



Holy Wisdom Monastery

2026 Wedding Handbook



Capture the Moment by Kristel Stephany

Brooke Livingston
Phone: 608.836.1631 x 100
blivingston@holywisdommonastery.org

Holy Wisdom Monastery
4200 County Road M
Middleton, WI 53562
www.holywisdommonastery.org

Introduction

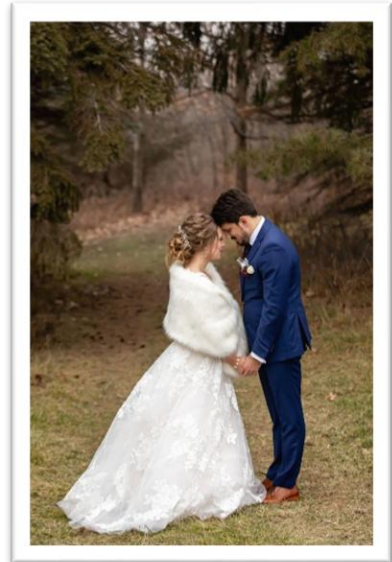
Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! Holy Wisdom Monastery is the home and workplace of Benedictine Women of Madison, an ecumenical monastic community. **By holding your wedding at Holy Wisdom Monastery, you are supporting our mission** to weave prayer, hospitality, justice and care for the earth into a shared way of life.

The following guidelines have been established to enhance the respectful use of the facility during wedding ceremonies and to make your day as special as possible.

Scheduling a Wedding:

Couples may schedule any four-hour time block for a wedding ceremony. This time block may be anytime between the hours of 8 am to 9 pm. Weddings are *not* scheduled at Holy Wisdom Monastery during Holy Week, on Easter Day, Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving weekend and Christmas Eve through New Year's Day.

Our standard reception package allots an additional four hours in addition to the four hours dedicated to the ceremony and must also conclude by 9 pm. Alternatively, an extended weekend wedding package that permits later receptions is available upon request.



Patricia Espedal

Requesting Additional Time:

If you find that a four-hour/8-hour time block is not enough time for your ceremony and/or reception, you may schedule additional time (non-refundable) at the rate of \$160 per hour. If a wedding runs over the allotted time, the couple will be responsible for paying the additional time used, and this fee may be deducted from their damage deposit.

Scheduling Your Rehearsal:

A one-hour rehearsal is held the evening prior to the day of the wedding. Please have all guests in attendance 15 minutes prior to the assigned start time.

Wedding Coordinator:

Holy Wisdom Monastery will have a professional wedding coordinator available to oversee or assist with the rehearsal and the wedding.

Wedding Officiant:

Couples must arrange for an officiant on their own. Any officiant is welcome.

Music:

It is the couple's responsibility to contact and pay the musicians whom you wish to play or sing at your ceremony. The monastery's piano and organ may be used at no additional cost. The Assembly Room and Guest Dining Room also have a built-in sound system that couples can use.

Rehearsal Dinners:

Wedding rehearsal dinners are usually held in the main monastery building's gathering area, guest dining room and patio. These areas combined accommodate up to 200 guests. Rehearsal dinners immediately follow wedding rehearsals and must conclude by 9 pm. Please schedule this separately with the guest services manager.

Rehearsal Dinner Fee: \$575+food/beverages costs

Location Options for Ceremonies

Assembly Room:

The Assembly Room is the main chapel in the monastery building and has a capacity of 300 people. The chairs are set up in an octagon that reflects the shape of the room. Included in the wedding fee is the Assembly Room, two dressing rooms, the use of the gathering area next to the Assembly Room for your guests to socialize before and after the ceremony and the assistance of a monastery wedding coordinator to guide the rehearsal and the ceremony. Holy Wisdom also has air conditioning and ample parking for your guests. Live streaming service is available for an additional fee of \$100.



Ashley Bohman Photography

Ueda Photography



Outdoor Ceremonies:

The Lake Lawn, which overlooks the 10,000-year-old glacial Lost Lake, is a beautiful option for an outdoor wedding. The space seats up to 300. The wedding coordinator can show this location to the couple during a tour of the facility.

If a couple decides they would like to hold their ceremony outside, but the weather does not cooperate, the ceremony can be moved inside to the Assembly Room at no extra charge. Couples choosing to use the Lake Lawn for their ceremony will need to provide a sound system and chairs for their guests.

Location Options for Receptions

Outdoor Receptions:

The **Lake Lawn**, which overlooks the 10,000-year-old glacial Lost Lake, is a beautiful option for an outdoor reception. The space seats up to 250. If a couple decides they would like to hold their reception outside, but the weather does not cooperate, the reception can be moved inside to the Guest Dining Room for an additional \$320 fee. The **Monastery Patio** is also another great option for a reception. This space is located directly off our Guest Dining Room and next to our Assembly Room, on the main level of the monastery. The patio overlooks Lake Mendota and the ground surrounding the monastery. It can seat up to 100 guests and has a built-in fire pit to enjoy. If a couple decides they would like to hold their reception outside, but the weather does not cooperate, the reception can be moved inside to the Guest Dining Room for no additional cost. Couples choosing to use the Lake Lawn or Monastery Patio for their reception will need to provide a sound system, tent, tables, chairs, linens etc. for their guests.

Sandy Wojtal-Weber



Indoor Receptions:

The **Monastery Guest Dining Room** is located on the main floor of the monastery building. This room has a built-in sound system, and chairs and tables are provided. The adjacent patio with fire pit is available to enjoy. A bank of large picture windows extends across one side of the room and offers stunning views of the grounds surrounding the monastery. The Guest Dining Room is adjacent to the Gathering Area, a large open reception area for mingling. The dining room/gathering area can seat up to 200. Couples choosing to use the Monastery Guest Dining Room for their reception will need to provide linens for their guest tables, if desired.

Food and Beverages:

Bringing food and drinks for only the wedding party (such as bottled water, sandwiches, or snacks) is allowed. Please note: all trash, food, water bottles, etc. must be cleaned up within your time block. A refrigerator is not available for food or beverages.

Holy Wisdom Monastery Catering:

Holy Wisdom Monastery has a professional chef on staff that may be available to prepare food for your event. We have a vast selection of culinary options available for you to choose from and we can meet most medical dietary and food allergy requirements. All choices are price-pointed at a standard rate. Please see our menu selections for more details. If you have a special request, you may work individually with our chef to design your own meal which would start at our respective price point and may possibly increase depending on your request(s). All food is served buffet-style.

Cost determined by culinary selections. Menu coming soon. Holy Wisdom Monastery does not charge tax. Gratuity, although appreciated by our staff, is not expected.

Desserts are included with all menu options. Guests are welcome to bring in desserts. Holy Wisdom does not discount menu selections in consideration of brought-in items.

Holy Wisdom provides cutting and serving of brought-in desserts, which includes all serving and eating utensils and wares. Guests may avoid this fee and plan to cut and serve desserts themselves. However, guests need to bring in their own utensils and service-ware. In this scenario, Holy Wisdom recommends the use of disposable eating utensils, plates and napkins as outside dishes and utensils may not be washed on site.

Brought-in Dessert Service:	\$1.55 per person
Brought-in Dessert Self Service:	\$0.00

Due to food-handling issues, all leftover food items prepared by Holy Wisdom Monastery are the property of the monastery and will remain onsite at the conclusion of events.

Beverages:

Meals provided by Holy Wisdom Monastery include regular and decaf coffee, a selection of hot tea and ice water. If you would like an additional selection of iced tea and/or lemonade, a beverage bar may be requested.

Beverage Bar Set Up:	\$145
Per person fee:	\$3.15

Alcohol:

Holy Wisdom Monastery does not own a liquor license. However, alcohol may be served during the event as long as the event is a private event not open to the public. Alcohol consumption must be done in an appropriate and respectful way in keeping with the monastery's policies. Due to state and local laws, Holy Wisdom Monastery and its staff cannot provide, handle, serve or pour any alcoholic beverages. Absolutely no alcohol may be served to guests under the age of 21. Cash bars are not allowed.

All alcohol and any glassware must be provided by the host and should be delivered to the monastery during the host's chosen time block. Outside glassware may not be washed on-site.

Since Holy Wisdom Monastery staff cannot be involved in the service of alcoholic beverages, it is requested that hosts designate individuals to dispose of beverages partially consumed and left behind by guests throughout the event.

For a fee, Holy Wisdom Monastery will provide same day refrigeration, set-up with a table and linen, cleaning, corkscrews, ice and ice bins. ***Any event serving alcohol is required to pay this fee.***

Alcoholic Beverage Set Up Fee:	\$600
--------------------------------	-------

Outside Vendor Catering:

Facility users are allowed to use Holy Wisdom Monastery catering or an outside caterer. If you opt to use an outside caterer, a kitchen/facility use fee will be charged to cover the cost for the caterer to use the facility during the event. **Please note:** no cooking should be done at HWM. Kitchen use is for staging and final preparations only. Due to safety issues, the dishwasher and refrigerators may not be used at any time. Caterers should be prepared to stay on-site for food setup, serving, take down and clean up. HWM staff is not provided to assist with these needs.



Ueda Photography

Caterers must be approved by HWM. Guests are welcome to bring in desserts, but they must be pre-packaged or prepared professionally. Guests may not bring in home-prepared items. Potlucks are not allowed.

Holy Wisdom Monastery does not provide utensils, cookware, dishware, flatware or beverage containers for outside caterers. Paper products such as disposable cups, paper plates, serving ware, plastic utensils or napkins are not available.

All food provided by outside caterers should have place cards identifying the name of the catering company at all food serving tables.

Any HWM equipment removed by the caterer must be returned within 48 hours or the host of the event will be assessed a \$1,000 fine and the caterer will not be allowed to use the HWM kitchen in the future.

HWM does not provide linens or place settings for outside vendor-catered events. Any linens, place settings, decorations or additional table rental is the responsibility of the host.

Outside Caterer Kitchen use Fee:	\$470, up to 50 people
	\$570, 51 -100 people
	\$670, 101 + (maximum of 200 people)

Outside Catering	
Refundable Damage Deposit:	\$500

Additional Labor Fee:

For receptions with 138-200 guests, an additional labor fee is required to cover labor for kitchen work, setup, and cleaning.

Additional Labor Fee:	\$250
-----------------------	-------

Wedding Menu:

Appetizers - \$12 per person (pick 2)

Each additional appetizer +\$4 per person

Seasonal Sliced Fresh Fruit Platter – *A variety of seasonal fresh fruit. (Vegan, GF)*

Local Charcuterie Platter - *A curated selection of artisanal cheeses from Car Valley paired with assorted meats like salami, and delightful accompaniments like green apples and crackers.*

Crudit  Relish Platter - *A vibrant assortment of fresh, crisp seasonal vegetables served with a variety of dips including creamy hummus, zesty tzatziki, tangy ranch dressing, and Green Goddess dressing.*

Mini Meatball Italian Wedding Soup - *A comforting soup featuring bite-sized meatballs in a hearty broth with vegetables and small pasta.*

Finger Sandwiches (Choose two) -

Cucumber and cream cheese with dill

Smoked salmon with cream cheese

Egg salad with mayonnaise and mustard

Ham and Brie with Dijon mustard

Tomato-cheddar with mayonnaise (seasonal)

Turkey and cheese with assorted condiments

Entr es

\$23 per person (one meat, one vegetarian choice, one side) **available up to 200 people**

\$26 per person (two meat and two sides) **available up to 90 people**

All entr es are served with mixed green salad with dressing, sourdough bread with butter, choice of side, assorted desserts, water, and coffee. Additional sides +\$3 per person, per side.

Breakfast menu available upon request.

Meat & Fish

Beef Bourguignon

Chunks of beef slow braised in a rich Burgundy red wine sauce, accompanied by caramelized pearl onions, earthy mushrooms, and sweet carrots.

Lamb, Chicken, or Pork (choose one) Chasseur

Meat choice saut ed and simmered in a luscious sauce made with dry white wine, fresh mushrooms, shallots, tomato paste, and herbs.

Chicken (or turkey)   la Moutarde

Chicken (or turkey) pieces seared and simmered in a creamy Dijon mustard sauce with white wine, pearl onions, and aromatic herbs.

Marry Me Chicken

Chicken cooked in a sauce made with garlic, sun dried tomato, and parmesan cheese.

Glazed Pork Loin

Glazed pork loin stuffed with cheese and herbs, served with a sweet and sour sauce.

Portuguese Haddock Casserole

Haddock baked with saut ed onions, potatoes, sour cream, nutmeg, and white pepper, topped with cheese and baked until golden.

Vegetarian

Cassoulet Végétarien

A medley of tender white beans and seasonal vegetables simmered in rich vegetable broth infused with thyme and bay leaf.

Chickpea Ragoût

A stew of tender chickpeas simmered with seasonal vegetables and aromatic herbs like thyme and bay leaf.

Cheese Tortellini

Cheese-filled tortellini sautéed in creamy butter with fresh spinach, finished with Parmesan cheese and garlic.

Ratatouille

A colorful medley of tender eggplant, zucchini, green beans, peppers, and tomato compote simmered with garlic and fresh herbs.

Sides

**vegan upon request*

Potatoes Gratin

Creamy potato gratin featuring thinly sliced potatoes in a mixture of heavy cream and milk, infused with garlic and nutmeg.

Mashed Potatoes*

Creamy Yukon Gold potato purée whipped to perfection with butter and cream for an irresistibly smooth texture.

Rice*

Fluffy rice simmered in a savory broth, infused with the sweetness of caramelized onions cooked until golden.

Baked Rigatoni

Al dente rigatoni pasta coated in marinara sauce enriched with Italian sausage and layered with creamy ricotta before being baked to golden perfection.

Rosemary Roasted Yukon Gold Potatoes*

Crispy roasted Yukon gold potatoes with rosemary, salt, and onions

Seasonal Vegetable Medley

Seasonal vegetables, lightly seasoned and roasted

Green Beans

Green beans roasted with spring onions, olive oil, and herbs

Dessert

Assorted Sweet Bars

Blondie | Chewy butterscotch squares liberally studded with walnut chunks and bittersweet chips.

Peruvian Brownie | A fudgy brownie made with high-quality Peruvian chocolate, delivering an intense and deep chocolate flavor that chocolate lovers will adore.

Lemon Crumb Bar | A zesty lemon bar, offering a refreshing citrus taste complemented by a delightful crunch. This bright dessert adds a refreshing contrast to the sweeter options.

Totally OREO® Brownie | A rich brownie featuring OREO cookie pieces, combining the beloved cookie's flavor with fudgy brownie goodness for an irresistible treat.

Pecan Bar | An elegant choice for any dessert table, this bar features butter-toasted pecans.

Mini Doughnuts

Glazed | A classic donut cake covered in a sweet glaze.

Crunch | A texture-rich option with a crunchy topping

Powdered Sugar | A donut cake dusted with powdered sugar for a sweet finish.

Chocolate | A rich and indulgent chocolate-flavored donut cake.

Macarons (+\$2 per person)

Baked Strawberry | A classic flavor featuring a sweet strawberry filling, often complemented by a light, airy shell.

Passion Fruit | Typically filled with passion fruit curd or ganache, offering a tangy and tropical taste.

Coffee | Infused with rich coffee flavors, often combined with chocolate or cream for a decadent treat.

Orange | Bright and citrusy, this flavor can include orange zest or essence in the filling.

Chocolate | A popular choice made with premium chocolate ganache, delivering a rich and indulgent experience.

****All prices listed subject to change.***

Fees and Payments

Total fee for ceremony:

Assembly Room (Indoor) Ceremony Fee:

\$1,865 + \$250 refundable damage deposit

Lake Lawn (Outdoor) Ceremony Fee:

\$1,965 + \$250 refundable damage deposit

Total fee for reception:

Dining Room (Indoor) Reception Fee:

\$1,465 + \$400 refundable damage deposit + Food/Beverage costs

Monastery Patio (Outdoor) Reception Fee:

\$1,465 + \$400 refundable damage deposit + Food/Beverage costs

Lake Lawn (Outdoor) Reception Fee:

\$1,885 + \$400 refundable damage deposit + Food/Beverage costs

Late Night Reception Fee (End Time Between 9:00-11:00pm, Indoor or Outdoor):

Additional \$3,842 (includes all overnight rooms in Retreat and Guest House for 2 nights)

All rates are subject to change.

Holy Wisdom Monastery Sunday Assembly members receive a 10% discount.

Damage Deposit:

The damage deposit will be returned within 30 days after the wedding if there is no additional cleanup, extended times or damage to the equipment or facility caused by the couple, guests or contracted vendors. Additional charges may be incurred if the cost to repair the damage is more than the original damage deposit. An itemized bill will be submitted to the couple for reimbursement.

Reservation Fee:

A **non-refundable reservation fee**, which is 50% of the total ceremony fee and/or reception fee, plus the damage deposit(s), is required with the Ceremony & Reception Reservation Form when reserving the date.

- If after 10 business days the deposit has not been received, the reservation will be removed from our calendar.

Final Payment:

The balance of all fees must be paid **two weeks prior to the wedding**.

Rules and Guidelines for Using the Monastery Facilities

Setup:

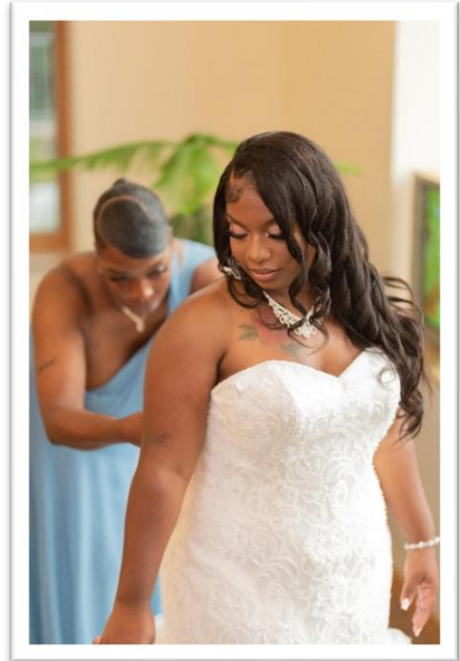
All set up and tear down must be done within your reserved time slot. The couple is responsible for designating friends or family members who will install and remove the decoration before and after the ceremony and/or reception. All décor must be removed from Holy Wisdom on the day of the ceremony. You may schedule additional time (non-refundable) at the rate of \$160 per hour if you feel you might need more time.

The organ and piano may not be moved in the Assembly Room. Up to two sections of chairs may be removed or rearranged for a \$320 fee.

Dressing Rooms:

Separate dressing rooms with private bathrooms will be provided for the couple and their attendants at no additional fee.

Jim Ponce



Jim Ponce

Wedding Arch:

We offer a wedding arch for use during outdoor weddings as a backdrop for the couple. Flowers or greens can be attached to the arch using twist ties or pipe cleaners. The rental fee for the arch is \$160.

Florists:

The couple may use the florist of their choice. Arrangements for flowers are the responsibility of the couple. The couple is responsible for coordinating the delivery and removal of all flowers within the ceremony time block.

Hanging Decorations and Signs:

No tacks, staples, nails, wire, glue, sticky tape, screws, pins or gum may be used on the walls, floor, woodwork, chairs or furnishings. The monastery is decorated during the season of Advent, Christmas and Easter. Once these decorations are in place, they are not to be removed until after the end of the season, but the couple may incorporate them into their wedding scheme.

Candles:

Couples must provide their own candles for the ceremony, including a unity candle and tapers. Due to fire codes and safety issues, there shall be no candelabras or candles standing in the aisles or fastened to chairs. The unity candle and two side tapers do not need to be enclosed with a glass hurricane as long as they remain on the altar.

Rental Equipment:

Outdoor weddings/receptions must arrange for the rental of chairs, tables, tents, sound system/microphones, etc., if needed. You may contract with a rental service of your choice. Because this facility does not have room to store equipment for the following day, all rental equipment must be delivered and picked up on the day of the ceremony. These items may not be left or stored at Holy Wisdom Monastery beyond the reserved time block. For outdoor receptions, a rental company may pick up equipment the following day upon request. Some exceptions apply.

Rice, Birdseed, Glitter, Flower Petals, Sand and Confetti:

Rice, birdseed, glitter, real flower petals, sand and confetti may not be used in and around the monastery. A flower girl may drop artificial flower petals down the center aisle which must be picked up after the ceremony. Outside the monastery you may blow bubbles, light sparklers, release butterflies or anything else approved by your Holy Wisdom Monastery wedding coordinator and is environmentally-friendly.

Audio/Visual Equipment:

The use of the sound system and microphones for indoor weddings are included in the ceremony fee. Recorded music from CDs and MP3 players can be broadcast through the monastery sound system. Holy Wisdom Monastery staff does not play recorded music during ceremonies. You will need to designate a guest to cue and play music on the sound system. Outdoor weddings must provide their own sound system and microphones. The guest dining room has a retractable projection screen that guests may use to run a DVD, show videos or a PowerPoint presentation for an additional \$55

Tobacco Usage:

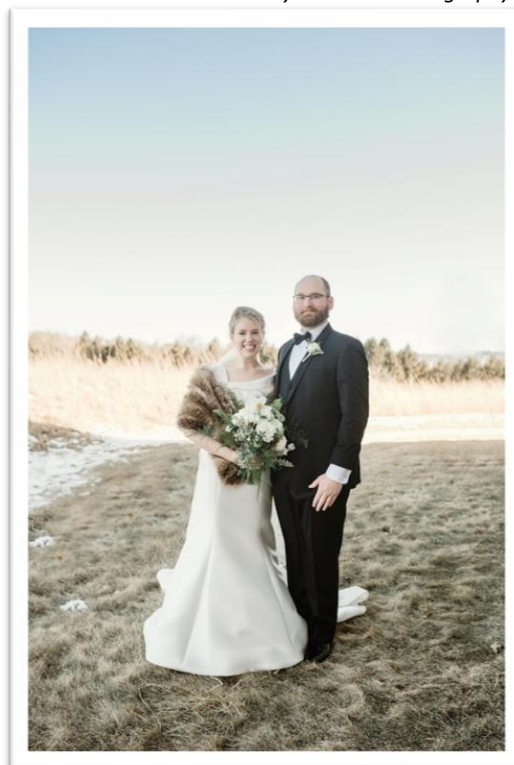
Smoking is not permitted in the buildings or outside on the grounds. Please make sure your guests are aware of the no smoking policy.

Marriage License:

A valid marriage license, issued by the state of Wisconsin, and acceptable for use in Dane County must be brought to the rehearsal or wedding. Your officiant will fill out the license, your two witnesses sign it, and then the officiant sends it to the Dane County Clerk's office. The marriage license is then processed and becomes your wedding certificate.

For couples that live in Dane County or from another state, a marriage license may be procured by contacting the Dane County Clerk's Office in the City-County Building, 210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Madison, WI / 608-266-4124.

Ashley Bohman Photography



For couples that reside in a different Wisconsin county, you are required to apply for the license in the county in which you live. After the ceremony, the license will be filed in Dane County.

*****Holy Wisdom is in the Township of Westport*****

Questions:

If you have further questions about reserving Holy Wisdom for your wedding or ceremony or would like to set up an appointment for a tour of Holy Wisdom Monastery, please contact Brooke Miller, guest services manager, at blivingston@holywisdommonastery.org (preferred), or 608-836-1631 x 100.



Capture the Moment by Kristel



Holy Wisdom Monastery
2026 Wedding Reservation Form

Assembly Room (Indoor) Ceremony Fee:

☐ \$1,865 + \$250 refundable damage deposit

Lake Lawn (Outdoor) Ceremony Fee:

☐ \$1,965 + \$250 refundable damage deposit

Monastery Guest Dining Room (Indoor) Reception Fee:

☐ \$1,465 + \$400 refundable damage deposit

Lake Lawn (Outdoor) Reception Fee:

☐ \$1,885 + \$400 refundable damage deposit

Monastery Patio (Outdoor) Reception Fee:

☐ \$1,465 + \$400 refundable damage deposit

(check all that apply)

50% of Ceremony and/or Reception Fee + Damage Deposit/s is required to confirm reservation.

Please complete this form and return with **non-refundable deposit** and **damage deposit** to:

Holy Wisdom Monastery, Attention: Weddings, 4200 County Road M, Middleton, WI 53562

Make checks payable to Benedictine Women of Madison

Wedding Date: _____ Rehearsal Date: _____

Estimated # of Guests: _____ Estimated Rehearsal Time (ONE HOUR): _____

Estimated Ceremony Start Time: _____ Estimated Dinner Time (if applicable): _____

Time Block (anything over included time (4 or 8 hours) is \$160 per hour): _____

Please reserve for us:

- ☐ Live Streaming Service (for indoor weddings only, \$100)
- ☐ Wedding Arch (for outdoor weddings, \$160)
- ☐ Additional hours: (\$160 each hour x _____ hours)
- ☐ Projector (\$55)

You may not arrive earlier or stay later than your chosen time block unless you pay for additional hours. When determining the time of the ceremony, please consider the time needed for decorating, dressing, guest arrival, picture taking before and after the wedding and cleanup after the wedding.

Couple information:**Name 1:** _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email Address: _____

Name 2: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email Address: _____

Name and address where the damage deposit should be mailed after the wedding:

How you heard about Holy Wisdom Monastery? If you found us on the Internet, what site?

Wedding Contract:

We have read the Holy Wisdom Monastery Wedding/Ceremony Handbook and agree to abide by all guidelines and policies as stated. The receipt of your initial deposit and signed contract holds your reservation at Holy Wisdom Monastery. Benedictine Women of Madison, Inc. reserves the right to cancel this agreement in the event the deposit has not been received after 10 days from when the original agreement was sent. If the event is cancelled by the couple, the deposit is non-refundable. Final payment and participant count is due two weeks before the wedding.

If property damage occurs during the rehearsal, ceremony, or reception, we agree to reimburse Holy Wisdom Monastery for such damages. The undersigned agrees to hold Holy Wisdom Monastery harmless of any claims, losses or damage that result from activities during the rehearsal, ceremony, and/or reception, by the undersigned, their guests and any other parties participating in the wedding.

Signature_____
Date_____
Signature_____
Date