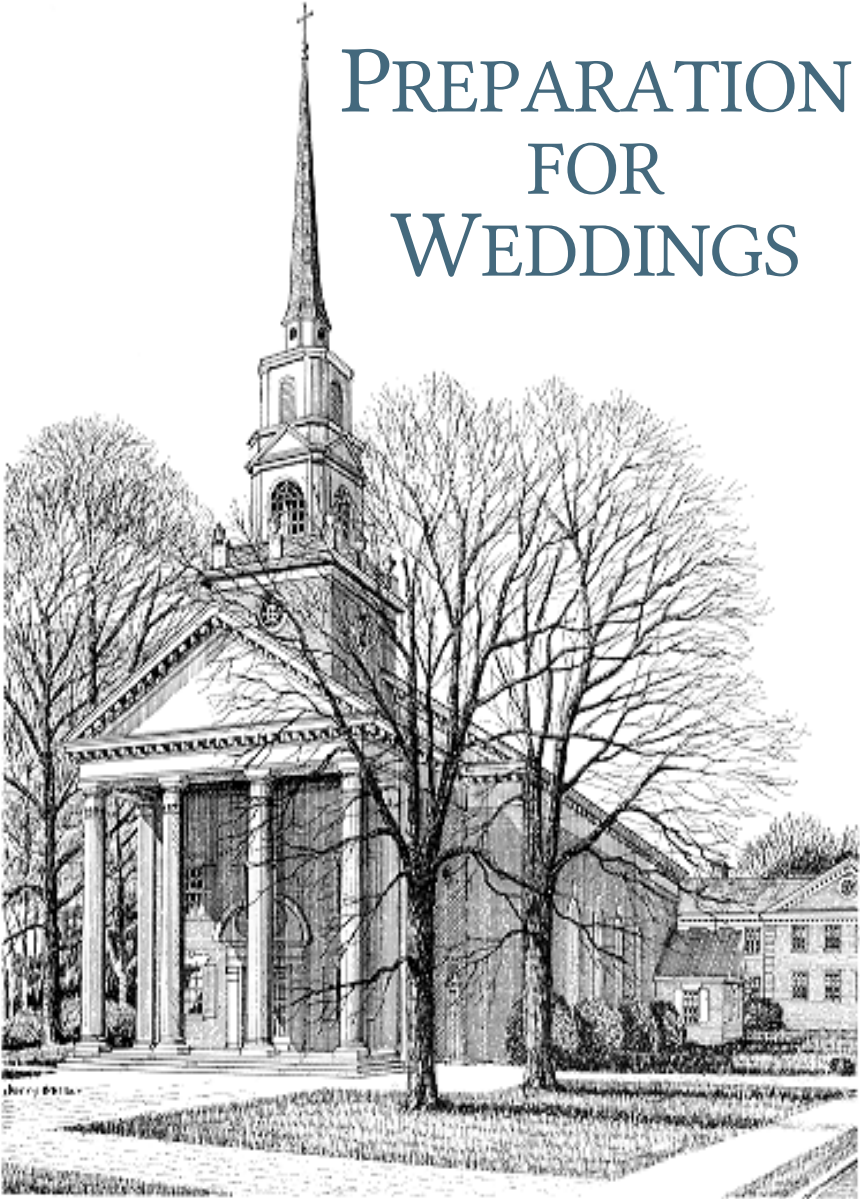


# PREPARATION FOR WEDDINGS



WHITE MEMORIAL  
— PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH —  
RALEIGH, NORTH

# WHITE MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

## PREPARATIONS FOR WEDDINGS

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## INTRODUCTION

### THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND MARRIAGE

We are delighted that you wish to have your marriage service take place at White Memorial Presbyterian Church. We want to assist you as you prepare for your wedding and, even more, as you prepare for your life together as a couple. Please share your **Guidelines for Weddings** booklet with all those involved in planning your wedding and rehearsal.

As Christians and Presbyterians, we believe that Christian marriage is a solemn and sacred covenant. A church marriage is governed by the traditions and teachings of the Church as well as state law. The worship of God should be the focus of a Christian wedding. A church wedding indicates that couples seek to depend on the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ as the foundation of their home and their marriage. The church pledges its loyalty and prayers to the couple being married, and the couple asking to be married in the church building, publicly promises their loyalty to Christ's church and announces their intentions to live in marriage as Christian witnesses. To fulfill this pledge we have formulated guidelines as listed in this booklet. The guidelines will prevail unless written exceptions are authorized by the pastor and the Worship Committee, and if requested by the pastor, action by the Session.

Marriage at White Memorial is a worship service, to be conducted with the same dignity and respect as any other worship service. When you request to be married at White Memorial, you are asking the pastors, church musicians, and Wedding Guild to guide you in preparing to worship God as you celebrate your commitment to each other.

Under the Book of Order, which governs the Presbyterian Church and Presbyterian pastors, the pastor is in charge of the wedding ceremony.

Under the policy of White Memorial, a pastor may schedule a wedding service with any couple, any two people as allowed by the Book of Order and the jurisdiction of the state of North Carolina. Therefore, we ask you to meet with one of our pastors and work closely with him or her in planning your wedding. A pastor cannot be compelled to preside over any wedding which might violate his or her conscience. "If the pastor is convinced after discussion with the couple that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise, the pastor shall assure the couple of the church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony." [Perry Biddle *A Marriage Manual*, Eerdmans 1999 pg. 90].

This booklet sets forth the guidelines ordinarily used to govern all decisions related to weddings at White Memorial or conducted by a pastor of White Memorial.

## **THE CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF MARRIAGE**

(From the Book of Order, The Directory of Worship Section [W-4.9000]  
Presbyterian Church (USA))

W-4.9001

### **Christian Marriage**

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.

W-4.9002

In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.

### **Preparing for Marriage**

In preparation for the marriage service, the pastor shall provide for a discussion with the couple concerning:

- (1) the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,
- (2) the legal requirements of the state,
- (3) the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,
- (4) the nature and form of the marriage service,
- (5) the vows and commitments they will be asked to make,
- (6) the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,
- (7) the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments. This discussion is equally important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce.

Christian marriage should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship. As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the pastor and the supervision of the session.

The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. Each person in the couple shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the pastor shall declare publicly that the two are now joined as one in marriage. A charge may be given. Other actions common to the community and its cultures may appropriately be observed when these actions do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. The service concludes with a benediction.

Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer. Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshippers' consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life.

## **PREPARING FOR YOUR WEDDING**

### **Scheduling Your Wedding**

1. Weddings may be scheduled only for active members engaged in the life of White Memorial Presbyterian Church, having been members a minimum of six months prior to scheduling a wedding, and their immediate family members.
2. Ordinarily, one person in the couple is expected to schedule the wedding and to be responsible for communication with the church staff. All wedding arrangements are scheduled through the pastoral assistant.
3. An Application for Rehearsal and Wedding form is located at the back of this booklet for information only. The actual form will be provided in the wedding information packet, which will be mailed to the couple. The application must be signed and returned, along with payment of the appropriate fee, before confirmation can be given. **No firm plans should be made for a rehearsal or wedding until confirmation is received.** If the wedding is cancelled, a full refund will be made unless the wedding is moved to another location and the church is not notified at least thirty days in advance. Fees [checks] should be made payable to WMPC and sent directly to the pastoral assistant, clearly marked "Wedding Fee."

4. No more than two sanctuary weddings are scheduled on the same day. Because of the time required to prepare for and clean up after a wedding, ordinarily, no wedding may be scheduled to start within three hours of another wedding to be held in the same location. Because of parking concerns, usually a wedding may not be scheduled to start within two hours of another wedding in any location at the church. Weddings may not be scheduled to begin after 7:00 p.m. without specific permission of the officiating pastor, the Chair of the Wedding Guild, and the Church Administrator. An extra charge may be required for late weddings, to cover increased custodial charges.
5. Weddings are not scheduled for the sanctuary during December; Easter weekend or the two preceding weekends; weekends in which a major musical presentation is scheduled; 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend or the weekend associated with the Thanksgiving holiday. Weddings for holiday weekends such as Memorial Day or Labor Day may be possible through request in writing to the Wedding Guild of White Memorial Presbyterian Church.
6. All ordained pastors at White Memorial share in officiating at weddings on a rotating basis and according to availability. Applying to have a wedding at White Memorial indicates willingness to accept the assigned pastor.

### **Selecting a Pastor for Your Wedding**

1. One of the pastors of the church will officiate at all weddings. Assignment of a specific pastor may not be possible until a few months prior to the wedding. In case of illness or unforeseen absence, another pastor of the church will always be available to officiate, though this substitution is rarely necessary. The couple may request a specific pastor, who will gladly comply if that pastor's schedule permits.
2. If either person in the couple wishes to invite another minister or pastor to assist in officiating at the ceremony, the procedure is as follows:
  - a. Contact the person to be invited and secure confirmation of availability.
  - b. Make the desire known to the White Memorial pastor, along with the full name and address of the co-officiant.
  - c. The assigned pastor will extend a written invitation to the guest co-officiant.

### **Pre-marital Counseling**

All couples are required to attend one group pre-marital counseling session (usually held quarterly) and at least one private session with the officiating

pastor. After the group session, couples will make an appointment with the officiating pastor for a pre-marital conference. Attendance at the group session and the private meeting should be scheduled as soon after the wedding date is set as possible. At the group session and in the private meeting, specific details of the wedding ceremony will be discussed.

### **Music**

A church musician will be assigned to provide and coordinate music for the wedding. All couples will meet with the church musician prior to planning any music for the wedding. Specific policies related to music for worship services and weddings will be found elsewhere in this booklet.

### **Wedding Director**

A Wedding Guild representative, who is a church member and volunteer, will be assigned to work with each wedding. Ordinarily, one or two assistant representatives will also be present for each rehearsal and wedding. You are not expected or obligated to invite wedding guild members to your wedding festivities. If a Wedding Guild representative has not contacted a couple at least one month prior to the wedding, please notify the pastoral assistant.

**Outside wedding directors are not permitted.**

**Flowers and Decoration** – Refer to page 10 for more details.

### **Marriage License**

The couple is responsible for obtaining a marriage license from the office of the Wake County Register of Deeds or any Register of Deeds in North Carolina. The marriage license is to be delivered to the church office at least forty-eight hours prior to the rehearsal. You may get more information on line or by calling the local Register of Deeds at 919-856-5460.

## **PLANNING THE REHEARSAL AND THE WEDDING**

### **General Information**

A White Memorial Presbyterian pastor will be in charge of and direct all rehearsals and weddings.

A volunteer from the Wedding Guild will attend the rehearsal and wedding to assist the pastor and to insure the dignity of seating of guests, assist with the processional and recessional, and perform other responsibilities as may be assigned.

Decisions of the pastor, church musician, and the Wedding Guild representatives are final and binding upon wedding parties and professionals such as photographers, soloists, and florists. Any requests for exceptions to stated guidelines and policies must be made **in writing** at least 2 weeks prior to the rehearsal. Address to:

White Memorial Presbyterian Church  
Attn: Pastoral Assistant  
1704 Oberlin Road  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27608

The wedding service concludes with the benediction and recessional of the wedding party and appropriate family members. Couples are not "presented" at the beginning or end of the wedding ceremony. Presentations are more appropriately done at the reception.

A "Stand-in" may share in the rehearsal; however, the principal is expected to "shadow" the stand-in and to participate in the rehearsal.

No decorations or displays are permitted outside the church or in the narthex.

Receiving lines are not held at the church after the wedding. To be respectful of the custodial staff and any additional weddings that day, and to assist in preparing for Sunday worship services, the wedding party needs to be finished with all photographs and out of the building within one hour after the service is over.

### **Rules Regarding Controlled Substances**

No alcoholic beverages or illegal substances may be brought to or consumed on church property. Violation of this policy may lead to cancellation of the wedding.

### **Rehearsal Times**

Wedding parties are expected to be prompt for the scheduled rehearsal. Often other wedding rehearsals are scheduled for the same evening. The wedding party, including parents of the couple, should arrive at the church at least 15 minutes prior to the time the rehearsal is scheduled to begin. Rehearsals ordinarily last one hour.

### **Capacities**

The maximum seating capacity of the sanctuary is approximately 550, including the balconies. The chancel and nave of the sanctuary can comfortably accommodate a maximum total of fifteen in the wedding party, including the couple. The chapel seats 75 comfortably and accommodates a



wedding party of six, including the couple. Closed circuit television broadcast from the sanctuary to the chapel and to the rear balcony is available. For fire and safety reasons, no more than twenty guests will be allowed to stand in the rear of the sanctuary. Please inform the Wedding Guild representative if you expect that guests will need to be seated in the chapel.

Handicap Access is available for both the sanctuary and the chapel. Hearing apparatus devices are available in the sanctuary.

### **Positioning the Wedding Party**

Prior to the rehearsal, the couple should discuss positioning of the wedding party and seating of honored guests with the Wedding Guild representative. Written requests on these matters may be given to the Wedding Guild representative, as this will expedite the rehearsal.

### **Involvement of Children in the Service**

Children under the age of four often become uncomfortable during weddings or create embarrassing distractions. If any children are to participate, wedding couples are strongly encouraged to invite only children age four or older to be members of the wedding party.

### **Photography by Guests**

Photography during the rehearsal is acceptable. Photography during the wedding ceremony detracts from the sacredness of the worship service and is not permitted. If a program is used, including an announcement such as, "Because a wedding is also a worship service, guests are requested to refrain from taking photographs" is helpful. Usher and groomsmen are asked to request of those with cameras to refrain from taking pictures during the wedding ceremony.

### **Dressing at the Church**

Dressing areas are provided for the couple and attendants. The dressing area will be available two hours prior to the wedding. Please do not plan to bring dresses or other items to the church prior to this time. No storage space is available. The wedding party should arrive with hair styling and makeup completed. **The dressing area should be cleared of all personal items before the wedding begins.**

Ushers should arrive at the church one and one-half hours prior to the wedding, dressed in wedding attire.

In case of inclement weather, the Wedding Guild representative will advise the wedding party of procedure.

### **Scripture Readers**

Members of the wedding party, family or friends may be invited to read one or more of the selections of Scripture. Scripture readers should be present at the rehearsal.

### **Programs**

Printed programs are not necessary. If the wedding couple desires programs, please ask the pastoral assistant to proofread the Order for Worship before having the program printed.

### **Security of Valuable Possessions**

The Church cannot be responsible for personal items, money, presents, or any other possessions left on church premises at any time.

## **MUSIC**

### **Guest Musicians**

A White Memorial musician will play the organ for and is responsible for the music at all weddings. If neither the Director nor the Associate Director of Music is available, another music director for the wedding will be secured. The White Memorial musician should be consulted at least 3 months before the wedding planning process to assist in choosing wedding music. If a guest organist or other guest musicians are desired, notify the Director of Music.

### **Instrumental and Vocal Music**

Since the Christian marriage ceremony is a service of worship before God who sanctifies marriage, music needs to be suitable and reverent. Instrumental and vocal music shall be decided upon in consultation with the assigned Director of Music. Appropriate music, including processional and recessional, will be suggested and played upon request. **Taped accompaniment, microphone and other amplification equipment may not be used.**

Vocal music should have words directed toward or about God. Secular love songs are not appropriate for a worship service. The style of music at weddings will be consistent with the music used in White Memorial's Sunday morning worship services. The Director of Music has final authority over all musicians and music for weddings.

## **Hymns**

The singing of congregational hymns is an excellent way for all to share in thanksgiving and praise. For all sanctuary weddings, and many chapel weddings, a hymn is ordinarily sung following the entrance of the wedding party. Other hymns may be used during the service as desired by the couple. A list of suggested hymns will be provided, but any hymn in the congregational hymnbook is acceptable.

## **Soloists & Instrumentalists – Requirements and tips**

1. Be careful to select soloists and instrumentalists who have solid musical skills and who are experienced in performing before an audience. The music staff can recommend qualified instrumentalists and vocal soloists.
2. Both the soloist and the assigned Director of Music need to be supplied with original copies of the music. Photo copying music usually violates a copyright and is illegal.
3. The Director of Music should be furnished with the music at least two weeks prior to the wedding.
4. The soloist or instrumentalist needs to have learned the music before the rehearsal. The assigned Music Director will be available for one rehearsal, not to exceed 30 minutes.
5. Soloist/instrumentalist fees are to be paid directly to the soloist or instrumentalist by the wedding couple.

## **FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS**

**Please give a copy of these instructions (copy also enclosed in wedding packet) to your florist.**

Floral decorations for a wedding must be appropriate for a church ceremony. Floral arrangement requests and any other requests related to decorations at the church should be discussed with the Wedding Guild representative at least one month prior to the wedding. Florists and others decorating the church must abide by White Memorial's Flower Policy guidelines.

### **For all Weddings**

1. Attractive arrangements of silk flowers are available for use from the church without charge.
2. Please leave sanctuary and chapel arrangements at the church for use during the Sunday morning worship services. Acknowledgement of the flowers will be printed in the Sunday worship bulletin. If more than one wedding is held on a given weekend and separate flowers

are used for each wedding, flowers from one of the weddings will be placed in the Jane Bell Gathering Space, with an appropriate acknowledgement given in the Sunday worship bulletin.

3. When the sanctuary or chapel is decorated for special seasons, no additional flowers may be used in either location.
4. No chancel furnishings may be covered or decorated. No tacks, tape, nails, or wires may be fastened to any part of the sanctuary or chapel, including pews and floors.
5. The Wedding Guild will provide white pew markers for special seating. Bows or flowers are not permitted to mark reserved pews.
6. No confetti, rice, birdseed, flower petals, bubbles, or other substance should be thrown or in any way be distributed in or on church property. No additional exterior lighting or other decorations are permitted.
7. Window shutters in the sanctuary may be opened or closed. Lighting in the sanctuary or chapel may be adjusted as suitable.
8. Aisle cloths are not used in the sanctuary or chapel because of the hazard incurred.
9. A unity candle is not part of the Presbyterian tradition, and its use is discouraged. Unity candles and stand, if desired, must be furnished by the wedding couple. The candles and stand should be present at the rehearsal.

### **Flowers for sanctuary weddings**

1. Chancel table flowers - one or two arrangements may be used and the dimensions listed here apply to either.
  - a. Flowers should be in liners that fit into the church vases -- size 4J (papier-mache) or gold plastic style 161.
  - b. Flowers may be no taller than the wood wainscot which is 44" above the top of the vases.
  - c. Flowers should not be so deep that pastors and choir members cannot move easily near the back of the chancel -- the maximum dimensions are 26" from the wall to the front of the arrangement or 44" from side to side.
  - d. Flowers should be placed into the church vase(s) at least one and one-half hours before the wedding, or two hours if all photos before.
2. Other decorations
  - a. Simple decorations around the hurricane globes in the windows are permitted -- the glass globes must be able to be lifted in order for the candles to be lighted.
  - b. Simple decorations are also permitted on the candelabra (if used).

- c. No other floral arrangements are permitted -- this means nothing on the pews, doors, railings, etc. of the church.
3. Wedding party flowers
  - a. Flowers should be labeled with the appropriate person's name (traditionally the bride's name) and for whom they are intended (bridesmaid, groomsman, mother of bride, etc.).
  - b. Please deliver flowers to the Jane Bell Gathering Space at least one and one-half hours before the wedding, or two hours if all photos before.

### **Flowers for chapel weddings**

1. Communion table flowers – one or two arrangements may be used and the dimensions listed here apply to either.
  - a. Flowers should be in liners that fit into the church vases -- size 3J (papier-mache).
  - b. Flowers may be no taller than 36" above the top of the vases, no wider than 30", and no more than 24" from the wall to the front of the arrangement.
  - c. Please place the flowers into the church vases at least one and one-half hours before the wedding.
2. Other decorations - no other decorations on pews, doors, etc., are permitted.
3. Wedding party flowers
  - a. Flowers should be labeled with the appropriate person's name (traditionally the bride's name) and for whom they are intended (bridesmaid, groomsman, mother of the bride, etc.).
  - b. Please place flowers on the back pew of the chapel at least one and one-half hours before the wedding.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO CAMERAS**

**Please give a copy of these instructions (copy also enclosed in wedding packet) to all professionals, friends, and family members who offer to take pictures for your wedding.**

Weddings held in a church are of a religious nature and are not to be a photographic production. Any photographs taken should be done in a dignified, professional and unobtrusive manner.

1. Photographs are not permitted in the Sanctuary or Chapel during the Processional or the Recessional. If pictures of these events are desired, the Wedding Party may reassemble at the conclusion of the ceremony to re-create such pictures. We ask that wedding

photographers cooperate and work with the officiating Pastor and Wedding Guild representatives.

2. Photographers and video camera operators are expected to respect the following procedures:
  - a. If possible, attend the Rehearsal to meet the Wedding Party, the Pastor, and the Wedding Guild representatives.
  - b. Dress appropriately for the Wedding. Arrive in ample time before the Wedding. Report to the Wedding Guild representative to clarify plans and procedures.
  - c. Begin photography of the Wedding Party not more than one and one-half hours prior to the wedding (unless arrangements were made ahead to begin earlier). The timetable for pre-wedding photographs is on reverse side of this sheet.
  - d. Keep photography or video equipment out of sight of guests. This includes tripods, lights, and cords, etc. No additional lights are allowed during the Wedding. **Once guests are seated, photographers are not to cross the threshold of the Sanctuary.**
  - e. During the ceremony please take pictures quietly and only from the balcony. Be respectful of the worship service, therefore no photography during prayers. Flash equipment may not be used during the ceremony.
  - f. **Make every effort to be as quiet as possible.** Once any guests are seated in the Balcony, there should be no further movement of photographers or video camera operators, although pictures may still be taken.
  - g. In the Chapel, during the ceremony, pictures may be made from the rear pew or foyer only.
  - h. Please have a prearranged system for taking group photographs after the Wedding. If photographs of the Pastor are desired, they should be taken first. The Wedding Party needs to be finished with all photographs and out of the building within one hour after the service is over.
  - i. Use video cameras only in the Narthex and from the Balcony. No additional lighting or microphones, other than the microphone on the camera itself, will be permitted.
  - j. Videographers may plug into the sound system by using the adaptor box that is connected to the sound system. The box is located on the floor in front of the sound system controls in the back corner of the Balcony. The cable is long enough to allow the videographer to place the camera in the front center of the Balcony.

## **EXPENSE POLICIES AND FEES**

Weddings are a privilege extended to White Memorial members and their immediate family members. Church facilities are not available to be rented; they are shared with members for purposes that contribute to the glory of God and the fulfillment of the Christian life.

Couples are expected to pay the designated charges at the time church facilities are reserved. If the wedding is cancelled, full refund will be made unless the wedding is moved to another location and the church is not notified at least thirty days in advance. Fees should be sent directly to the pastoral assistant and clearly marked "Wedding fee."

1. Effective June 12, 2016, the wedding fee schedule is:
  - a. Sanctuary - \$1,000.00
  - b. Chapel - \$500.00
2. These fees include honoraria for the church officiating pastor and the church staff musician. Additional gifts may be given if desired.

## **RECEPTIONS**

1. Receptions at the church are limited to one per day. Receptions will be scheduled for church members on a first-come, first-serve basis, providing no conflicting church function has been previously scheduled.
2. The Office Manager and the Director of Food Services will schedule receptions and advise couples of the current fees and guidelines.
3. Receptions are ordinarily held in the Geneva Dining Room and connecting areas. Pickard Hall may be used for exceptionally large receptions.
4. No alcoholic beverages are allowed at receptions.

The formal application will be provided by the church once the wedding is scheduled. The form below is provided just for information.

WHITE MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA  
APPLICATION FOR REHEARSAL AND WEDDING  
[This application is to be executed by the couple only]

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Member WMPC? \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone numbers (m) \_\_\_\_\_ (other) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Member WMPC? \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone numbers (m) \_\_\_\_\_ (other) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

If neither are members, what is your tie to WMPC? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Wedding date requested \_\_\_\_\_ Time requested \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal time assigned 5:00 PM \_\_\_\_\_ or 6:30 PM \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor preferred, if any (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor or other religious leader to be invited, if any \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the **Guidelines for Weddings at White Memorial Presbyterian Church** booklet. I agree to abide by the guidelines and expectations given in the booklet and will ask the professionals, family members, and friends assisting with our wedding to comply with them also. I have given a copy of the guidelines to my florist and my photographer.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**For Church office use**

Date application approved \_\_\_\_\_ Pastor assigned \_\_\_\_\_

Date fee received \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding Guild Director \_\_\_\_\_



WORSHIP | EMBRACE | SERVE *in the manner of Christ*

WHITE MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1704 OBERLIN ROAD

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA 27608

PHONE: 919-834-3424

FAX: 919-829-0139