

**WEDDING POLICIES**  
**Westminster Presbyterian Church**  
**Hattiesburg, Mississippi**

Approved by Session August 24, 2003, revised October 16, 2011

**The Christian Faith:** In the Reformed tradition, a wedding ceremony is a worship service. At least one person getting married must be a confessing Christian, and the couple must seek to have a Christian wedding. Westminster takes seriously both the reverence and the theological integrity of your wedding. These policies support this approach.

**Reserving the Church: Step by step procedure:** To avoid scheduling conflicts and misunderstandings, all weddings at Westminster must be approved, at least 60 days in advance, by the church's pastor and the governing board - the Session. For your planning purposes, it is wise to complete these steps 6 - 9 months before the wedding. Before your wedding date is secure and your approval is final, you must complete these seven (7) steps:

- 1) Receive written confirmation from the church secretary that the date you wish to reserve is available.
- 2) Complete and return to the church secretary the *Wedding Reservation Form*. It is available on the church website ([www.WPCHattiesburg.com](http://www.WPCHattiesburg.com)) or from the church secretary.
- 3) At least 60 days before the wedding, speak with the Pastor about your plans including:
  - a) your plans for pre-marital counseling and b) the minister you would like to conduct the wedding. These plans must be approved, in advance, by our pastor.
- 4) Payment of fees: 50% when you submit the Wedding Reservation Form; the remainder one month before the ceremony. When your Wedding Reservation Form and 50% of your fees are received, we will tentatively reserve the date for you. If someone submits a form and fees for your date ahead of you, they will have priority for that date. If your wedding is not approved, your initial fees will be refunded. If the wedding is approved, these fees are non-refundable.
- 5) Contact our Wedding Coordinator.
- 6) Contact our Organist.
- 7) Obtain confirmation from the church secretary that your wedding has been approved.

Until all of these requirements are satisfied, the wedding is not approved. Please do *not* send out wedding invitations before completing these steps!

**Premarital Counseling:** If our pastor agrees to do pre-marital counseling, you will be expected to meet with him at least twice and to take a pre-marital inventory called Prepare-Enrich, costing \$35.00.

**The Wedding Coordinator:** Before submitting your Wedding Reservation Form, you must contact our Wedding Coordinator and discuss with her the date you are proposing. If she is not available, you will need to find your own Wedding Director. In our tradition, a Christian wedding is a worship service. This means that the music must be sacred music and the decorations and other elements of the service must be appropriate for a worship service. To help you, we normally provide at no expense to you a Wedding Coordinator who will assist you in planning and with the use of the church facility. If you do not have a wedding director, the Wedding Coordinator will also assist the Pastor in coordinating the bridesmaids, ushers, etc. for the wedding. If you have your own wedding director, she will need to coordinate with our Wedding Coordinator. This will help minimize stress and ensure a well-planned ceremony. The Pastor is in charge of designing the worship service, readings, music, decorations, and the like.

**Music:** Before submitting your Wedding Reservation Form, if you expect to have organ music, you must contact our Organist and discuss with him the date you are proposing. If he is not available, you will need to find your own Organist. Sacred music plays a vital part in the wedding service. An organ prelude and postlude are customary. You may also have one or more soloists or an organ interlude. The couple and the organist are responsible for the selection of the music, subject to the approval of Westminster's Pastor. It is our policy that our organist, Dr. Randall Harris, shall play at all weddings at Westminster if he is available. Dr. Harris' fee is \$200 and should be paid directly to him. If he is not available for your wedding, you may obtain an outside musician who is familiar with our organ. Any outside organist must be approved by Dr. Harris and the Pastor.

**On the role of children.** In a wedding, the couple getting married and God are the focal point of the ceremony. We have a nursery near the sanctuary for small children. It is the policy of Westminster that any child under the age of 10 may come down the aisle as part of the wedding party (flower girl, ring bearer, etc.), but shall immediately return to a pew and sit with an adult. If a child is not able to sit quietly, the Wedding Coordinator or some other responsible adult will be asked to remove the child to the nursery. Please take this into account when you plan your wedding. If you want children to be involved, we suggest you choose another venue.

**Outdoor chapel:** Westminster has an outdoor chapel that can be used for weddings. If weather or other circumstances create the need to move inside the church, the cost will increase to reflect the charges based on a sanctuary wedding. The wedding party is responsible for setting up chairs, microphones, etc. and after the wedding for restoring the outdoor chapel to its original condition. Westminster will consider all requests to use the outdoor chapel but reserves the right to limit weddings to one per month for non-members.

**Decorations and Furniture:** Floral arrangements for weddings are to be in keeping with the beauty, elegant simplicity, and religious symbolism of the sanctuary. This is a church, not a ballroom or an auditorium. If you intend to use the church's silk floral arrangements, there will be an additional charge of \$150.00 for non-members, and these arrangements may be moved only by a specified church representative.

Do not move anything without prior permission. The communion table and baptismal font may be moved. Furniture in the narthex (hallway) shall not be moved. You may move or rearrange tables and chairs in the fellowship hall, but it is your responsibility to return everything to its original position and condition by midnight of the day of the wedding.

**Dressing Rooms:** The church parlor is available for the bride and attendants to use for dressing as needed. The church is not responsible for items if lost, stolen, or damaged.

**Photography:** Reverence is in order. Photographs may be taken before and after the ceremony, but not during the service. Have your photographer check with the Pastor prior to the service. Videography is permitted from a stationary position in the sanctuary or the balcony.

**Fees:**

A. Members: (member fees include use of rehearsal dinner hall, sanctuary, reception hall, and use of silk floral arrangements)

Sanctuary wedding	\$300
Outdoor chapel wedding	\$150
Refundable clean up fee	\$100

**B. Non-Members:**

Sanctuary wedding	\$1,200 (50% is due with your application)
Reception (in our Fellowship Hall)	\$200 (50% is due with your application)
Rehearsal Dinner (in our Fellowship Hall)	\$200 (50% is due with your application)
Outdoor chapel wedding	\$300 (50% is due with your application)
Refundable clean up fee	\$100 (50% is due with your application)

The Pastor does not charge. You may wish to give an honorarium, but that is your choice.

**Note:** Please pay half of the fees when you submit your request for a wedding. All remaining fees must be paid one month before the ceremony.

**Miscellaneous.**

- 1) Smoking is not permitted in the church.
- 2) Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the premises. (If we find beer bottles, bottle caps, etc. you will forfeit your clean up fee.)
- 3) Persons under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will not be permitted to participate in the wedding or reception.
- 4) Only non-drip candles are allowed.
- 5) No rice, please. Birdseed outside the building is fine.
- 6) After the service, please arrange to have any rented furniture removed and restore the church to its original status before midnight Saturday so the church can resume its normal schedule on Sunday morning. If this is done, we will refund your \$100 clean up fee. If not, we will pay that fee to our sexton.
- 7) Please lock and secure the building when you leave.
- 8) Please return the key to the Wedding Coordinator or arrange for it to be delivered to the church on Monday following the wedding.
- 9) The bride and groom are jointly responsible for any damage suffered by the church before, during, or after the wedding that are related in any way to the wedding.
- 10) In the unlikely event that a scheduling conflict exists on the date of your wedding, the church reserves the right to require you to move your ceremony forward or back by two hours to accommodate the conflict. We sincerely hope this will not be necessary, but we reserve the right to modify plans in the interest of fairness. In the event this is unacceptable, we will refund your fees and you can move the wedding at another location.
- 11) The church is offering its building as a service to the public. In the event the church is not available or in a condition to accommodate your approved wedding, the church's liability shall be limited to refunding the fees you have paid.

These policies have been adopted by the Session of the church. Please feel free to discuss these with the Pastor or our Wedding Coordinator. We wish you God's blessing upon your preparation, your wedding, and your life together as husband and wife.

Approved by the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church  
Mac Forsyth, Clerk of Session, last revised October 16, 2011.

# WEDDING RESERVATION FORM

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Desired Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Rehearsal date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Sanctuary capacity: 250 Number of guests expected: \_\_\_\_\_

	BRIDE	GROOM
Full Name		
Address		
Phone		
Email		
Parents' Names		
Parents' Address		

**FEES:** Please give the Church Secretary a check covering applicable fees (50% due with application; 50% due one month before the wedding).

**Member:**

Sanctuary wedding	\$300
Outdoor chapel wedding	\$150
Refundable clean up fee	\$100

**Non-Member:**

Sanctuary wedding	\$1,200 (50% is due with your application)
Reception (in our Fellowship Hall)	\$200 (50% is due with your application)
Rehearsal Dinner (in our Fellowship Hall)	\$200 (50% is due with your application)
Outdoor chapel wedding	\$300 (50% is due with your application)
Refundable clean up fee	\$100 (50% is due with your application)

Signature of Bride: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACTS:** You must contact these people before you send in this form.

Pastor	Steve Ramp	601-584-7574
Wedding Coordinator	Beverly Dennis	601-268-9659
Church Secretary	Kay Salter	601-584-7574
Organist	Randall Harris	601-583-0977; 601-466-6250
Floral Arrangements	Pam Dossett	601-543-5296

For office use:

Met with Pastor (date): \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Session: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Wedding Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Fees Paid: \$\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

## Information for the Pastor and Wedding Coordinator

Officiating Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's/Groom's church affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of PARENTS who will be present

Bride's: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of GRANDPARENTS attending:

Bride's: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Attendants:

Maid/Matron of Honor: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Best Man/Groomsmen: \_\_\_\_\_

Ushers: \_\_\_\_\_

Flower Girl's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Ring Bearer's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Will you have bulletins? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, when will they be sent to the church \_\_\_\_\_

Florist: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Photographer: \_\_\_\_\_ Videographer: \_\_\_\_\_

Musicians: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Reception: \_\_\_\_\_

Who will remove family items? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will have the rings the day of the wedding? \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent address of couple: \_\_\_\_\_

Special requests or concerns: \_\_\_\_\_

You may not be able to answer all of these questions at this time; however, any information that you can provide will assist the Pastor and Wedding Coordinator as they prepare for your wedding.