

Wedding Guidelines



Wedding Guidelines

Congratulations on your engagement! We welcome the opportunity to be a part of your journey toward a life-long Christian marriage. At HNW, we believe it's worth investing time and thoughtful preparation to help ensure the success of your marriage for years to come. With that in mind, below are steps to be married by one of the pastors of Houston Northwest Church.

Note: We strongly encourage you to begin this process at least 6 months prior to your desired wedding date. If your wedding date is less than 3 months away, it is unlikely we will be able to accommodate your request due to the important preparation time that is needed for everyone involved.

Step 1: Complete the Wedding Request Form to determine availability for the rehearsal and wedding date as well schedule your initial meeting with the officiating pastor to discuss your wedding plans and our expectations. Below is a list of HNW pastors who officiate weddings:

Pastors:

Alan Bugg

Darren Carver

Galen Blom

Step 2: Fully complete our Wedding Planning Form to reserve your wedding date. A \$250/\$500 deposit is required when submitting this form. The \$250 fee will be transferred to the officiating pastor upon completion of your wedding. The \$250 building deposit will be refunded to you following the event if no damages occur. *(Note: Until this form is completed and submitted, your wedding date is not yet reserved.)*

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Step 3: Premarital counseling should begin at least six months prior to the wedding. Premarital counseling will be at the direction of Houston Northwest Church. *At any time during or following a counseling/planning session, the officiating HNW pastor may cancel his participation in the wedding ceremony.*

Step 4: Schedule and meet with your officiating pastor to finalize wedding details at least 4 weeks prior to your wedding date.

Note: If your wedding will be held on the Houston Northwest Church campus, you will also need to schedule and meet with the HNW Wedding Coordinator at least 4 weeks prior to your wedding date to discuss decorations, dressing rooms, building access, etc. and pay all remaining fees.

*We believe marriage should be rooted and
established in Christian Community...*

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Dressing Rooms

The wedding party may dress in designated rooms in the church. Clothing and other items must be picked up immediately following the ceremony. Items left are not the responsibility of the church.

SCHEDULING OF WEDDING DATES

Weddings and receptions can be scheduled on **Friday evenings** or **Saturdays**. **Saturday weddings/receptions** must be out of the building no later than 4:30 p.m. Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays.

WEDDING POLICIES & INFORMATION

Marriage License

A marriage license is issued by the Recorder of Deeds in each Texas County and is valid only in Texas. A man and woman applying for a marriage license do not need to be Texas residents. Both must appear in person before the recorder of deeds or a deputy recorder and present valid identification containing date of birth, along with Social Security card, to apply for a marriage license. Fees for a marriage license and copies may vary by county. For more information on marriage licenses and to find what documentation is required, contact your county's Recorder of Deeds.

Pastor/Ceremony

- All weddings at HNW are under the direction of one of the listed HNW pastors. Where the assistance of another pastor is desired, approval is required by the HNW Executive Pastor.
- The wedding service will be designed and ordered in consultation with the bride and groom and the officiating HNW pastor.

Pre-marital Mentoring or Counseling

All HNW Church pastors require successful completion of premarital counseling prior to your final meeting with them to confirm ceremony details.

- Complete the Prepare/Enrich pre-marital questionnaire. This is a relationship assessment tool completed online that identifies a couple's strength and growth areas. It is one of the most widely used programs for premarital counseling and helps you to build and sustain a strong marriage. The cost for this activity is \$35 per couple.

- Complete Pre-marital Counseling. (Instructions for scheduling your sessions will be provided after you complete the Prepare/Enrich pre-marital questionnaire).

**NOTE: If the Prepare/Enrich report indicates that you need more in-depth counsel than a laymentor couple can provide, we will connect you with a professional licensed counselor (Option 2). Counseling fees will apply, and mentor fee will be refunded.*

- Pre-Marital Counseling—You will meet as a couple with Marilyn Maddox for approximately 8 sessions. Marilyn is a Christian Counselor who works closely with HNW.

CHURCH FACILITY USAGE POLICIES

It is the wedding party's responsibility to inform guests and participants of all church policy guidelines.

- No alcoholic beverages are permitted on the premises, including the parking lot. Smoking is prohibited inside of any building on the HNW campus.
- Because of insurance regulations, no rice, birdseed, silly string or confetti is to be thrown inside or outside the building. Bubbles are often used, however only outside.
- No food or drink is permitted in the Worship Center.
- Church furniture may not be moved or used without permission from the officiating HNW Wedding Coordinator.
- Any church property broken or damaged will be the financial responsibility of the wedding party.

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- No use of the nursery or classrooms is allowed.
- Arrangement of deliveries should be made through the wedding coordinator. No direction by any photographer, florist, or personal wedding coordinator (either paid or volunteer) supersedes the direction of the officiating HNW pastor at the rehearsal, wedding ceremony, or church reception.

Decorations

- Flowers or bows may be attached to the ends of the chairs. No decorations may be attached to any other church furnishing or wall.
- HNW does not have candelabras available. Please consult the officiating HNW wedding coordinator about the size of the candelabras, possible location placement. Dripless candles must be used and all care to prevent wax from getting on the carpet or upholstery. The bride and groom will be responsible for professional cleaning of wax from the carpet and upholstery.
- Flowers dropped by flower girls shall be artificial and not real petals unless a runner is present.
- Aisle runners are permissible. The Worship Center aisle is approximately 100 feet from the front of the stage to the entrance doors.
- All decorations and wedding paraphernalia must be removed from the church immediately after the wedding to allow the custodian to clean. It is best to designate a person to collect all personal belongings immediately following the ceremony. HNW will not be responsible for any items left following the wedding.
- All band equipment will remain on stage.

Catering/Kitchen Facility

- Receptions may be held in the front Lobby and/or 249 South. Please submit catering service name and phone number to church office upon selection. There are no linens, dishes, or silverware, etc. available for use. Please provide your own table coverings, table service, etc.

Music/Sound System

- The HNW sound system is equipped to play CDs and iPods. Because of the highly technical nature of the equipment, only authorized HNW sound operators will be allowed in the sound booth. Tech fees will apply.
- If using digital music or projected images, music files must be mp3 format and images must be high resolution jpeg format.
- Music is to be appropriate to a Christian wedding service. Its place in the service will be discussed with the officiating HNW pastor and Wedding Coordinator early in the planning stages.
- Vocalists and musicians should be prepared to work with the appointed sound operator for a sound check during the rehearsal time.
- The church does not have a traditional organ. Only authorized/ approved persons will be allowed to operate the keyboard.

Custodial Fees

- Fees are for basic set up before the wedding and clean-up after the wedding.
- Custodians will not remove decorations, flowers, etc. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make sure all decorations and food are removed or discarded appropriately. The bride's designated contact should check with HNW Wedding Coordinator to do a final walk thru before leaving HNW property.

Miscellaneous

- If you have any question about any aspect of the wedding, please contact the HNW church office at 281.469.3369.