



HOUSTON NW CHURCH

WEDDING GUIDELINES

HOUSTON NORTHWEST CHURCH 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 that marriage is a God-ordained covenant between one man and one woman. Furthermore, we believe the definition of "man" and "woman" is based on the gender determined by the biological sex observed at birth. According to our church By-Laws:

ARTICLE IV STATEMENT OF FAITH

Section 3. Houston Northwest believes the Bible and the historical Christian church have held that sex is reserved for one man and one woman within the covenant of marriage as a reflection of the love Christ has for His church. Consistent with the church's First Amendment rights, it is the church's sincerely held belief that marriage is a God ordained covenant between one man and one woman.

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 ministers of HNW.

Note: We strongly encourage you to begin this process **at least six months prior** to your desired wedding date. If your wedding date is less than three 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 of the minister and facility for your rehearsal and wedding dates. Pastor Steve Bezner is not available to officiate weddings; however, we have several other HNW Ministers who are available and would be honored to be part of your special day. Below is a list of HNW ministers who officiate weddings:

- Kirk Gentzel
- Galen Blom
- Chris Hall
- Matt Delp
- Shawn Myers
- Cassidy Odom

Step 2: Once you have been provided with the link via email, fully complete the Wedding Planning Form to officially reserve your wedding date.

- A \$250 minister fee and/or a \$250 building deposit is required when submitting this form.
- The \$250 minister fee will be transferred to the officiating minister upon completion of your wedding.
- The \$250 building deposit will be refunded to you following the event if no damages occur.
- This form will also allow us to schedule your initial meeting with the officiating minister to discuss your wedding plans and our expectations.
- Until this form is completed and submitted, your wedding date is not yet reserved.

Step 3: Premarital counseling should begin **at least six months** prior to the wedding. If using a minister from HNW to officiate your wedding, premarital counseling will be at the direction of HNW. At any time during or following a counseling/planning session, the officiating HNW minister may cancel his/her participation in the wedding ceremony. If you are not using a minister from HNW and only using our facilities, a certificate of completion for premarital counseling will be required before the date of the ceremony.

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

Step 5: If your wedding will be held on the HNW campus, you will also need to schedule and meet with the HNW Wedding Coordinator **at least four weeks** prior to your wedding date to discuss decorations, dressing rooms, building access, technical needs, etc., and pay all remaining fees.

See fees information on the following page.

WEDDING FEES SCHEDULE

If your wedding and/or reception will be held at HNW, the fees below are required for all events and must be paid in full **at least four weeks** prior to your wedding date. You are welcome to make partial payments toward any of the fees, as long as they are paid in full by the 4-week deadline.

Ministerial Fees	Fee Notes	Fee
Minister	Paid with the Wedding Planning Form	\$250
Prepare/Enrich Premarital Questionnaire	Per Couple	\$30
HNW Wedding Coordinator	Check paid directly to the HNW Wedding Coordinator	\$200
Tech	AV/Tech Support (first 2 hours per engineer)	\$150
	AV/Tech Support (each additional hour per engineer)	\$100
Worship Leader	Fee will be determined after meeting with the Worship Leader	TBD

Building/Room	Max # (chairs only)	Max # (round tables & chairs)	Building Fee	Maintenance Fee	Utility Fees	Total
Refundable Building Deposit			\$250	n/a	n/a	\$250
Worship Center & Atrium	1200	not available	\$500	\$200	\$100	\$800
Commons	350	25 tables w/8 chairs per table = 200	\$300	\$150	\$100	\$550
Student Bldg. North	200	20 tables w/8 chairs per table = 160	\$300	\$150	\$150	\$600
Adult Bldg. Room A121	80	8 tables w/8 chairs per table = 64	\$200	\$75	\$50	\$325

Payment Info for Fees

Building Deposit	Paid automatically when submitting Wedding
Minister Fee	Paid automatically when submitting Wedding
Wedding Planner Fee	Check made out to the wedding planner
Tech & Worship Fees	Check made out to HNW Tech
Building/ Room Fees	Check made out to HNW Church
Premarital Counseling Fee	Check made out to HNW Counseling

HNW FACILITIES

Wedding

The Worship Center will seat approximately 1,200 people in chairs. Student Building North will seat approximately 100 people. Chairs can be moved to accommodate a center aisle.

Reception

Receptions may be held in The Commons or Student Building North. Largest room capacity is 100 in Student Building North. There are round tables available for receptions. The round tables seat eight persons each. There are long tables available for use for food service and cake table. There are no linens available for use on the tables. No food or beverages are permitted within the worship space.

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 ministers. Where the assistance of another pastor is desired, approval is required by the HNW Executive Team.
- The wedding service will be designed and ordered in consultation with the bride and groom and the officiating HNW minister.

Premarital Mentoring or Counseling

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

- Complete the Prepare/Enrich premarital 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 premarital counseling. Instructions for scheduling your sessions will be provided after you complete the Prepare/Enrich premarital questionnaire.
 - NOTE: If the Prepare/Enrich report indicates that you need more in-depth counsel than a lay mentor couple can provide, we will connect you with a professional licensed counselor. Counseling fees will apply, and mentor fee will be refunded.
- Premarital counseling is completed as a couple with one of our counselors for approximately eight sessions.

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.
- 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 minister 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 furnishings or walls.
- HNW does not have candelabras available. Please consult the officiating HNW Wedding Coordinator about the size of the candelabras and 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

Please submit the catering service name and phone number to HNW 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 digital media. Because of the highly technical nature of the equipment, only authorized HNW sound engineers 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 minister and wedding coordinator early in the planning stages.
- Vocalists and musicians should be prepared to work with the appointed sound engineer 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 the 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 281.720.0032.