

Policies Regarding the Use of the Facilities of Highland Baptist Church
For Weddings and Receptions

It is the desire of Highland Baptist Church to make these services beautiful, worshipful events; and to extend to each wedding party every possible courtesy. The following procedures have been thoughtfully adopted to assist in the planning of weddings which are to take place in our facilities. In accepting the use of the facilities of Highland Baptist Church, the rules regarding their use are also accepted. Please read the rules carefully.

I. General Information

A. Who can be married at Highland Baptist Church, Meridian MS?

To schedule a wedding, either the bride or the groom must be an active member of HBC and in good standing as found on page 4 of our current Highland Baptist Church By-Laws. Exceptions might be made but will be taken on a case by case basis and decided upon by a designated group of people. The marriage ceremony shall be performed under the conditions and definition of marriage as stated in the Highland Baptist Church Constitution.

Under Articles of Faith, add Section 18: *The Family*

“Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God’s unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.”

Furthermore, Highland Baptist Church defines manhood and womanhood as being the natural, biological gender in which you were born. We view God as the Perfect Creator and as his creation, we submit to His will.

B. Scheduling

- I.** The use of any of the church facilities or equipment must be arranged and scheduled through the church office. Scheduling will be done on a first-come-first-serve basis. Dates for weddings cannot be scheduled more than nine months prior to the date to protect the church calendar.
- II.** The latest start time for a wedding that will be allowed is 6:00 P.M.
 - a.** The only exception is Friday night weddings. These may start as late as 7:00 P.M.
- III.** No weddings can take place on dates that coincide with church-related events that are already scheduled.
- IV.** Reservations for the facilities will be confirmed when the Wedding Policy Agreement and Reservation Form is completed and returned, a \$150 deposit is made, and after an initial meeting with a Highland Baptist Minister. The following appointments **MUST** be scheduled at this time to review the wedding policies:
 - a. Appointment with an HBC Staff Member:** Within two weeks after the initial booking.

This time will be spent going over the wedding policy with a staff member and answering any initial questions you might have.

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b. Appointment with the Bride/Groom, Wedding Director, and Minister of Music:
60-90 days prior to wedding date

Allow an hour or more for this appointment to approve music, look at sanctuary, and talk through any needed media resources. Please be prepared to have a discussion on the instrumentalists needed and any media needs that you might have so that a tech crew can be assigned. The Minister of Music can help recruit musicians if necessary. The Wedding Director will need to know the Wedding Party size so dressing rooms can be assigned. The fees for the wedding will have been set and will be clearly discussed at this time.

c. Appointment with Officiating Minister and Wedding Director: 2-3 weeks prior to the wedding.

Allow thirty minutes for this appointment. Have your ceremony outline finalized to discuss with the minister. Also, let the Wedding Director know when decorating is to take place.

II. Provisions

A. Facilities

- I.** The facilities are open Monday through Thursday 8:30 – 4:30 and Friday 8:30 – 3:00. During these hours, they can be viewed at any time contingent upon prior scheduling with the Wedding Director.
- II.** The Sanctuary seats approximately 500 people comfortably.
- III.** Dressing Rooms for the Wedding Party:
 - a.** The Bridal Party will have access to the Tea Room for dressing and pre-wedding preparation while the Groom's Party will have access to the choir suite or conference room. Both areas either have restrooms adjacent or attached and have areas to prepare and serve snacks and beverages. If more room is needed, the Wedding Director will assign it based on the size of the wedding party. All rooms should be left as they were found. The church is not responsible for any lost or stolen property.

B. Personnel

- I.** Minister
 - a.** If a minister at HBC performs the wedding, the minister should be contacted for approval of date and time. A guest minister may be used with the approval of the pastor or his representative. Please indicate his name, church affiliation, and a contact telephone number on the reservation form.
- II.** Wedding Coordinator/Director
 - a.** The Highland Baptist Church Wedding Coordinator/Director (currently Mary Carlisle) will help the Wedding Party abide by all guidelines listed off in this wedding policy and will be the contact person for any questions ahead of time. She will be at the rehearsal and the wedding through the ceremony end. Her duties are as follows:
 - i.** She is responsible for opening and unlocking the facilities for any Wedding Party Needs.
 - ii.** Helps coordinate wedding décor placement in the church sanctuary to ensure compliance with the wedding policy outline.
 - iii.** Meets with the bride at two scheduled pre-wedding planning meetings. The first is in order for her to take notes of some of the details so as to know what to expect. During the 2nd meeting, she will need to know more details of what

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the bride's plans are for decorations, what style ceremony she envisions, and some placement of wedding party details.

- iv. Create a detailed order of the Ceremony Outline (including photo schedule if not provided by the photographer)
 - 1. The bride is required to submit an order of ceremony and full wedding party/family list no later than two weeks prior to the wedding. The wedding party list should detail who is walking with whom and the order they wish them to be in.
- v. Coordination of the rehearsal
- vi. Coordinate services from photos through ceremony on wedding day

III. Music/Media Team

- a. The HBC media technicians will be in charge of all lighting and sound needs for the wedding ceremony, as well as any videography needs, if so desired. If lighting changes are to be made during or just prior to the ceremony, additional personnel will be needed. Also, if video equipment of HBC is to be used, additional operators will be needed and an additional fee will be assessed. It is also your prerogative as to whether or not you will utilize the video recording equipment already in the Sanctuary. If you desire to use it, you must let the Music Minister know in the meeting that will take place 60-90 days prior to the wedding to ensure that he will have adequate time to line up cameramen and technicians.
- b. Any sound equipment and instruments in the sanctuary can be moved ONLY by the HBC Sound Techs.
- c. The piano and organ will not be moved from their locations in the Sanctuary unless given special permission by the Minister of Music.

IV. Custodial

- a. Sanctuary
 - i. The church custodian is responsible for cleaning the church sanctuary, wedding party rooms, all adjoining rooms, and bathrooms AFTER the wedding. All wedding party personals including food, clothing, and decorations **MUST** be removed by a designee of the wedding party by 3 hours after the wedding **start** time. Any HBC furniture or equipment that has been moved, upon prior approval, from its original location must also be returned by 3 hours after the wedding start time.
- b. Family Life Center/Fellowship Hall
 - i. The wedding party is responsible for restoring the FLC and/or Fellowship Hall to how it was found prior to the event.

III. Additional Information

A. Photography/Videography

- a. The Bride, along with the Wedding Director, will instruct the hired photographer and hired videographers regarding flash photography or video equipment visible during the ceremony.

B. Evangel Announcement

- a. If the Bride or Groom would like an announcement in the weekly Evangel before the wedding date, it will be their responsibility to deliver that information to the church office. Please be sure the information is in the church office three weeks before the wedding date so the announcement can be included.

C. Rehearsal

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- a. Rehearsal of the wedding ceremony should be well organized and limited to one and a half hours from the stated time on the reservation form. The Wedding Director is responsible for leading the Wedding Rehearsal.

D. Reception

- a. Should you choose to use the HBC Fellowship Hall or Family Life Center for your reception, please note that rice is not allowed. Birdseed may be distributed and thrown outside the building. Under NO circumstances should any type of firework or sparklers be used inside any building or under any covered areas outside the building. These may only be used in the parking lots.

IV. Music

Because marriage is an ordinance of God, and the ceremony at the altar places the marriage relationships under the blessing and commandment of God, music used in the ceremony should be in keeping with the dignity of a religious service.

***Final approval of the music lies with the Minister of Music and should be submitted and discussed in conference with the Minister of Music at the scheduled appointment.**

- The church can recommend the names of a pianist, organist, or other instrumentalists that might be desired.
- Musicians secured by the wedding party will be paid separate from the fees required by the church.
- If the Fellowship Hall, Family Life Center, or any other HBC venues are used for the reception, all music on the set list/playlist must be approved by a HBC staff member.

V. Decorations Policy

- Decorating needs to occur the day before the ceremony. If there are no other scheduled events, it can happen 2 days before but you cannot reserve the sanctuary for more than 2 days (rehearsal and ceremony).
- Any decorations in the sanctuary other than that of a traditional setting must receive prior approval from the Wedding Director and ministerial staff.
- All decorations must be removed within the 3-hour time limit after the wedding.
- Nails, staples, pins, florist clay, or anything that might mar or leave permanent marks is NOT allowed.
- Only drip-less candles or votive candles may be used in the sanctuary.
- Potted plants MUST have saucers or plastic underneath.
- The florist or bridal party will be responsible for any clean-up between the rehearsal and the ceremony.
- Instructions for the physical setup of the Sanctuary and/or the Fellowship Hall must be in the hands of the Building Superintendent no later than 1 week prior to the wedding.
- Arrangements should be made in advance with the Pastor's Secretary if floral arrangements are to be donated to the church for use in regular services after the wedding ceremony.

VI. Restrictions

- There will be no alcoholic beverages or drugs permitted on the property. Any wedding participant appearing to be under the influence will be asked to leave immediately.
- No smoking is allowed in the building or on church property.
- No vulgar language on church property.
- Any sound equipment or furniture moved in the Sanctuary must be done so with the permission of the Wedding Director. The individuals signing the Wedding Policy Agreement will be held responsible for any broken furniture or equipment.

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VII. Fees

All fees payable to Highland Baptist Church are to be paid one week prior to the rehearsal. Please make all checks payable to Highland Baptist Church.

Fee Payable to Highland Baptist - \$700

This includes:

- Use of facilities
 - Sanctuary
 - Tea Room (Bridal Party)
 - Choir Suite/Conference Room (Groom's Party)
- Services of the Wedding Coordinator/Director
 - *The services provided by the Wedding Director do not apply off campus of Highland Baptist. If your reception is held at another venue, you may negotiate those services separately if you so desire.*
- Use of equipment and services of HBC Media Techs, including:
 - Sound & Media Technicians (2)
- Services of our custodial crew

Additional Fees Payable to Highland Baptist Church (agree upon prior to payment)

- \$25 per additional dressing area required
- \$75 per additional Media Crew/Camera operator required
- \$150 per HBC instrumentalist
- For reception on HBC Campus, there is a **\$125** fee for our Fellowship hall and a **\$150** fee for the use of our Family Life Center

Fees paid to Individuals

(Note: Please give these checks to the Wedding Director at the rehearsal and she will disburse the checks for you after the wedding. Call the church office if you need to know the names of the people to be paid.)

HBC Vocalist **\$100.00 per person (**suggested**)**

Officiating Minister(s) **\$250.00 per person (**suggested**)**

**Both of these numbers are merely a suggestion. The Bridal Party will be responsible for negotiating these prices.

Nursery Workers **\$10.00 per person per hour (minimum of 2 workers/2 hours)**

If you desire to have a nursery during your wedding, the Wedding Director alongside the director of the Highland Baptist Child Development Center will help you find workers.

VIII. Cancellation Policy

Should the ceremony need to be cancelled thirty days or less prior to the date of the ceremony, the bride will incur a \$150 cancellation fee. Exceptions to the loss of the deposit would include severe weather issues, power outages, or any other unforeseen circumstances that the signees of the Wedding Policy Agreement have no control over.

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Highland Baptist Church Wedding Policy Agreement and Reservation Form

I have carefully read the Highland Baptist Church Wedding Policies (revised April 2018) and agree to follow the guidelines contained within.

Date and Time of Wedding

Minister to Perform Wedding

Signature of the Designee Responsible for Cleanup

Phone Number

Name of Bride (Printed)

Name of Groom (Printed)

Signature of the Bride

Date

Signature of the Groom

Date

Signature of the HBC Staff Witness

Date

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