

Wilmot United Church
473 King Street, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 1E5

Wilmot United Church Marriage Policy (# S-01-2011)

Purpose: This marriage policy:

- Affirms our principle beliefs and values on Christian marriage
- Defines the criterion for marriage at Wilmot United Church (WUC), and
- Describes the considerations and responsibility for approval of marriage requests.

Wilmot United Church Affirmations on Marriage:

(adopted in whole or in part from United Church of Canada Marriage Policy)

We affirm:

- that marriage is a gift of God through which Christians make a covenant with one another and with God. In marriage we offer one another the promise of lifelong companionship and commitment.
- that this unity is a creation of God and is greater than the two individuals. Marriages in WUC will be within the context of Christian worship.
- our responsibility to support those entering into covenant relationship with one another.
- an inclusive approach to marriage requests for those who meet the legal requirements for marriage and the criterion for marriage at WUC as stated in this policy.

Criterion for Marriage at Wilmot United Church:

1. Couples who wish to be married at Wilmot United Church must have a connection to the church family, either as members, through participation in the life of the church (adherents), through close family ties to the church, or through a historical connection to WUC. Examples: having grown up within the congregation, parents or grandparents who are members or adherents.
2. Exceptions / exceptional circumstances may be considered by clergy, however all requests are approved at the discretion of session.
3. All couples requesting marriage at WUC are expected to participate in marriage preparation.

Process for Marriage Requests:

1. All marriage requests are forwarded to WUC clergy for initial discernment.
2. After initial discernment the WUC clergy will present / recommend appropriate marriage requests to session. (Note: A minister is not obliged to recommend any marriage request or to perform any marriage.)
3. Session is charged with the duty / responsibility “to oversee the spiritual interests of the Pastoral Charge” (United Church Manual, Section 153, page 107), therefore approval for all marriages conducted by Wilmot clergy or within the WUC building must be granted by session.
4. It is our hope and expectation that couples married at WUC will remain active in the life of our community.
5. Additional considerations:
 - All applicants for marriage must meet the criterion as defined in this policy.
 - WUC clergy will be present at all marriages recorded in the church records.
 - Session must approve the participation of clergy from another faith community in the marriage service.
 - Requests for marriages outside the sanctuary must be agreed to by the clergy and approved by session.
 - Retired clergy, who need a special license to perform a marriage, must receive and send written permission from clergy/session/official board (from the church where the marriage is to be registered), to the secretary of Presbytery.

Fees:

- Marriages of members and adherents constitute part of the pastoral care of the congregation. Facilities and ministerial services for marriages are provided free of charge as part of that care.
- All other marriages approved by session will be charged a fee as per the current “Use of Facilities” fee structure.