

Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church

Wedding Guide



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Scheduling and Reservations

1. **Contact us.** Please call the church office at 512.327.1116 or complete the online Wedding Inquiry Form. A staff member will check the church calendar for availability of our sanctuary or chapel, pastors, and wedding staff. You should receive a response within one week.
2. **Submit a Wedding Agreement Form and deposit.** Carefully read the guidelines for weddings at WHPC. Then, complete the Wedding Agreement Form emailed to you by our church office, including signatures of both the bride and the groom. Return the form and the necessary fees to the church office. *Receipt of the form and deposit will reserve the date and time for your wedding on our church calendar.* Members may make reservations up to 12 months in advance and non-members up to 9 months in advance of their wedding date.

Reservation deposit for members: **\$300** (Sanctuary or Chapel)
(Includes \$200 refundable security deposit + \$100 non-refundable deposit)

Reservation deposit for non-members: **\$700** (Sanctuary or Chapel)
(Includes \$200 refundable security deposit + \$500 non-refundable I)

Please make checks payable to Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church, with the bride and groom's names and wedding date on the memo line.

3. **Begin working with the WHPC Wedding Coordinator Team.** After the Wedding Agreement Form and initial fees have been received in the church office, and the wedding is secured on the church calendar, you will be contacted by a member of the WHPC Wedding Coordinator Team. This person will be walking with you through the logistics of having your wedding at WHPC from start to finish.

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Information that may be helpful when choosing a date and time for your wedding:

- Because of observance of holidays and limitations on staff availability, weddings and rehearsals cannot be conducted:
 - During Holy Week (Easter)
 - Christmas Eve (Dec 24)
 - Christmas Day (Dec 25)
- Weddings and rehearsals may be scheduled on other national holiday weekends **if** staff is available.
- Weddings may be scheduled at 3:00 p.m. or later on Sundays.
- WHPC enhances the facility with seasonal decorations that remain in place during weddings.

Facilities

Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church has multiple areas for use in wedding ceremonies.

Sanctuary

Seating capacity, including the balcony, is a comfortable 700 and a maximum 800. The sanctuary has a large Casavant pipe organ and a grand piano.

Chapel

Seating capacity is a maximum 100. The chapel has a grand piano.

Rooms are available for the wedding party to gather and prepare for the ceremony. WHPC is not responsible for valuables left in these rooms, so please plan accordingly.

Facility Usage Guidelines

1. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the church premises.
2. Non-alcoholic beverages and snacks may be brought into the wedding party changing rooms but are not allowed in the sanctuary or chapel. Please do not put food or beverages on the piano in the choir room. If furniture is moved, please return it to its original location.
3. The wedding couple is responsible for the cost of professional cleaning or repair services, if either is needed.
4. Smoking is only permitted outdoors in the parking areas.
5. The facility will be available for preparation and decoration 3 hours before the wedding start time. One hour is allotted for the ceremony. The facility should be vacated within 1 hour of the conclusion of the ceremony. If additional time is needed, please discuss this with the Wedding Coordinator Team. Additional fees will be assessed for increased building use and staff time.

Officiating Pastor(s)

WHPC has several pastors on staff who perform weddings. One of the WHPC pastors must participate in the wedding. An ordained guest pastor may participate in the ceremony by invitation of a WHPC pastor and with approval of the WHPC Session as long as the ceremony is in keeping with Reformed tradition.

The officiating pastor:

- Conducts premarital counseling with the wedding couple, typically using the Prepare and Enrich course, unless alternative arrangements are made
- Works with the wedding couple to develop the wedding ceremony order of worship
- Conducts the wedding ceremony and rehearsal

Premarital Counseling

WHPC strongly believes that healthy marriages start with a good foundation and understanding of issues commonly faced by married couples. We consider premarital counseling to be an essential part of achieving a healthy marriage. Therefore, couples married at WHPC must complete premarital counseling with the WHPC officiating pastor or a similar course of counseling, pre-approved by the officiating pastor. If a WHPC pastor is officiating the wedding, we will assist you in completing the necessary preparations as part of the Prepare and Enrich course. The course has a onetime processing fee which is included in the wedding fee. Information about this course can be found at www.prepare-enrich.com. Upon completion of counseling done outside of WHPC, the wedding couple must provide verification of premarital counseling at least 31 days prior to the wedding date.

Communion

If communion service is desired as part of your wedding ceremony, it must be approved by the WHPC Session, which meets monthly, so please plan accordingly. Also, policies of the Presbyterian Church (USA) state that if communion is included in a wedding ceremony, the elements must be served to the entire assembly of guests. If you are interested in serving communion as part of your wedding ceremony, please discuss this with the Wedding Coordinator Team as early in the planning process as possible.

Wedding Music

Music is an important consideration when planning a wedding ceremony, and care should be given to selecting appropriate and meaningful music for this special worship service. Music selection should be completed at least one month before the ceremony, allowing time for the Wedding Coordinator Team to review all music chosen.

1. The sanctuary has both a large Casavant pipe organ and a grand piano. The chapel has a grand piano. Arrangements may be made to have the WHPC organist play the organ and/or piano at weddings performed in the church. If the WHPC organist is unavailable on the wedding date, the Wedding Coordinator Team will arrange for an alternate organist. Guest musicians are welcome with approval of the Wedding Coordinator Team.
2. The Wedding Coordinator Team can provide names of suggested vocalists. Other guest vocalists are welcome to participate with approval of the Wedding Coordinator Team.
3. All music at WHPC weddings shall be performed live. Honorariums for guest musicians and soloists are not included in the WHPC wedding fees.
4. A sound technician operates the sanctuary sound system. Basic sound service is included in the WHPC wedding fees. The sound tech will be at the ceremony one hour prior to set up and do sound checks. If sound tech is needed at the rehearsal, an additional fee will apply.
5. The chapel is equipped with a sound system; however, it is generally not needed for wedding ceremonies.

Responsibilities of the WHPC Wedding Coordinator Team

WHPC is pleased to provide the services of the Wedding Coordinator Team. Upon receipt of the Wedding Agreement form and initial fees in the church office, a member of the Wedding Coordinator Team will contact the designated person representing the wedding couple to discuss the wedding ceremony. The services of the Wedding Coordinator Team are included in the WHPC wedding fees. The wedding coordinator will:

- Serve as the primary contact between the wedding couple and the church staff once the wedding is scheduled
- Ensure that WHPC wedding policies are understood and followed by the couple, wedding party, family members, and vendors
- Set up a logistics meeting with the wedding couple at least one month before the wedding date
- Coordinate with the facilities manager and custodial staff regarding worship service setup
- Make arrangements for servers and elements if communion is to be served during the ceremony
- Act as liaison between the couple and WHPC organist/pianist, if applicable, and provide names of outside musicians and vocalists, if needed
- Approve the music selection and the decoration plan for the ceremony
- Provide a wedding notebook with the finalized ceremony order of worship to the officiating pastor(s), with copies to the musicians/vocalists and sound technician
- Oversee the rehearsal and the wedding day activities at WHPC in place of off-site wedding planners and family members. Assist the officiating pastor(s) as needed. Review duties with the ushers at the rehearsal
- Coordinate with the florist, photographer, musicians, vocalists, and other outside vendors
- Assist the wedding party regarding dressing, photography, and schedule
- Obtain the necessary signatures on the marriage license following the ceremony and submit license to county clerk's office

Floral and Decorations Guidelines

We believe that simplicity in decorations is in harmony with the spirit of a worship service. Accordingly, the wedding couple is asked to follow the WHPC Wedding Floral and Decoration policies.

1. The Floral Agreement form is to be completed, signed by the Florist, and returned to the church Wedding Coordinator at least 2 weeks before the ceremony.
2. The decoration plan for the sanctuary or the chapel is to be approved by the Wedding Coordinator Team.
3. The communion table may not be removed from the chancel area of the sanctuary or the front of the chapel. The communion table is to be left free of any decorations or floral arrangements. Communion elements (one chalice and one plate with bread) will be provided by the church and placed on the communion table during wedding ceremonies.
4. Decorations should be completed at least 1 hour before the ceremony. The Wedding Coordinator Team will work with the Florist to determine a time to decorate, but no sooner than 3 hours before the ceremony start time.
5. The Florist should make arrangements to remove all decorations/equipment promptly following the ceremony and nothing is to be left overnight. If the wedding couple wishes to share the joy of their marriage by leaving their floral arrangement(s) for Sunday worship services, please let the Wedding Coordinator Team know at least 2 weeks before the wedding. An acknowledgement will be placed in the Sunday worship bulletin.
6. Candles may not be placed along the sanctuary aisles, on the chancel steps, or directly on the slate floor. In the chapel, candles may not be placed in the aisles or directly on the wooden floor. Candles should be non-drip only, with protective covering placed beneath them. The wedding couple is responsible for cleaning and repair fees caused by candle drippings or accidents that may occur.
7. The church can arrange for a wooden pedestal with protective covering for a unity candle set. The wedding couple should supply the candles and holders.
8. Care should be taken to ensure that decorations not mar the wood in the sanctuary or chapel. Please do not use nails, tacks, staples, tape, or other potentially harmful items in decorating. Protective covering should be used under fresh floral arrangements, and any other decorations.
9. Dried or silk flower petals may be spread or tossed in the aisles of the sanctuary or on the chancel, and also in the chapel. Live flower petals can cause damage and may not be used.
10. Only birdseed, bubbles or live flower petals may be used in the parking lot. Please distribute these items to guests outside.

11. Decorations already in the church must be considered when planning wedding decorations. Seasonal decorations, such as at Easter and Christmas, will remain in place during weddings

Photography and Videography Guidelines

Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church considers the marriage ceremony to be a service of worship. Therefore, we ask that the contracted photographer/videographer follow the church policies.

1. A Photography/Videography Agreement is to be completed, signed by the photographer and/or videographer, and returned to the WHPC Wedding Coordinator at least 2 weeks before the ceremony.
2. Photographs may be taken before or after the service in any part of the building and on the grounds; however, all pre-ceremony photography in the sanctuary/chapel should be concluded **1 hour prior to the ceremony.**
3. Flash photography should be limited to before the ceremony, during the processional, and after the ceremony.
 - 3a. Sanctuary. The photographer may stand at the fourth row from the back of the room during the processional and recessional. Non-flash photos may be taken from the back of the room, the far side aisles, or from the balcony.
 - 3b. Chapel. Non-flash photos may be taken from the back and sides of the room.
4. Professional videography is permitted during the ceremony.
 - 4a. Sanctuary. The videographer may record from the back of the room, from the balcony, or with an unmanned camera in an unobtrusive location on the chancel. All video equipment should be in place 1 hour prior to the ceremony. It is permissible to attach an audio cable to the church sound system, with this cable being provided by the videographer. Placing microphones on the bride and groom is not allowed. The WHPC sound technician will not mic acoustic instruments such as the organ, string quartets, trumpets, etc. Arrangements should be made through the WHPC wedding coordinator for the videographer to meet with the sound technician to test equipment during the week prior to the ceremony.
 - 4b. Chapel. The videographer may record from the back of the room or with an unmanned camera in an unobtrusive location in the front of the room.

NOTE: Couples planning to share videos or slide shows as part of their wedding are asked to do so at gatherings separate from the ceremony, such as the rehearsal dinner or reception.

Wedding Rehearsal

It is important to rehearse the wedding ceremony so that the service itself will go smoothly on your wedding day. This includes practicing the processional and recessional, reviewing the wedding ceremony, confirming special seating, and reviewing responsibilities with ushers.

1. Rehearsals are generally scheduled to begin between 5:00 and 6:00 pm on the evening before the wedding. If another time is preferable for the wedding couple, please discuss this with the Wedding Coordinator Team.
2. One hour is allocated for the rehearsal. Please be sure your wedding party is present and ready to begin on time.
3. The officiating pastor(s) will conduct the rehearsal. Representatives from the Wedding Coordinator Team, and custodial staff will be present at the rehearsal.
4. **It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to secure a marriage license from any Texas county clerk's office. There is a specific window of time during which this is to be done, so be sure to apply for the license within that time frame.** The marriage license must be given to the Wedding Coordinator Team at the rehearsal (or before). The Wedding Coordinator Team will obtain the necessary signatures following the wedding ceremony and return the signed license to the county clerk's office. The wedding certificate will be mailed by the county clerk's office to the married couple at the mailing address provided to the Wedding Coordinator Team by the wedding couple.

Wedding Fees

| | <u>Members of WHPC*</u> | <u>Non-Members of WHPC</u> |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sanctuary wedding Maximum capacity 800 | \$1,700 | \$3,000 |
| Chapel wedding Maximum capacity 100 | \$1,400 | \$1,800 |

Above Fees include:

- WHPC Pastor
- Wedding Coordinator Team
- Pianist/Organist
- Sound Technician (sanctuary wedding)
- Prepare/Enrich Pre-Marriage Course
- Custodial staff
- Facility Use
- Non-refundable deposit

Above fees do **not** include:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Refundable security deposit | \$200 |
| Sound tech at rehearsal | \$100 |
| Guest pastor | honorarium |
| Guest musicians | honorarium |
| Set up/take down of furniture | TBD based on requests |

*For the purpose of this policy, 'members' include parents or adult children of WHPC members

Payment Schedule and Cancellation Policy

Payment Schedule

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Refundable security deposit (\$200) | Due at time of reservation |
| Non-refundable deposit (\$100 or \$500) | Due at time of reservation |
| Balance of wedding fees | Due one month prior to ceremony |

The \$200 security deposit will be refunded within two weeks following the wedding if all wedding guidelines are followed and no damage to the property is incurred. The wedding couple will be responsible for any damages that exceed the security deposit amount.

Cancellation Policy

All fees paid to date, with the exception of the non-refundable deposit, will be refunded in the event of cancellation of the wedding ceremony. Cancellations must be made in writing and directed to the Wedding Coordinator, who will then provide written confirmation of the cancellation.