

WEDDING POLICIES
of
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Approved by Session, August 24, 2003
Amended by Session, May 17, 2009

In General. A Christian wedding is an act of worship. These policies are to preserve and enhance the reverence and theological integrity of your Christian marriage.

Reserving the Church: Step by step procedure:

The church's governing board - the Session - must approve your wedding. In order to do so, you must complete the following steps.

- 1) Confirm with the church secretary that the date you have chosen is available. This should be done at least 60 days before the ceremony is to take place.
- 2) Obtain a *Wedding Reservation Form* from the church website (www.WPCHattiesburg.com) or the church secretary. Complete and return it to the church for review by the Session.
- 3) Speak with the Pastor about your plans. He can help answer questions and coordinate schedules.
- 4) Pay 50% of all fees. The other 50% is due one week before the ceremony. Until these steps are taken, the wedding date is not considered secured. Please do *not* send out invitations before completing these steps!

Using Another Pastor. If you wish for another minister to conduct the service, this must be discussed and approved by Westminster's Pastor in advance. If approved by Westminster's Session, our Pastor will invite your minister to conduct the service.

Premarital Counseling. For reasons of integrity, you need to plan a marriage and not simply a ceremony. The Session will not approve a wedding without satisfactory evidence of a plan for pre-marital counseling. Please give our Pastor at least two month's advance notice. During this time, the couple meets with the Pastor for counseling, to plan the ceremony, and for the rehearsal. The couple is expected to complete a pre-marriage inventory at a cost of \$35 as part of pre-marital counseling.

The Wedding Coordinator. 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 will provide free of charge 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. 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 be asked to play at all weddings at Westminster. Dr. Harris' standard fee is \$200. 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 the Music Director and the Pastor. Please contact the organist as soon as possible to discuss musical arrangements after the wedding date is established.

Outdoor chapel. Westminster has an outdoor chapel with electricity that may be reserved for weddings. If weather or other circumstances create the need for the wedding 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 state. 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. Do not move anything without prior permission. The pulpit, font, and other symbols of our faith and tradition are part of the sanctuary and shall not be moved. The communion table may be moved back two feet. 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 if 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 balcony.

Fees. Member, sanctuary wedding	\$300
Non-member, sanctuary wedding	\$600
Reception (Fellowship Hall)	\$100
Member, outdoor chapel wedding	\$150
Non-member, outdoor chapel wedding	\$300
Refundable clean-up fee, outdoor chapel	\$ 50
Rehearsal Dinner (Fellowship Hall)	\$ 50
Organist (payable to Randall Harris)	\$200

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 the *Wedding Reservation Form*. All remaining fees must be paid one week before the ceremony.

Miscellaneous.

- 1) Smoking is not permitted in the church.
- 2) Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the premises.
- 3) Persons under the influence of alcohol or other drugs will not be permitted to participate in the wedding or reception.
- 4) No rice, please. We suggest birdseed outside the building.
- 5) 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.
- 6) Please lock and secure the building when you leave.
- 7) Please return the key to the Wedding Coordinator or arrange for it to be delivered to the church on Sunday following the wedding.
- 8) 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.

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, August 24, 2003
Charles Hogrefe, Clerk of Session

Revised by the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church, May 17, 2009
Althea Jerome, Clerk of Session

WEDDING RESERVATION FORM
Westminster Presbyterian Church

PROPOSED DATE & TIME OF WEDDING _____

DATE & TIME OF REHEARSAL _____

	BRIDE	GROOM
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 week before the wedding).

Members, sanctuary	\$300
Non-Member, sanctuary	\$600
Members, outdoor chapel	\$150
Non-members, outdoor chapel	\$300
Reception (Fellowship Hall)	\$100
Rehearsal Dinner (Fellowship Hall)	\$ 50
Organist	\$200 (payable to Randall Harris)

Signature of Bride: _____ Date: _____

WEDDING CONTACTS:

Pastor: Steve Ramp (584-7574)
 Wedding Director: Beverly Dennis (268-9659)
 Church Secretary: Kay Salter (584-7574)
 Organist: Randall Harris (583-0977)

For office use:

Meet with Pastor (date): _____

Approved by Session: _____

Approved by Pastor: _____

Approved by Wedding Coordinator: _____

Fees Paid: \$ _____ on _____ \$ _____ on _____