

# West U Methodist Church

## Wedding Policies & Procedures

*The wedding ceremony is a service of worship in which a man and woman praise God and exchange vows of covenant to one another. The staff at West University United Methodist Church (WUM) wishes you happiness in your life together and desires to assist you so that your wedding will be a sacred and beautiful occasion.*

# General Information

From [www.westumethodist.org](http://www.westumethodist.org)

Frequently Asked Questions about Weddings  
at West U Methodist, Houston

Updated March 2012

These FAQs are not intended to provide every answer about weddings at WUM. For more information, including reservation forms and policies, please see elsewhere in the Weddings section of this Website. It is the responsibility of the bride and the groom to ensure that any outside vendors to whom these policies apply be provided a copy of the relevant policies and that these policies are followed. If you have additional questions, please contact the Wedding Coordinator, Cara Bevill at [cara\\_johnson@comcast.net](mailto:cara_johnson@comcast.net) or call 713-664-8111.

*May we have a wedding at WUM if we are not members of the church?*

Yes, you may.

*How far in advance may we schedule a wedding at WUM?*

You may book your wedding as far in advance as you wish. Unless the bride or groom (or a parent, guardian, or grandparent) has been a member WUM for at least six months before scheduling a wedding, the wedding is regarded as a non-member wedding.

*When are weddings held at WUM?*

Weddings will not be scheduled on Sundays, certain holidays, or the weekends of those holidays — New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the month of

December. Weddings also will not be scheduled during Holy Week, which is from the Saturday before Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday.

*How many people will WUM Sanctuary seat? The Chapel?*

The seating capacity for the Sanctuary is 450 adults. The Chapel seats 60 adults.

*May we select our own minister to officiate at our wedding?*

All weddings at WUM will be officiated by one of our staff clergy. Please call the church at 713-664-8111 to make an appointment with the designated pastor for a conference to be held no later than threemonths before the ceremony. During the conference, the pastor will discuss with you the details of the service and the meaning of marriage in the context of the Christian faith. Ministers of another United Methodist Church may be invited by the Senior Pastor to officiate your service.

*Is marriage counseling required?*

Yes, at least two sessions with the Officiating Pastor are required. Please call the church, 713-664-8111, to make an appointment with the officiating pastor at least 3 months prior to the wedding.

*May we select our own music and musicians?*

Responsibility for all music at WUM is delegated to Organist/Pianist performing at your wedding. Only West U Methodist staff musicians may play the organ or piano at a wedding.

*How old must one be to participate in a WUM wedding?*

Children must be at least five years old to participate in a wedding. This includes ring bearers and flower girls.

*May we write our own service?*

All weddings will use "A Service of Christian Marriage" as published in The United Methodist Hymnal or other services approved by The United Methodist Church. The Officiating Pastor will help personalize the service.

*How do we schedule our wedding?*

To schedule your wedding, contact the Wedding Coordinator, Cara Bevell, via email at cara\_johnson@comcast.net or call the church office at 713-664-8111. A wedding is officially scheduled once the reservation form and deposit are received by the church.

*What are the fees?*

For members  
 \$1,200 \*Wedding in the Sanctuary plus a \$200 deposit  
 \$800 \*Wedding in the Chapel plus a \$200 deposit

For non-member  
 \$1,800 \*Wedding in the Sanctuary plus a \$200 deposit  
 \$1,200 \* Wedding in the Chapel plus a \$200 deposit

*\*The fees above includes use of the Bride's Room, the Groom's Area, parking lot, minister honorarium, the church wedding coordinator, organist, one hour rehearsal, sound technician, custodial services and related services for three hours before through one and-one-half hours after the wedding begins.*

*What is the Payment schedule?*

*Deposit.* A \$200 deposit is required to secure the availability of WUM for your wedding. This deposit will be returned after your wedding ceremony if no damage is incurred.

*Second Payment.* A non-refundable payment of \$500 for a sanctuary wedding or \$250 for a chapel wedding is due toward the total fees owed to WUM at either six months before the wedding date or upon booking the wedding if the wedding date is fewer than six months after the booking date.

*Balance.* The balance of the fees is due and payable no later than 14 days prior to the wedding date.

\*Weddings will be removed from the calendar if the fees are not received according to the payment schedule. Please mail all payments to the church, attn. Wedding Coordinator.

*What if we have a cancellation?*

If you must cancel your wedding for any reason, please notify the Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible so this date may be made available for others.

*When may we schedule our rehearsal and who must attend?*

The rehearsal time must be set with the Wedding Coordinator when the wedding is scheduled. All members of the wedding party, including parents, grandparents, and ushers, should be present at the rehearsal. Please stress promptness. If members of your party are more than 15 minutes late, your rehearsal may begin with present party members or be cancelled.

\*The marriage license must be presented to the officiating pastor or wedding coordinator by the end of the rehearsal.

*Any other pertinent details?*

- A church Wedding Coordinator will be available at the rehearsal and wedding.
- A bride's room is available for the bride and her attendants to use beginning three hours before the wedding begins. A groom's area is available as well.
- The wedding party must make arrangements for someone to receive the wedding dress when delivered. Additionally, the wedding party must arrange for someone to oversee the security of the attendants' belongings during the service and remove all personal articles no later than 1 ½ hours after the wedding ceremony begins. Dresses and other belongings must not remain in the facilities overnight. The church cannot be responsible for any items lost, stolen, or damaged.
- No rice, bird seeds, or flower petals (real or artificial) may be thrown on the church premises by anyone, including a flower girl.
- Absolutely no alcohol or smoking is allowed on the church premises at any time before, during, or after the ceremony.

# Policies

From [www.westumethodist.org](http://www.westumethodist.org)

## Wedding Music and Musicians

Updated March 2012

Responsibility for all music at WUM is delegated to the service musician, who will assist you in planning the music for your wedding. Contact information will be given to you as soon as your service musician has been scheduled.

*The following music policies are in effect for all weddings:*

- Because a wedding is a worship service, the guidelines for music are subject to the same standards as music for any other worship service at WUM.
- Texts of hymns, anthems, or solos are to be taken from Holy Scripture, the *United Methodist Hymnal*, or shall be texts congruent with them. Only music appropriate for a church service is to be used. Music chosen should be classical and or Christian. Recorded music or outside sound systems are also not permitted.
- The Director of Music Ministries and the service musician will have final say as to the appropriateness of all musicians and music to be included in a wedding at WUM.
- WUM staff or contracted Organist and/ or Pianist play at all weddings at which organ/ piano music is desired. In addition to the organ and/or piano, other instruments — such as strings, trumpet, harp — may be included with the prior approval of the Director of Music Ministries.

- Payment for WUM staff musician is included in your fees. Payment for other instrumentalists/ soloists is made directly by the couple according to arrangements you make with them.
- All soloist/instrumentalists are required to select their music prior to the rehearsal, inform the Organist or Pianist and be able to provide music to the Service Musician in the key which he/she will sing/play.
- Fees also include a brief consultation with the Organist/ Pianist to choose ceremony music as well as one rehearsal with any outside musician. If bride and groom or outside musicians need additional time with Organist/ Pianist, \$100 per hour fee will be added to the final cost of the wedding.

The following page includes recommended organ music selections for your wedding ceremony. You may talk with your Organist or Pianist directly to make your selection.

# Policies

From [www.westumethodist.org](http://www.westumethodist.org)

## Recommended Organ Music Selections

Updated March 2012

### *Pre-Service Music*

Ave Verum	Mozart
Wachet Auf (Sleepers Wake! A Voice is Calling)	Bach
Rhosymedre	Vaughan Williams
Fugue	Pachelbel
Aria in F Major	Handel

### *Seating of Mothers*

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring	Bach
Ave Maria	Schubert
Sheep May Safely Graze	Bach

### *Procession of Attendants*

Canon in D	Pachelbel
St. Anthony Chorale	Brahms
Sound the Trumpets from Judas Maccabaeus	Handel
Processional from Judas Maccabaeus	Handel

### *Bridal Processional*

The Prince of Denmark's March	Clarke
Trumpet Tune	Purcell
Prelude to Te Deum	Charpentier

Hymn of Praise from Symphony No.1  
Bridal Chorus

Brahms  
Wagner

### *Recessional*

Hornpipe from Water Music Suite	Handel
The Rejoicing from Royal Fireworks Music	Handel
Wedding March	Mendelssohn
Ode to Joy	Beethoven
The Rejoicing from Suite in G	Callahan

# Policies

From [www.westumethodist.org](http://www.westumethodist.org)

*Wedding Photographers and Videographers*

Updated March 2012

WUM welcomes photography/videography by professionals or amateurs provided it does not distract attention from the worship ceremony. WUM reserves the right to deny access-present or future-to anyone who violates any of these policies.

## *Photography or Videography*

During the wedding ceremony itself, noise and movement must be kept to an absolute minimum.

Photography or videography sessions held inside the sanctuary or chapel before the service must end 30 minutes before the service is set to begin. Similar sessions may follow the wedding. However, all equipment, members of the wedding party, and guests must be out of and away from the Sanctuary building 90 minutes after the beginning of the ceremony. (Example: For a 3:00 pm wedding, vacate the premises by 4:30 pm) At this time, church staff will begin their clean-up process.

Before the wedding party enters the Sanctuary or Chapel, a photographer may take flash pictures from immediately inside of the Sanctuary. Flash pictures also may be taken from the back doorway as they leave the Sanctuary or Chapel at the end of the ceremony as long as the flash is not directed towards the interior.

During the service, only available light may be used. Also during the service, no cameras may be used in the main seating area of the

sanctuary or chapel; flash photography is not permitted during the ceremony. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to advise family and friends of this policy.

The balcony vantage point provides a beautiful view of the entire Sanctuary and all participants in the worship service. However, staff, sound and lighting technicians have priority use in that space and should be consulted before camera are set

## *Videography Specific*

Videotaping in the Sanctuary is permitted only from the balcony and only using available light. Videotaping in the Chapel is permitted only from the back corner or from outside the doors, and only using available light.

Video cameras will not be allowed in the chancel area in either the Sanctuary or the Chapel.

Remote microphones used to enhance the sound quality are not allowed.

All video equipment must be set up one (1) hour prior to the beginning of the ceremony.

## *TIP*

The wedding party has use of the church for three hours prior to the beginning of the wedding and for 90 minutes after it begins. To effectively use this time, it is recommended that as many photographs as possible be taken before the wedding begins.

# Policies

From [www.westumethodist.org](http://www.westumethodist.org)

Wedding Florist

Updated March 2012

The policies for florists apply whether the family chooses to use the services of a professional florist or those of a non-professional friend or relative. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to ensure that anyone ordering or handling floral or other decorations is supplied with a copy of these policies. It is the responsibility of the florist to keep a current copy of these policies on file and to comply with them. The Weddings section of the WUM website ([www.westumethodist.org](http://www.westumethodist.org)) will have the most recent copy of them. Any florist failing to follow these policies will not be permitted to return to work at WUM. The florist, bride and groom also will be responsible for any damages incurred.

## *Decor and Decorum*

The WUM Sanctuary is itself an offering of praise to God. The richness of the Sanctuary's architectural style requires little enhancement; therefore, wedding decorations should be kept as simple as possible. Furniture, altar pieces, paraments, Bibles or any of the Christian symbols used in the facility may not be moved.

## *Set-up and Removal*

Florists may begin decorating the sanctuary or chapel no more than three (3) hours before the service is to begin. WUM regrets that we are unable to make exceptions to this policy. Florists must clean up any debris from the installation and removal of arrangements and must bring the brooms, dustpans, towels or other equipment necessary for so doing.

All decorations must be removed immediately after the ceremony. Items not removed by the florist or family may be discarded by church staff or volunteers to allow preparation for other worship services and cost incurred in removal will be deducted from the deposit. The wedding flowers are, of course, yours to keep; however, if you wish to donate your flowers to the church for use in the next day's Sunday services, contact the Office Manager at 713-664-8111.

## *Candles and Candleholders*

In the Sanctuary, two (2) candlesticks are permanent fixtures on the altar table. No other candles or flowers may be placed on the altar table. Hurricane shades are available for your use in the windowsills. The bride and groom or florist must provide candles for the windows. Floral arrangements or greenery can be placed in the windowsills.

Florists also may supply floor candelabra (dripleless candles only — the florist is responsible for any damage) for placement in the altar area. The church can provide a brass unity stand at no additional cost. The bride and groom or florist must provide dripleless candles.

## *Flowers and Greenery*

Two arrangements may be placed on flower stands provided by the church. Urns are available for your use. Their sizes are 7" tall and 9" in diameter. Small arrangements of flowers and/or greenery may be attached at the ends of the pews using ribbon only. To allow the wedding party to pass down the center aisle, such arrangements must not extend more than 6" into the aisle, and no other objects may be placed in the aisles, including aisle runners.

No greenery, bows, or decorations of any kind may be placed anywhere else in the chancel or other areas, i.e., altar railings, choir loft, pulpit and walls.

*Other Information*

- Use only ribbon to fasten decorations to the pews. Tape, pins, nails, tacks, or glue may not be used anywhere in the building, including on the furnishings.
- Rice, bird seed, flowers or petals (real or artificial), or anything of this nature may not be thrown anywhere on church property, including in the parking lot. These are safety hazards.
- Aisle cloths are not permitted.
- Arches, gazebos, screens, columns, or other such free-standing decorations are not permitted.

# Policies

From [www.westumethodist.org](http://www.westumethodist.org)  
*Timeline for Weddings*  
 Updated March 2012

## *Six Months Prior*

When your wedding date is confirmed, a non-refundable payment in the amount of \$200 and reservation form are due. (Please see "General Information-Deposits and Fees.")

## *Three Months Prior*

When the Wedding Coordinator confirms the name of the Officiating Pastor call the church offices to arrange your initial appointment with him/her.

## *Two Months Prior*

Begin meeting with your Service Musician to start planning the music for your ceremony. You will need to complete the "Wedding Information Form." Begin pre-marriage sessions with Officiating Pastor.

## *One Month Prior*

Meet with the Wedding Coordinator to Finalize the "Wedding Information Form." By law, you must obtain your Texas marriage license between 30 and three days prior to the wedding. *The marriage license must be delivered to the Officiating Pastor or Wedding Coordinator at the wedding rehearsal.*

## *Three Weeks Prior*

Call the Wedding Coordinator to determine the final balance of fees owed. The balance of the fees is due in the church office 14 days before the wedding date.

Mail the check to:  
 West University United Methodist Church  
 ATTN: Wedding Coordinator  
 3611 University Blvd  
 Houston, TX 77005

## *Two Weeks Prior*

If you are printing an order of service, you need to receive approval from the Officiating Pastor before printing.

## *Day of Rehearsal*

Your rehearsal will begin promptly at the scheduled time. To allow for delays, have the wedding party at the church 15-20 minutes prior to that time. Everyone participating in the wedding, including parents and grandparents, should attend. The wedding ceremony will be rehearsed completely this evening. *Remember to bring your wedding license to the rehearsal.*

## *Wedding Day*

The vendors and wedding party may arrive up to three (3) hours prior to the beginning of the ceremony. All wedding party members must be gone by one and a half hours after it begins.

Everyone who is scheduled or expected to be in photographs that will be taken prior to the wedding should arrive at the same time as the wedding party.

Bridesmaids should bring necessary items in bags and re-pack them before the wedding begins. We strongly encourage all wedding party members to lock their belongings in their car prior to the beginning of the ceremony. West U Methodist cannot be responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged items.

All decorations and personal items must be removed no later than 1 ½ hours after the ceremony begins.