



Westminster

Presbyterian Church

Weddings at Westminster

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PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

Dear Friends,

Your wedding is one of the most significant and joyous occasions in your life and Westminster is pleased to have the opportunity to play an active part. We are eager to make every phase of your wedding one that will be remembered with deep contentment.

This booklet is designed to assist you with your wedding planning and to answer your questions. We want you to be satisfied with every detail of your wedding ceremony; this booklet will serve as a guide to help make the best decisions to create an atmosphere that reflects your wishes. The Pastor and Wedding Coordinator are glad to offer assistance as needed.

We trust your wedding at Westminster will be a joyous occasion and a blessing as you begin your new life together.

Larry R. Hayward, Pastor

Patrick Hunnicutt, Associate Pastor

Whitney Fautleroy, Associate Pastor

Jacob Bolton, Associate Pastor

R. Benjamin Hutchens, III, Director of Music Ministries

Heather George, Wedding Coordinator

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

1) The Marriage License:

City of Alexandria

To obtain the license, both parties must:

- ❑ Be 18 years of age (proof required)
- ❑ Visit the Circuit Court Clerk's Office in person
 - Marriage Licenses are issued Monday thru Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. in the Clerk's Office at 520 King St., Rm. 307
 - Both parties must appear together to obtain a license and must present an UNEXPIRED, government-issued photo ID (e.g. driver's license, passport)
 - Fee for marriage license is \$30, cash only
 - No blood tests, no waiting period, no residency requirements
 - [Click here to download the Alexandria, VA marriage license application.](#)

Once issued, the license is valid for 60 calendar days and may be used anywhere in Virginia.

The marriage license must be given to the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal.

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2) The Wedding Service

The wedding service is an act of worship and as such, is under the direction of one of the Westminster pastors. When appropriate, other licensed pastors may be invited to assist in the service at the request of the wedding couple, but only upon the personal invitation of the officiating Pastor. In order to assure conformity with church policies, all wedding arrangements must be approved by the Pastor or Wedding Coordinator.

Wedding services are normally scheduled for members of Westminster and for children of members. A Westminster pastor at his or her discretion may conduct a wedding at Westminster for a non-member couple who desires to be married in a church, particularly if one of the parties is a member of another church or is seeking a church home in this area.

All couples must meet with a pastor for at least one session of premarital counseling. During your meeting(s), that pastor will get to know you, discuss your plans for the service, and explore options for longer-term premarital counseling.

3) Music

Music for the wedding service is under the direction of Dr. R. Benjamin Hutchens, II, Director of Music Ministries. The couple should contact Dr. Hutchens as early as possible to

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

schedule an appointment to discuss music. If he is unavailable to play for the wedding, Dr. Hutchens will arrange for a substitute. Recognizing that a wedding is a worship service, the music selected must be in keeping with the dignity and style of a worship service and be approved by Dr. Hutchens. Vocal music must contain sacred texts.

The music normally comprises a 15- to 20-minute prelude as guests are being seated, the processional, and the recessional. Options include having a vocal soloist sing during the prelude or during the service, and having the congregation sing a hymn during the service. Dr. Hutchens will engage a vocal soloist or instrumentalist if one is desired.

4) Flowers/Decorations

Chapel or sanctuary decorations must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator. Decorations should be in keeping with the dignity of the wedding service and cannot cause damage to the facility. No decorations may be placed in front of the cross on the chancel. If, by accident, candles or other decorations cause damage, such damage will be repaired at the couple's expense.

The church has two pairs of candelabra. There is a charge for the candles (see fee schedule). The church also has hurricane globes for the sanctuary windows. If you use a Unity Candle, please discuss this with the Wedding Coordinator.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

All decorations must be in place no later than one hour before the start of the service. The wedding couple is responsible for the removal of all decorations from the church within one hour of the ceremony's conclusion, unless other arrangements have been made.

Child attendants may spread silk rose petals.

The throwing of rice, bird seed, or confetti at the conclusion of the ceremony is prohibited. Bubbles are allowed.

The church has some pew bows available for use. If you choose to have your florist do pew bows, make sure that they bring clips; tape, tacks or nails are *not* permitted on any church furnishings.

Should you wish to use the "Reserved" signs on some pews, please request this through the Wedding Coordinator.

From the second week of December through early January, Christmas greenery may be in place in the church. There are also wreaths and window treatments of greens and candles.

Please ask your florist to label all flowers with the **title** of each recipient (i.e., Mother of Bride, Soloist, Best Man, etc.).

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5) Photography/Videography

Photographs/videos of the wedding party may be taken 60 minutes prior to the service and at its conclusion. During the ceremony, the photographer/videographer must be inconspicuous. No flash or video lighting is permitted from the end of the processional to the beginning of the recessional. All photos/videos must be shot from the back of the sanctuary/balcony during the wedding ceremony; photos/videos are permitted during the processional and recessional from the back four rows of the sanctuary.

The Pastor(s) will be pleased to cooperate with the wedding party in posing for pictures.

If printing a program, it is recommended that the following wording be included in the program:

"As this is a worship service, we ask that you please silence cell phones and refrain from taking photos during the ceremony."

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of the Wedding Couple

- ❑ Meet with the officiating Pastor prior to the wedding. The Pastor will discuss details about the ceremony and conduct appropriate premarital counseling.
- ❑ Meet with the Wedding Coordinator two times (sometimes only one meeting is needed for Chapel ceremonies) to discuss wedding arrangements. The first meeting should be scheduled two to three months prior to the wedding. The second meeting will take place ten to fourteen days prior to the wedding.
- ❑ Meet with the Director of Music one time to discuss musical selections.

It is the responsibility of the couple to schedule the above appointments.

- ❑ Ensure that the marriage license is in good order and is provided to the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal.
- ❑ Ensure that the photographer/videographer agrees to the church guidelines.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Duties of the Wedding Coordinator

Westminster's Wedding Coordinator is your liaison with the church. The Wedding Coordinator makes sure that everything goes smoothly at your rehearsal and wedding. The Wedding Coordinator handles all questions concerning the wedding, the rehearsal, and relevant church policies. Required meetings will ensure that your wedding ceremony turns out exactly as you have planned.

The Wedding Coordinator's services include:

- ❑ Two meetings (sometimes only one for Chapel weddings) with the couple to discuss all aspects of the wedding
- ❑ Completion of the Wedding Information form which outlines all of the details for the wedding
- ❑ Execution of guidelines for florists, photographers, and videographers
- ❑ Receipt of checks and marriage license prior to the wedding and distribution afterward, if applicable
- ❑ Obtaining officiating Pastor's signature on marriage license prior to wedding
- ❑ Attendance at the rehearsal and coordination of roles with Pastor, organist, and bridal party
- ❑ Arrival at least one hour and a half prior to ceremony to make sure everything is in order

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Duties of the Wedding Coordinator (cont'd):

- ❑ Oversight of candles that need to be lighted if candelabras, window hurricanes, or unity candle are used
- ❑ Distribution of flowers to attendants and special guests
- ❑ Instruction and supervision of ushers and attendants on seating
- ❑ Assistance to parents, grandparents, and wedding party as they make their entrance
- ❑ Availability during ceremony in case of emergency or to seat late-arriving guests
- ❑ Assistance to usher in escorting guests after the ceremony
- ❑ Organizational help for receiving line and/or to advise the party when the photographer is ready
- ❑ Pre-planning for flowers to go with the couple or remain in the sanctuary following the ceremony
- ❑ Completion of and copying of the marriage license
- ❑ Mailing of the original, signed copies of the marriage license to the appropriate courthouse

REHEARSAL

It is critical that all individuals in the wedding party and anyone who will be seated just prior to the processional (mothers, grandmothers, etc.) attend the wedding rehearsal. It is equally important that **only** the wedding party and close family attend, as too many extra people tend to complicate the rehearsal.

All should plan to arrive promptly at the designated rehearsal time, as there may be another event immediately preceding or following your rehearsal. The rehearsal lasts 45 to 60 minutes.

At your second meeting with the Wedding Coordinator, they will discuss with you all the final details of the wedding, including seating. Seating, processional, service order, and recessional will all be rehearsed. If the Director of Music Ministries is asked to accompany this rehearsal there will be an additional rehearsal fee (see fee schedule). The vows and pronouncement of marriage will not be made at the rehearsal. If anyone other than the Pastor is reading scripture, this will also be rehearsed.

The couple's marriage license should be given to the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal. The Wedding Coordinator will give it to the Pastor and ensure it is signed.

THE WEDDING DAY

One room is available for dressing, called the Bride's Room. Let the Wedding Coordinator know if the Bride's Room is needed and whether arrangements need to be made for an additional room for dressing.

The wedding party needs to be at the church at least 45 minutes prior to the wedding ceremony. The library is available as a waiting area prior to the ceremony.

Ushers will begin seating guests 30 minutes prior to the wedding. The rule of thumb is one usher for every 50 guests.

A stand is available if you wish to have a guest book at the ceremony. Let the Wedding Coordinator know if it is needed. A friend or family member of the couple should oversee the book and take it to the reception.

Receiving lines are permitted in the narthex, outside, and downstairs in Fellowship Hall.

FACILITY

SANCTUARY

Seating Capacity:	
Nave	332
North Transept	15
South (Library) Transept	42
Balcony	52
Total:	441
Number of Pews (per side, nave)	19
Center Aisle:	71'

Available Equipment:
Pipe organ, grand piano, flower pedestals, candelabras

CHAPEL

Seating Capacity:	64
Number of Pews:	12
Center Aisle Length	24'

Available Equipment:
Electric organ, flower pedestals, candelabras

FACILITY

Wedding receptions may be held in either Fellowship Hall or Johnson Parlor. Arrangements for receptions are made through Westminster's Executive Assistant, Tara Cain. All receptions must conclude and parties vacate the premises three and one-half hours after the wedding start time for Fellowship Hall, or two and one-half hours after the wedding start time for Johnson Parlor.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the church or on the church grounds.

The use of alcohol is strictly forbidden on church property, including the parking lot. The pastors respectfully request that all members of the wedding party refrain from alcoholic beverages prior to the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

FEE SCHEDULE

Pastoral Honoraria:

Members and their children	Voluntary
Non-Members	\$300

Sexton:

Chapel and Bride's Room	\$100
Sanctuary and Bride's Room	\$150
Reception in Fellowship Hall	\$150
Reception in Johnson Parlor	\$75

Director of Music Ministries:

Consultation, wedding and one rehearsal with soloist or instrumentalist	\$400
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Accompaniment for wedding rehearsal (if requested)	\$75
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Additional rehearsals with soloist or instrumentalists, each	\$35
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Fees for vocal soloists and instrumentalists vary

Wedding Coordinator:

Duties previously outlined	\$500
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Candles (per candelabra)	\$35
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Non-Member Facility Use Fee	\$100
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PHOTOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER CONTRACT

Photographer/Videographer:

It is critical to maintain an appropriate atmosphere for a religious service during wedding ceremonies. Westminster Presbyterian Church does permit the taking of photographs during the ceremony. However, they should be as noiseless as possible and are only allowed from the balcony and the last four rows of the sanctuary. No flash is allowed during the service. Video recording must be done from the balcony and/or a stationary tripod on one side of the chancel area. Finally, we recommend that the photographers, videographers, and their assistants dress appropriately for a formal church service.

By your signature below, you agree to abide by the written rules for wedding photographers/ videographers at Westminster Presbyterian Church. The section from this wedding brochure entitled "Photography/Videography" is provided by your client at the time you contracted for the event.

Signature _____

Name (Printed) _____

Studio Name _____

Phone _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

To schedule a wedding, please contact the church office:

Westminster Presbyterian Church

2701 Cameron Mills Road

Alexandria, VA 22302

703-549-4766

office@wpc-alex.org

Rev. Dr. Larry R. Hayward, Pastor

lhayward@wpc-alex.org

Rev. Patrick Hunnicutt, Associate Pastor

phunnicutt@wpc-alex.org

Rev. Whitney Fautleroy, Associate Pastor

wfautleroy@wpc-alex.org

Rev. Jacob Bolton, Associate Pastor

jbolton@wpc-alex.org

Dr. R. Benjamin Hutchens, III, Director of Music Ministries

bhutchens@wpc-alex.org

Heather George, Wedding Coordinator

weddings@wpc-alex.org

Tara Cain, Executive Assistant

tcain@wpc-alex.org

DIRECTIONS TO WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

From I-395 (going North or South):

- Take the **Shirlington** exit and follow the signs to **Quaker Ln**
- Take the second left onto **Crestwood Dr**
- Make a right at the third stop sign on **Cameron Mills Rd**
- Go one block
- The church is on the corner of Cameron Mills Rd and **Monticello Blvd**

From Maryland across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (I-495):

- Take **176-B – Telegraph Rd**
- Follow signs for **VA-236 E/Downtown/Alexandria**
- Turn left at the second light onto **Callahan Dr** (road goes in front of the Masonic Memorial)
- Go straight through the first light and proceed 1.8 miles on **Russell Rd**
- Turn left onto **Monticello Blvd** (second left after Del Ray Baptist Church)
- Westminster is located at the top of the hill (corner of Monticello Blvd and **Cameron Mills Rd**)