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A Guide for Planning Your Wedding at Westwood Presbyterian Church



And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three;
and the greatest of these is love.

—I Corinthians 13:13

Summary of Wedding Fees

Our prayer for you...

Whether or not you choose to be married at Westwood Presbyterian Church, we celebrate your new beginnings as husband and wife and pray the following blessing for you.

“The grace of Christ attend you,
the love of God surround you,
the Holy Spirit keep you,
that you may live in faith,
abound in hope,
and grow in love,
both now and forevermore.”

From the Book of Common Worship -
Presbyterian Church [U.S.A.]

As the church is maintained by the contributions of its members and friends, wedding fees are established not for profit but are necessary for maintaining the church facilities and compensation for the staff assisting you.

Sanctuary Use	\$ 600
Wedding Coordinator	\$ 225
Organist	\$ 275
Custodian	\$ 180
Audio Technician	\$ 80
Base Wedding Fee	\$1,360

A \$150 non-refundable deposit is required to hold the date.

Soloists are available upon request. Fees vary are not included in the base amount.

There is no "Fee Schedule" for the officiating pastor's services. However, it is customary to offer the minister an appropriate honorarium at the time of the service. (Honoraria ordinarily range between \$300 and \$750)

Costs for pre-marital counseling sessions with a licensed Psychologist or Marriage and Family Therapist are the responsibility of the couple.

Photography/Videography

The wedding coordinator can refer you to professional photographers and videographers to document your special day. It is very important that the solemnity of the ceremony not be disrupted. No flash photography is permitted during the service by guests or by your photographer. Time-exposure photos from the balcony are permitted. Video taping is permitted subject to the unobtrusive placement of the camera operator. No additional lighting or flashes may be used during the service.

Marriage License

Obtaining the marriage license is the responsibility of the couple to be married. The license is to be brought to the wedding rehearsal along with the names and addresses of the witnesses who will be signing the document. Please provide printed documentation of all names to the wedding coordinator as they will need to be recorded for our books and legal documents.

Outside Weddings

If their schedules allow, our pastors are able to officiate at weddings held outside of Westwood Presbyterian Church. Contact the church office to make arrangements.

Miscellaneous

Also included in the information packet is a *Wedding Service Preparation Form*, which requests critical information that your Wedding Coordinator will need as she assists you in preparing for your wedding. Please return this form to the church no later than 4 months prior to your wedding.

Fees are explained on a separate Cost Sheet that will be included in the information packet. The cost sheet should be returned along with the completed *Wedding Service Preparation Form*.

Please note other important policies and procedures outlined in the *Wedding Service Preparation Form*.

Some First Steps:

We celebrate your upcoming marriage and are delighted that you wish to be married in a Christian worship ceremony here at Westwood Presbyterian Church. We believe that marriage is one of God's very special gifts to humankind. Marriage is best celebrated in the context of a Christian community that affirms its sacredness and invites God's grace and blessing on the marriage covenant. Know that we would consider it a privilege to assist you as you take on the joys and responsibilities of marriage.

The following items will help you as you begin to navigate the journey toward your wedding:

Scheduling Your Wedding

Before you make any firm plans, please call the church office [310/474-4535] to request a date for your wedding. When the request is made, an information packet will be sent to you that will include complete information about our wedding policies and procedures. Included in that packet will be a *Wedding Request Form* to be filled out and returned to the church, along with a \$150 nonrefundable deposit. If you are requesting a particular pastor on our church's staff, the requested date must be confirmed and approved by her/him. Once the pastor has approved the date, it will tentatively be reserved on the church calendar. Your wedding will not be firmly on our wedding calendar until the required application and deposit have been received.

Clergy

A pastor on the church's staff must approve and officiate the wedding. In some situations, a request for a non-staff clergy person to assist our pastor in the service might be granted. You are free to request a specific pastor on this church's staff. If there is no such request, the matter will be referred to the Senior Pastor who will see that pastoral services are arranged. The couple will have two meetings with the officiating pastor to consider together the spirituality of marriage, hear the report of premarital counseling, and to prepare for the wedding ceremony.

Premarital Counseling

Your relationship is more important than your ceremony and reception. A wedding and reception generally last 6 or so hours - a marriage is for a lifetime. Therefore all couples must invest themselves in intentional relationship preparation by arranging for 3-6 sessions of premarital counseling with a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Clinical Psychologist or Pastoral Counselor. Fees for premarital counseling shall be the responsibility of the couple. While couples are free to seek their own counselors, a list of recommended professionals will be included in the information packet.

Wedding Coordinator

Once your wedding is firmly scheduled, you will hear from our Wedding Coordinator who will assist you through the process of planning for your wedding rehearsal and ceremony. The wedding coordinator will be able to answer any questions you might have about our policies and practices here at the church, and will be present at the rehearsal and ceremony to insure that things run smoothly. If you do plan to work with a private wedding consultant, their assistance at the rehearsal and ceremony will not be needed. For weddings involving more than 25 people, the service of the wedding coordinator is required.

The Rehearsal

All rehearsals are held at 5:00 p.m. on the day prior to the wedding service. Please insure that the wedding party and members of the bride and groom's immediate families are present for the rehearsal.

The Service

As a confessional Church in the Reformed tradition, the content of the marriage ceremony is determined by the pastor. As a marriage ceremony is an act of Christian worship it will include reference to God, scripture and prayer. As well, this is **your** wedding and the pastor will work with you to ensure that the service reflects your hopes as they fit within the bounds of Christian marriage, our church's traditions and the dictates of good taste.

Music

The church's organist will advise you regarding appropriate music, both instrumental and vocal, and its meaningful integration into the ceremony. As this is a service of Christian worship, all music in the wedding service must be God centered and worshipful. If our organist is unable to play the organ for your wedding, she will determine a substitute from our list of approved organists. No extra fee will be charged to accompany a soloist unless more than one rehearsal is necessary. For weddings involving more than 25 people, the service of the church organist is required. If you are in need of a paid soloist the wedding coordinator will be able to make arrangements for one or more of our excellent vocalists to sing.