

Chapel Crediting Guidelines: Attendance at all services is recorded by the swiping of each student’s Bethel ID card; it is each student’s responsibility to maintain a functioning ID card and to bring their ID card to each service.

- Any student arriving ten minutes or more after the scheduled start of any service will be considered absent.
- Any student who leaves any service without permission prior to being dismissed will be considered absent.
- Any student who is deceitful with regard to their attendance at any service (i.e., swiping their ID card but then leaving), will be penalized with two absences. If a student is found to have been deceitful with regard to their attendance at more than one service, then they shall be summoned to a meeting with the Chapel Committee or the chairperson of the Committee. At that point, the student may be placed on a Chapel Attendance Contract.

Attendance Monitoring: Students can monitor their Chapel attendance record on the Student Services page of their My Bethel portlet. Students are encouraged to keep track of their Chapel attendance.

The Chapel Committee is charged with monitoring the Chapel attendance of all students in order to handle compliance with the Chapel Attendance Requirement. The Chapel Committee will inform the Residential Life staff of attendance matters on a weekly basis with the goal of their encouragement of students to meet their Chapel attendance obligations.

- As a courtesy, each student is notified via email by the Chapel Committee at the end of each week if they are at or above their last allotted unexcused absence.
- Upon the first and/or second absence beyond their allotment of unexcused absences, a resident student will be contacted informally by their Resident Director or Resident Assistant. Commuting students will be contacted by the Chapel Committee via email. The purpose of the contact is to clarify the requirement and encourage the student to attend Vespers in order to make up the absences.
- Upon the third absence beyond their allotment of unexcused absences, a resident student will be contacted intentionally by their Resident Director or a member of the Chapel Committee for the same purpose. Commuting students will be likewise contacted by the Chapel Committee.
Upon the fourth absence beyond their allotment of unexcused absences, the student will be summoned to meet with either the Chapel Committee or the chairperson of the Committee to review the circumstances for each of their excessive absences, establish a plan for bringing their record into compliance, and clarify the consequences of violating the Chapel attendance requirement. If a student misses their meeting with the Chapel Committee or its chairperson without a satisfactory reason (e.g., an emergency), the Chapel Committee has the authority to recommend to the Director of Student Life an immediate suspension from classes until the student meets with the Committee.

Penalty for Excessive Absences

Four or More Excessive Absences: If a student exceeds their allowed number of unexcused absences by four or more in any semester, then the student will be placed on a Chapel Attendance Contract with the college.

- In the case of grossly excessive absences, the Chapel Committee may recommend to the Vice President for Student Development for that student's immediate dismissal upon completion of the semester.

Multiple Semesters: If a student exceeds their allowed number of unexcused absences by any amount in more than one semester in their college career, then the student will be placed on a Chapel Attendance Contract with the college.

Chapel Attendance Contract: A student who has been placed on a Chapel Attendance Contract for excessive absences or attendance deceitfulness is required to acknowledge and agree to the following:

- If the student at any point in the semester exceeds their allotment of unexcused absences, the Student Development office will advise them that a “Chapel Hold” has been placed on their account, preventing them from registering for the following semester. This “Hold” will remain on their account until the end of the semester. It is the student’s responsibility to take the action necessary to bring their record back into compliance.

- If a student with a “Chapel Hold” on their account for excessive absences while on Contract brings their Chapel attendance back into compliance by the end of the semester by attending enough Vespers services, then the “Hold” will be removed from their account following the completion of the last Chapel service of the semester, and the student would then be free to register for the next semester’s classes.

- If a student with a “Chapel Hold” on their account for excessive absences while on Contract finishes the semester without bringing their attendance back into compliance, then the Chapel Committee may recommend to the Vice President for Student Development for that student’s dismissal upon the completion of that semester.

- If a student is found to have been deceitful with regard to their attendance at any service while on Chapel Attendance Contract, then the Chapel Committee may recommend to the Vice President for Student Development for that student’s dismissal upon the completion of that semester.

- Students who are dismissed for violation of Chapel attendance policies will not be allowed to reapply for enrollment for one full (fall or spring) semester.