

**Westminster Presbyterian Church  
4303 Wheeler Road  
Martinez, Georgia 30907**

**WEDDING POLICY**

Congratulations on your desire to have a wedding in the facilities of our church! The Session would like to express its hope that God will guide, bless, and enrich you with every spiritual blessing in your new life together. All couples married in this church are asked to commit to establish a home that honors the biblical doctrine of the sanctity of marriage.

We believe that marriages and families are best nurtured in the context and community of the church and encourage you to either make or renew your commitment starting now to be regular in your attendance and participation in the worship and life of this church or your other home church.

We commend your desire to be married in a church believing that a service that honors God, Who ordained marriage, is the appropriate setting to start your marriage. A wedding ceremony is primarily a worship service and not just a social event. We encourage couples and their families to plan weddings that are appropriately joyful celebrations but not such that they leave a burden of indebtedness to the newlyweds and/or their parents.

**Preliminary Information**

The use of Westminster Presbyterian Church facilities is intended for those who have a significant relationship with the church through membership either personally or of a parent, pastoral relationship or other involvement with this church fellowship.

All wedding services and wedding dates at the church are individually approved by the Session.

Those desiring to be married who are under eighteen years of age need to seek their parents' approval before contacting the Senior Pastor. If the parents are divorced or separated you will need to get approval of at least one parent or legal guardian. Without

the parents' approval in these circumstances the wedding will not be approved by the Session.

### **Pastoral Considerations**

Weddings at Westminster Church are generally performed by an ordained minister on the church staff. However, a request for an ordained minister who is a friend or family member to officiate or share in the ceremony may be made. Approval by the Session is necessary before this can be confirmed.

If, in the process of premarital counseling or otherwise prior to the wedding service, the Pastor of the church and/or another approved officiating minister determines in their judgment that it would be unwise or a violation of church and/or civil law to proceed, they may, with the approval of the Session, decline to conduct the wedding.

If either the bride or groom has been divorced, is of a different faith, or is not a professing Christian the Session will have to determine whether the biblical standards can or have been met. You may be asked to supply further information to the Session as it makes its decision.

### **Process**

Those seeking marriage should inform the Senior Pastor at the earliest opportunity of their desire to wed. The Session will be asked for its approval of the wedding and the use of the church facilities at its next regularly scheduled stated meeting.

The Wedding Information Packet (attached) will be sent to you from the church after the initial contact has been made with the Senior Pastor.

### **Counseling**

Much time is given to arranging the details of a wedding; please be prepared to give significant time to considering and building a biblical foundation for your marriage. All couples marrying in Westminster Presbyterian Church, whether members or nonmembers, will be required to participate in premarital counseling sessions conducted by the Senior Pastor, a minister on the church staff, or another ordained minister who has been approved to officiate or share in the ceremony. If the minister

that you have chosen to perform the ceremony is outside the staff of Westminster Presbyterian Church and he wishes to do the counseling, the Senior Pastor, in consultation with the Session, must give approval.

The pastor(s) shall have the freedom to utilize other counselors whom they believe would be beneficial to the engaged couple. The period of counseling will be arranged between the officiating minister on the church staff and the couple. The Senior Pastor normally conducts a premarital counseling program with a minimum of six sessions. Accordingly, requests for wedding services at the church must be scheduled sufficiently in advance to accommodate the appropriate counseling sessions.

### **Rehearsal**

A rehearsal will be held a day or two before the sanctuary wedding. Rehearsals should begin promptly at the time scheduled and should proceed in a dignified manner. Throughout the entire rehearsal members of the wedding party should remember they are in a place dedicated to the worship of God.

The Senior Pastor will conduct the rehearsal unless unusual circumstances prevent this from happening.

All members of the wedding party should be present and on time. Every step of the wedding service should be followed so that all will be familiar with the service and be able to participate without needless anxiety.

The marriage license should be secured and given to the Senior Pastor at the rehearsal.

### **Music for the Wedding**

Because a wedding is a worship service, music should be appropriate and to the praise of God. There is a wealth of literature including hymns, worship music, and traditional and classical wedding music from which choices may be made allowing room for personal expression of taste. Careful selection will assure a program that is pleasing to the bride and groom and reflects their individuality, yet maintains the propriety of the glory and worship of God.

The wedding couple is responsible for obtaining the organist, soloist or other musicians. If they are unfamiliar with the piano or keyboard at the church they should schedule a time for orientation and rehearsal during hours that the church offices are open.

**Be sure to provide all music details in the Wedding Information Packet.**

### **Wedding Pictures of the Ceremony**

A church wedding should be a worship service in every sense. Marriage is an ordinance of God, and the ceremony places the marriage relationship under the blessing and commandment of God. The attention of the bride, groom, wedding party and guests is to be focused on the ceremony, and photography or video **should not cause distractions**. The following policies are established to help maintain the worshipful nature of the ceremony.

1. **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHS or the use of cameras with any audible noise are allowed to be used during the ceremony.** The ceremony begins when the music first starts and is concluded when the music ends.
2. Pictures may be taken before and after the ceremony and during the reception.
3. During the ceremony the photographer should be located either in the rear or sides of the sanctuary (not on the podium).
4. It is preferable that the photographer and videographer will be at the rehearsal to finalize guidelines for photography and video to make sure that neither distract from the worship service. And if they are unable to attend the rehearsal, it is the responsibility of the bride and groom to provide these guidelines to the photographer and videographer.

### **Marriage Service**

The minister(s) will use a traditional marriage service from the Directory of Worship of the Presbyterian Church in America or the Book of Common Worship.

**Consistent with the teaching of our *Confession of Faith* and *Book of Church Order* the Lord's Supper may not be included in wedding services.**

The Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church considers a wedding to be a worship service and any special requests must be discussed with Westminster's pastor who will then seek approval from the Session.

### **Instruction for Decorations**

1. The only type of candles allowed for use in the sanctuary is a chace candle. Chace candles are surrounded by a metal casing and are almost completely dripless. They are identical in appearance to regular wax candle, and they are guaranteed to light and not melt down as much as a regular candle.
2. No tacks, nails, glue, or tape may be used to fasten any decorations to the furniture or building. Covered wire, forms and plastic clamps should be used in attaching decorations.
3. Removal of all decorations must begin immediately after the service. The wedding party must provide a crew sufficient to adequately remove decorations.
4. The sanctuary must be left "broom clean". Materials must be cleaned from the pews, floors and woodwork. If a custodian is on duty, he is not expected to do the clean-up work. He is there for the purpose of rearranging the furniture, vacuuming the floor after it is left "broom clean" and for lock-up. He may be called on to adjust heating and air conditioning, or to bring or replace church property, which may be needed or used in the decoration and the ceremony.
5. If the wedding occurs during the Christmas season, the church's Christmas decorations will not be removed from the sanctuary.

### **Sound Technician**

Trained sound technicians from the church are available and may be arranged through the Church Office. The fee is to be paid directly to them either at the rehearsal or no later than on the day of the wedding.

The assigned sound technician will arrive one hour before the music starts to set up microphones, recording equipment and adjust lighting.

## Wedding Fees

The Session has established the following schedule of Wedding Fees for Weddings, Rehearsal Dinners and Receptions at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Also there is a \$100.00 nonrefundable deposit to reserve the wedding date.

<b>Weddings</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Non-Members (Must be Session Approved)</b>	<b>Pay to</b>
Sanctuary	0*	\$500.00	WPC
Sound Technician	\$100.00	\$100.00	Technician
<b>Rehearsal Dinners</b>			
Fellowship Hall	0*	\$100.00	WPC
<b>Receptions</b>			
Fellowship Hall	0*	\$500.00	WPC

*\*The church will also accept a love gift offering for the use of the facility, custodial support, and general expenses.*

## Reception / Caterer

Caterers need to contact the administrative assistant at 706-863-8978 two weeks prior to the wedding date and provide the following information:

### Before Reception

1. Company that is bringing the equipment.
2. If caterer is bringing anything early.

### After Reception

1. Leave all sinks and countertops clean.
2. Remove all food, utensils, and other items brought in.
3. Leave kitchen as clean and orderly as you found it.
4. Reception shall be concluded by 10:00 p.m. on Saturday.

## Custodial Needs

1. Information regarding the number of tables and their arrangement for reception is to be given to the Church secretary at 706-863-8978 two weeks prior to the wedding.
2. Round or rectangular tables are available.

## **Special Instructions**

1. Smoking is not permissible in any parts of the church buildings.
2. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is forbidden on any part of the church property, including the parking lots.
3. No food or drink is allowed in any portion of the sanctuary building.
4. No rice, birdseed, or any other hard objects may be thrown at the bride and groom in the buildings or hallways.
5. If programs are to be used, it is the responsibility of the wedding party to have them printed at their expense at the printer of their choice.
6. Ordinarily there will be no receptions in church facilities for couples which the Session deems as nonmembers. Exceptions must be approved by the Session.
7. If a reception is held in the church building, the wedding shall be scheduled to begin no later than 6:00 p.m.

Westminster Presbyterian Church wishes you happiness in your life together with the hope that your wedding will be a sacred and meaningful occasion. Whether you are a member at Westminster or if you normally attend another church, we encourage you to build your marriage immediately by being consistent and committed to regular attendance in Sunday School, worship services and the life of the church.

## Wedding Information Packet

Wedding Desired for: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Place: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Personal Information***

Name of Bride: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Church Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ First Marriage? \_\_\_\_\_  
Member of Westminster Presbyterian Church? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Groom: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Church Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ First Marriage? \_\_\_\_\_  
Member of Westminster Presbyterian Church? \_\_\_\_\_

Address After Wedding:  
\_\_\_\_\_

### ***Wedding Details***

Name any Other Pastor to be asked to Participate: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Bride's Escort: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Best Man: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of Organist: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Singer(s):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Musical Compositions to be Played or Sung:

---

---

---

---

Name of Florist: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Photographer: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Caterer: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Videographer: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Site of Reception: \_\_\_\_\_

## Wedding Music Worksheet

Please complete before meeting with the organist. If you would like for the organist to assist you in choosing music titles, feel free to leave those spaces blank.

Name of Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Bridesmaids: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Groomsmen: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Children: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Mothers/Grandmothers: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrumentalists:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Vocalists:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Prelude (begins 30 minutes before the wedding)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Chiming of the Hour? Yes or No

Seating of the Mothers:

\_\_\_\_\_

Processional of the Wedding Party:

---

Bridal Processional:

---

Congregational Hymn(s):

---

Solo(s):

---

Recessional:

---

Postlude:

---