

A CHRISTIAN WEDDING:

*A Handbook of Policies, Procedures, and Plans for a
Christian Wedding at*



West Side Baptist Church

1008 SW 4th St. | Topeka, KS 66606 | Phone (785) 233-4241



Vision: The vision of West Side Baptist Church shall be that we commit ourselves to continual personal growth, reaching out to win and nurture others in the love of Jesus Christ.

From the Senior Minister

January 2018

Congratulations on the announcement of your engagement! I hope that your wedding and your marriage will be everything you imagine: uplifting, encouraging, enriching, and fulfilling all of your hopes and dreams.

On behalf of West Side Baptist Church, let me express my sincere joy that you have decided to get married. I encourage you to be married in your home Church, if possible. If this is not possible or desirable, I would be glad to officiate your wedding ceremony as a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I invite you to become actively involved in our congregation as your wedding day approaches.

As you may know, evangelical Christians consider the Covenant of Christian Marriage to be a serious and special bond - a holy institution - created by God between one man and one woman to enter into for a lifetime of unconditional-love (1 Corinthians 13:1-12; Ephesians 4:2-3, 4:32; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 John 4:7-8), mutual-help (Genesis 1:27-28), protective-strength (Ecclesiastes 4:12), fidelity (Mark 10:9), and personal fulfillment (Ecclesiastes 9:9; 1 Corinthians 7:5). God commands: "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral" (Hebrews 13:4). Therefore, the Covenant of Christian Matrimony should not be entered into light-heartedly, irreverently, or unadvisedly.

Therefore, we are here to help you not only have a wonderful wedding day but to strive for a rich and rewarding marriage which we hope will last a lifetime. We are pleased that we can play a part in this special time for you.

I will want to meet with you at least once to schedule a premarital consultation and to set the date for your service. This is important for several reasons: First, it will give us an opportunity to get to know one another, which will make the wedding ceremony more personal. Second, the meetings will enable us to discuss issues that will play a central role in your marriage – common values, hopes and dreams, children, religious background, communication styles and spiritual convictions. Third, the sessions will enable us to talk about marriage in general and your wedding ceremony.

I generally do not reserve the date of the service on the Church calendar until after my first consultation with the couple. Please reserve your date by calling the Church Office at (785) 233-4241. You should call three to six months before your intended wedding date.

I look forward to meeting with you very soon. Please call if you have any questions or need further guidance. My desire is to assist you in making this special day as Christ centered, God honoring and memorable as possible.

Blessings,

Pastor Ivan

The Reverend Ivan E. Greuter M.A., M.Div., D.Min.

Senior Minister

West Side Baptist Church

1008 Southwest Fourth Street

Topeka, Kansas 66606

CHURCH POLICY & ETIQUETTE

The building and property of West Side Baptist Church is dedicated to the glory of God and service of His Kingdom. It is available to the Church's members and the community for worship, study and significant occasions. This booklet is intended to give you all the information necessary to make your wedding a meaningful celebration and assist you that the wedding and surrounding tasks run smoothly. In order to provide guidance for the celebration of marriage, the following policies and procedures have been adopted by the Council of Ministry of this Church, along with some general guidelines on Church etiquette for wedding services. The Bride and Groom are responsible for insuring that all policies and procedures are followed by the wedding party, family, friends and guests. Violation of these policies and procedures may result in the cancellation of the celebration without notice, liability, reimbursement or legal recourse.

West Side Baptist Church does not rent its building or property for community use. The use of the Church's building and property is offered *gratis* (free of charge) to persons or groups who wish to fulfill the original intent of the congregation and are approved by the Council of Ministries. **Nothing in this booklet should be interpreted to convey a legal contract, a rental agreement, or a binding lease.**

Persons and groups using the Church building and property for Christian weddings must meet the following requirements:

- The couple complies with the traditional teachings and practices of the Baptist faith
- The couple engages in premarital consultation
- The couple is married by the Senior Minister of this congregation
- The couple complies with the following policies and practices:

NO ALCOHOL, GAMBLING, OR SMOKING – First and foremost, the Church is a place of prayer, worship, Christian education, and fellowship. We ask your cooperation in helping us keep the Church a holy place. Please do not bring alcoholic beverages on to Church property. No gambling is to take place on Church property. The building is a smoking-free environment. Please observe the “No Smoking” signs throughout the Church building. **No service will be performed for couples who are intoxicated, or if a member of the wedding party is drunk.** The Senior Minister reserves the right to cancel a service at any time if a person in the bridal party or immediate family has been drinking in the twenty-four hours prior to the service.

BOUQUETS, CORSAGES, & BOUTONNIERES – Flowers for the service should be delivered to the Church Parlor (first floor) prior to the wedding. The Florist should have each item marked as to the proper recipient. A person (traditionally an aunt or friend of the Bride's mother) should be asked to see that flowers are given to the proper person. *It is not customary to order a boutonniere for the Senior Minister.*

BULLETINS & BULLETIN COVERS – The Church Office is able to provide couples with a list of possible vendors who supply bulletin covers. The couple is responsible for purchasing their bulletin covers directly from the manufacturer, and having them printed.

CANDLES – If you wish to use the Church's candles, notify the Senior Minister prior to the service. Please secure “drip-less candles” for all candelabras, pew candles, memorial candles, windows, etc. For fire prevention, a glass or metal base is required for all candles not

on the Communion Table, with a glass or crystal lamp (e.g., hurricane lamp) around each candle extending 2 inches above the top of the flame.

CHANCEL TABLE – The Chancel Table is 61 inches long, 31 inches wide, and 31 inches high. The bride may decorate the Chancel Table with tablecloths (with a recommended 10 inch drop on each side), memorial flowers and/or pictures, unity candle, sand ceremony vases, and other sacred objects. The two pillar candles may not be removed from the table for any reason. The view of the sacred symbols of the Church (i.e., the Bible, Candles, Cross, flags, etc.) must not be obstructed by flowers, palliums, palms, pictures, or other items.

CHILDREN AND INFANTS – God loves children – and we do too! Jesus was known for taking children into his arms and blessing them. To help parents and guests enjoy their experience at our Church, we have a nursery located on the bottom floor. There are diaper changing stations and a nursing mother’s room in the nursery. For the safety of our children and guests, please dispose of diapers in the appropriate receptacles and follow all printed guidelines for hand washing and the prevention of infectious diseases. Report any broken equipment, furnishings, or toys to the Church Office or Senior Minister.

CLEAN UP - The Bride’s parents are encouraged to remain at the Church after the ceremony to take down any decorations and to do any last minute cleaning. Please schedule any additional time need for clean-up with the Senior Minister. Please help us keep the Church building and grounds a beautiful place to meet God and His people. There is no objection to flowers in suitable containers being left in the Church for an upcoming worship service if they would be fresh within the next day or two following the wedding.

CUSTODIAN - Weddings require extra work for our building Custodian during his off-duty hours. The suggested donation for Custodial service is set forth on the Donation Schedule. The Sanctuary and reception are to be arranged by the family or florist according to Baptist faith and tradition. The Custodian will vacuum and rearrange the rooms after the wedding ceremony.

DATE OF CEREMONY - At West Side Baptist Church, wedding services are held throughout the year on any day of the week except Sunday mornings; depending on the Church schedule. Couples can request a morning, afternoon or evening service. The wedding date must be approved through the Church Office as soon as possible for the use of the Sanctuary and reception rooms. The Church policy is “first come – first served” based on the needs of the Congregation.

DECORATING - It is customary for the Church to remain open for one hour following the rehearsal for decorating. The Church building will then reopen two hours prior to the wedding service for decorating, pictures, for the arrival of guests, and for last minute details depending on the Church schedule. Please schedule any additional time need before the service with the Senior Minister.

DRESSING - The Bride, Groom, and their attendants are welcome to dress for the ceremony in appropriate rooms. Traditionally, the Bride and attendants dress in the first floor Parlor. The Groom and his attendants may dress in the first floor Music Room. ***The Church cannot be held responsible for any lost, stolen or misplaced items.*** Do not leave personal items, purses, wallets, or other valuables in any of the rooms. No gifts or clothes should be left in the Church building overnight. Items discovered abandoned after the wedding will be kept in the Church Office for thirty (30) days.

FLAGS – The American flag and Christian flag may not be removed from the Sanctuary for any reason.

FLORIST AND FLOWERS – Arrangements for floral decorations should be made with the florist of your choice, except at Easter and Christmas time when arrangements may be made with the Senior Minister to use the Church decorations. In this case, the Bride's parents are asked to make a donation to the Flower Fund which provides these decorations. Most local florists will be able to suggest various decorations for your consideration. If your florist is not familiar with our Church, he or she should be told that it is not permissible to put tape, nails, tacks, or other abrasive items into the woodwork. Pew clips are encouraged for all bows and decorations. The florist should speak with our Church Office to answer any questions. If you plan for a flower girl to throw real flower petals – no silk or imitation petals - you must secure an aisle cloth (i.e., runner) from your florist. The Bride's parents are responsible for collecting all the spent petals.

FREE SERVICE – Couples wanting a free, Simple Service are encouraged to hold their ceremony in the Sanctuary. A free, Simple Service is limited to two witnesses, no rehearsal, no extended time for photographers, and fewer than fifty guests. The ceremony is limited to the spoken rite with no special music (e.g., solos, songs, etc.). Couples should speak with the Ordained Clergy to request a free, simple service.

GUEST SPEAKERS – It is expected the Senior Minister of West Side Baptist Church will officiate all weddings held on the premises. Occasionally a family may desire to have a relative who is an Ordained Minister perform the ceremony. She or he must be consecrated in one of the mainline denominations in good standing with the American Baptist Churches USA (e.g., Christian Church (Disciple of Christ), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church USA, United Methodist, United Church of Christ). The desire to have a guest clergy participate in the service should be made known to the Senior Minister of this Church at the time of scheduling the wedding who will then extend the invitation to the Ordained Minister, if approved. The Senior Minister must credential all clergy and other religious leaders who wish to participate in the service. Normally, weddings will not be conducted in this Church unless the Senior Minister leads the service. Please speak with the Minister directly prior to inviting guest speakers or presenters.

HONORARIUMS – Our trained Ordained Clergy spend years in academic training (e.g., college and graduate school), professional internships, hospital residencies, and more to prepare for the ordination examinations in hopes of being called to serv the Lord and common good of the community. These servants do not require or charge a fee to perform religious services at West Side Baptist Church. They perform their duties *gratis* ("free of charge"). It is customary for the Groom or Groom's family to provide a small sum of money (i.e., "honorarium") to the Ordained Clergy for services which professional fees are not traditionally required. A typical wedding honorarium is \$150.00. The Clergy usually donate their honorariums to the church's Benevolence fund for the relief of the poor and the assistance of persons in need. Donations to the Agape Benevolence fund are generally tax-deductible, as allowed by law.

INVITATIONS – When ordering invitations, the suggested form for the name and address of the Church:

West Side Baptist Church
1008 Southwest Fourth Street
Topeka, Kansas 66606

LANGUAGE – The Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:29: "*Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their*

needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” Therefore, we ask that every person refrain from the use of foul language, inappropriate humor, and rude speech. Remember that a wedding celebration is also a worship service. Be mindful of other worshippers when whispering in the Sanctuary, and please refrain from talking during the service.

LICENSE - The State of Kansas requires that a license for marriage be obtained and the couple fulfill the legal formality of pronouncement. See the Shawnee County Courthouse for details. Please bring the marriage license and accompanying papers to the Church Office as soon as possible. The Ordained Clergy will be responsible for mailing the completed license to the Clerk’s Office following the ceremony. Couples needing financial assistance for securing a marriage license from the County should speak with the Senior Minister.

MEMORIAL CANDLES, FLOWERS, PICTURES, ETC. – Couples are invited to remember special loved-ones who are deceased by presenting candle(s), flowers, pictures, and/or a small token of remembrance on the Chancel Communion Table. Be mindful the Table is 61” long x 31” wide x 31” tall. Candles, flowers (arrangements), pictures, etc. may not be taller than 12” in height. The view of the sacred symbols of the Church (i.e., the Bible, Cross, flags, etc.) must not be obstructed by any memorials on the Chancel Communion Table.

MUSIC / MUSCIANS – The Wedding ceremony is a worship service thus couples are encouraged to select sacred music that is in keeping with the religious occasion. Couples may arrange for their own ensembles, guitarists, orchestra, pianists, and/or vocalists. Since a wedding is a religious service, the music – whether instrumental or vocal – should be appropriate in words and music for worship. If a secular or contemporary melody is used, be sure that the lyrics are approved by the Senior Minister one week prior to the ceremony.

Our Organist and Pianists are excellent musicians and are familiar with a wide selection of music that is appropriate for Church wedding services. You may wish to leave your choice of music with the Church Office. Usually, *prelude music* is played one-hour to thirty minutes as guests are seated. Separate music is played for the seating of grandparents, parents, and special guests. The *processional music* is reserved for the bridal party, with a trumpet voluntary or wedding march played for the entrance of the Bride and escort. There is generally one special solo or ensemble piece performed at the lighting of the Unity Candle, or half-way through the service, and the *recessional music* occurs at the end of the service – after the benediction – while the bridal party exits the service. Contact our Church Organist for a list of recommended music.

ORDER OF SERVICE – Most services will include:

- A Call to Worship
- Declaration of Marriage
- Statement of Intent
- Reading from Scripture (see Senior Minister for list)
- A brief message or homily
- Prayers for family, couple and their future.
- Vows (traditional, contemporary, modern, etc.)
- Exchange of ring(s)
- Lighting of candles
- Music – traditional, special or contemporary
- The Kiss
- Pronouncement
- Formal Introduction

- Benediction

The order of service will be personalized to fit the style of service selected by the Bride and Groom.

ORGAN – Our Pipe Organ is a beautiful and delicate instrument. When played by a talented, trained musician, the results are inspiring. Therefore, we require our Church Organist to play for all weddings, or an equally qualified and trained Organist approved by the Senior Minister.

OUTDOOR WEDDINGS - The Ordained Clergy are allowed to perform weddings in backyards, gardens, houses, city parks, chapels, and other places of worship, but are not permitted to perform services in bars or saloons (establishments whose primarily is alcohol sales or consumption). American Baptist Ordained Clergy are not permitted to officiate same-sex ceremonies as outlined in Church discipline. ***No wedding is scheduled or approved by the Ordained Clergy until the Church Office receives the \$150.00 non-refundable deposit for a wedding ceremony occurring outside the Church building.*** The Senior Minister is not responsible, and cannot be held liable, for inclement weather.

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS – Most couples want their wedding ceremony to be recorded by a photographer and / or videographer. Pictures may be taken before and after the ceremony in the Bride's room, the Groom's room, in the halls, balcony, in the Sanctuary and outdoors. During the ceremony, pictures may be taken in the Sanctuary as long as they are in good taste and do not disrupt the worship service. Generally, photographs are taken of the bridal party upon their entrance in the Sanctuary aisle and at the end of the aisle at the time of the recessional. Flash pictures during the ceremony are strongly discouraged (either amateur or professional), and please no pictures from the chancel during the ceremony. Videographers must be stationary during the entire wedding service (no roaming). Pictures of the bridal party at the front of the Church may be posed either before or after the wedding ceremony. All family group pictures may be taken at that time as well. If the reception is held at the Church, it is highly suggested that these formal pictures be taken following the reception. Couples may take additional pictures after the ceremony. Please inform the Senior Minister of any pictures you would like taken with him. Pictures involving the Senior Minister should be taken first, so he can be excused for other duties.

PIANO – The piano may not be moved for any reason. Guest pianists should be classically trained, or experienced persons gifted in musical abilities. No flowers or objects containing a liquid (e.g., liquid wax, water, etc.) may be placed on the piano or keyboard.

PREMARITAL CONSULTATIONS - Couples must complete three one-hour premarital consultations with the Ordained Clergy or his designate prior to the ceremony; unless the Senior Minister approves otherwise. *The Ordained Clergy are not licensed professional counselors.* The consultation sessions are intended to help the couple prepare for the changes that occur when they enter the state of holy matrimony. The sessions are designed so they are not intrusive but help couples understand their communication styles, relationship dynamics and the importance of Christ-centered living. These sessions can also help the couple make important decisions regarding their wedding service. Preparing for a wedding can be time consuming and stressful. However, a healthy relationship can be the first step to a productive ceremony. The couple is expected to schedule the first consultation with the Senior Minister. Please be courteous and call if you cannot keep the appointment. Couples may choose to complete a pre-approved premarital program with a professionally trained, licensed counselor at their own expense. Our Clergy may refer couples to professional counselors, as needed.

RECEPTIONS – Wedding receptions may be held in the Church Fellowship and/or the Parlor for members and nonmembers. The Bride and/or Bride's family is excepted to reserve the required room with the Church Office, give the suggested donation, and provide all refreshments (e.g., cake, coffee donation, punch, mints, nuts, sugar, creamers, etc.); candles (dripless only), flatware, napkins, tablecloths, utensils, etc. These supplies may be brought to the Church the night of the rehearsal; however, it is suggested that nothing of great value be left at the Church before the day of the wedding. The Bride and/or the Bride's family is requested to provide servers (usually teenage family members) who would be responsible for picking-up the dirty dishes in the Parlor and delivering to the kitchen for washing during the course of the reception, as well as servers (usually aunts or female friends) to cut and plate the cake, restock the refreshment table, make punch when refills are needed, as well as hand wash dishes, clean-up of the kitchen, and surrounding areas after reception.

RECEPTION SERVICES – Couples may request the Church to provide Reception Services held in the Parlor. By paying the suggested donation for "Reception Services" in addition to donation for reserving the hall, members and nonmembers receive the following:

1. A meeting at the Church with the Wedding Chairperson to plain the details of the reception;
2. The use of the Church's silver collection (e.g., coffee pots, flatware, serving bowls, trays, and utensils of various sizes, punch bowls, snack trays, and cups);
3. Tablecloths for the cake and punch serving table; and
4. All servers necessary to cut and plate the wedding cake(s) at the reception,
5. All servers necessary to make and serve the coffee and punch at the reception,
6. All servers necessary to hand wash dishes, clean-up of the kitchen and surrounding areas after reception; and
7. Servers who will to wash and dry the tablecloths used to cover the reception tables.

The Bride and/or the Bride's family will provide all refreshments (e.g., cake, coffee donation, punch, mints, nuts, sugar, creamers, etc.); napkins, candles (dripless only), etc. These supplies may be brought to the Church the night of the rehearsal; however, it is suggested that nothing of great value be left at the Church before the day of the wedding. It is requested that the Bride provide servers (usually teenage family members) who would be responsible for picking-up the dirty dishes in the Parlor and delivering to the kitchen for washing during the reception. Aunts and family friends are welcome to assist during receptions, if so desired.

REHEARSALS – If the wedding party consists of no more than four adults, a rehearsal may not be necessary. However, if more than four persons are involved, and especially if children are included, a rehearsal is wise. Sixty minutes is ample time for the rehearsal, and all persons involved are urged to be prompt. ***The rehearsal traditionally occurs the night prior to the wedding at 5:00 pm, depending upon the Church schedule.*** The rehearsal includes instructions for the wedding party, two walk-through practices of the ceremony with music, formation of the reception line, and instructions for the ushers. It is desirable that the Bride have details of the wedding rehearsal well in mind beforehand, so it may be conducted without confusion and with maximum dignity. If there is a rehearsal dinner, please plan additional time for travel. It is courteous to invite the Ordained Clergy and his wife to the rehearsal dinner.

RICE, BIRDSEED, CONFETTI, ETC. – Please find environmentally safe items to throw or release following the wedding ceremony. All items, including birdseed, butterflies and bubbles, are allowed outside of the building. We ask the wedding party be free of items on their clothes and shoes prior to reentering the Church. In view of the millions of people who are hungry in the world, please do not scatter rice. Please do not use confetti, tissue or silk flowers or other non-biodegradable objects either inside or outside the Church building, and please do not release balloons without a permit from the Federal Aviation Administration.

SOUND / AUDIO / VISUAL TECHNICIANS – The Church’s audio and visual equipment is sensitive. Therefore, an outside operator may **not** be brought in to run audio or visual equipment. The Bride is expected to pay an Audio/Visual Suggested donation for the use of the Sanctuary audio / visual equipment. Families may bring their own video to display as a slide show. Please give the Senior Minister the slideshow at the rehearsal.

THE SANCTUARY - The Sanctuary is tastefully decorated with thirty-one pews on the main level which can comfortably seat **180 guests, plus forty-five (45) padded chairs in the balcony.** The Sanctuary aisles are forty (40) feet from the back of the Sanctuary to the base of the chancel steps. There is an additional twelve (12) feet from the chancel steps to the choir loft. All children must be escorted by a responsible adult in the balcony. No eating or drinking in the Sanctuary; and no gum. Do not put feet on book-holders, offering envelope racks, or back of pews. The Church building suggested donation shall apply for the use of the building to cover the cost of heat, water, air-conditioning, lights and use of equipment. The Bride will be responsible for all costs for replacing lost or broken items.

TYPE OF CEREMONY – There are several different types of weddings that can be performed at West Side Baptist Church of Topeka. It is important that you choose the ceremony that best fits your dreams and style - services can be very simple, traditional, liturgical (formal) or casual, depending upon the couple’s desires.

UNITY CANDLE – If you plan to light a Unity-Candle, please purchase this item from a vendor of your choosing. All candles wider than two inches must have a globe two inches taller than the top of the flame with a fire-resistant base (metal or glass preferred). Please clean up any wax that might spill on the carpet, pews or tables. Candle wax can permanently damage carpet, upholstery, and wood.

USHERS – The Ushers should be in the Sanctuary at least sixty (60) minutes before the wedding as guests will begin to arrive. At the rehearsal, the Ushers should be informed as to any special seating arrangements and the order for seating the grandparents, and parents of the Bride and Groom. Time does not permit an Usher to escort guests to the balcony, but the Usher should direct them to the foot of the stairs. The main entrance to the Sanctuary will be closed for the Bridal march five minutes before the start of the service; late arriving guests should be prepared to wait until the end of the Bridal march to be seated.

WORSHIP – The focus of Christian worship is on the Christian triune God alone. Remember, a Christian wedding is a worship service which honors our triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Persons interested in having their ceremony in the Church should be committed to the Christian faith and traditional Church teachings. It is expected that couples desiring to have their wedding ceremony in the Church will attend worship regularly.

The Ordained Clergy reserve the right not to perform a service for any reason without prior notification, ramifications, refunds, or legal recourse.

SUGGESTED DONATIONS & HONORARIUMS

The Church is maintained by the voluntary financial contributions of its members and friends. It is not the intention of the Church to profit financially from the use of the property for wedding ceremonies. Below is a schedule of suggested donations for weddings in West Side Baptist Church of Topeka, Kansas.

Couples are encouraged to pay all suggested donations at the time they schedule the use of the Church building. *All suggested donations must be paid one week prior to the ceremony.*

The Ordained Clergy's honorarium is normally given to him/her after the service.

Simple Service in Sanctuary: Free

Full Service in the Sanctuary*

Building Use/Utilities \$ 200.00

Custodial Services \$ 100.00

Reception in Parlor or Fellowship Hall (Custodial Services)

Parlor (Holmer Hall) \$ 100.00

Fellowship Hall (Cafeteria) \$ 175.00

Reception Services (Church Provided Staffing Services)

Parlor (up to 99 guest) \$ 200.00

(100 guests or more) \$ 250.00

Honorariums (paid directly to person)

Organist \$ 125.00

Pianist Honorarium \$ 100.00

Audio / Visual Technicians \$ 75.00

Pastoral Honorarium \$ 150.00

*Active members of West Side Baptist Church who voluntarily participate in the regular, financial support of the Church's ministry and mission will not be expected to pay the suggested donation for the building, custodian, or audio / visual technicians. It is customary for the Groom or Groom's family to provide a small sum of money (i.e., "honorarium") to the organist and/or pianist, as well as the ordained clergy.

Updated: Tuesday, August 07, 2018.

WEDDING VOWS

A few wedding vows are listed below for you to consider. You will want to consult with the Senior Minister as you select your vows. In the event that you cannot make a choice from the selection provided here, the Senior Minister will be able to offer more options when you meet with him.

TRADITIONAL: I, N, take you, N, to be my wedded husband / wife to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish (and obey), till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance. This is my solemn vow.

CONTEMPORARY: I take you, N, to be my husband / wife, and I promise before God and all who are present here to be your loving and faithful husband / wife as long as we both shall live. I will serve you with tenderness and respect and encourage you to develop God's gifts in you. This is my solemn vow.

MODERN: N, in the name of God, I take you to be my husband / wife from this time onward, to join with you and to share in all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all of our life together to be loyal to you with my whole being, as long as we both shall live. This is my vow.

WRITING VOWS: Some couples choose to write their vows. This is acceptable if the vows reflect Christian values and fulfill all legal mandates required by federal, state, and local law. Couples desiring to write their own vows should speak with the Senior Minister. He will need a finalized copy of the vows one week prior to the ceremony.

NOTES

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