

Wilmot United Church
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Marriage Preparation Booklet



Congratulations on your decision to marry!

This is one of the most important decisions of your life. Now that you have found each other, now that you care deeply for each other, you are about to make a lasting commitment to each other before God in a public act of worship. Since you have chosen to be married in the context of a Christian worship service, you will need to give careful thought to how you want this worship service to reflect your faith and commitment.

The United Church of Canada has adopted the following (among other) affirmations about marriage:

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 life-long companionship and commitment. that this unity is a creation of God and is greater than the two individuals. Marriages in Wilmot United Church will be within the context of Christian worship.

Wilmot congregation is a Christian community of faith and witness within which these affirmations are important. For more than 200 years people of faith have gathered here in worship and during that time literally thousands of couples have celebrated their unions within this historic sanctuary. We rejoice with you and invite you to participate in the life of Wilmot before and after your wedding.

This booklet will assist you in your planning and will advise you of our expectations. It offers a timeline for preparation, provides some helpful tips, and discusses the guidelines within which the rite of marriage is celebrated in our congregation.

Beginnings

1. Our policy concerning weddings is that Council approves all weddings, once the minister has made the initial discernment. Only members and adherents or those with strong historical

connections to the church are approved. Members and adherents are determined by Council. Their marriages constitute part of the pastoral care of the congregation. The cost of renting the facilities and ministerial services is provided as part of that care. However, the payment for the custodial services and organist's fees is required. In the rare cases where the Council has approved the marriage of non-members, the standard facility rental fees will apply, as well as fees for the custodian and organist.

2. Once your wedding has been approved, make an appointment to talk with the minister about your plans well in advance of the date you have in mind (preferably at least six months) and arrange to meet in person. This sets a process in motion, and if there are any problems they can be settled early. This also allows a date to be reserved and avoids conflicts in the use of the sanctuary.
3. It is our policy that Wilmot's minister must be present at your wedding, and under normal circumstances they will be the officiating clergy. When it is appropriate to have other clergy assist in the service, this is done at the invitation of the officiating minister and with the approval of Council. Please note that it is your responsibility to contact the officiating minister at all stages of the planning process for your wedding.
4. We ask all couples to complete some form of marriage preparation or counselling before the wedding. The minister may be able to suggest a resource for this.

Months Before

1. The Province of New Brunswick requires that you have a marriage license before you marry. This license must be obtained from Service New Brunswick within 90 days prior to your marriage. There is a fee for a license.
2. If you wish to have a private ceremony or a wedding in a location other than the church, special permission for the

- minister is required from Council. A decision about this should be made well in advance of your wedding, so there is no confusion or disappointment.
3. You should discuss the wedding ceremony with the minister. Additions can sometimes be made to the service to meet your preferences or needs, provided they are appropriate in a service of Christian Worship.
 4. All music arrangements, including solos and alternative organists, etc., must be done in consultation with the organist to ensure its appropriateness and it is your responsibility to contact the organist well in advance.
 5. Please do not necessarily expect the minister to be present at your reception. If it is your wish that s/he be present, please extend an invitation as you do to your other guests, and in turn s/he will respond as requested.

The Wedding Rehearsal and Decorations

1. Most weddings are preceded by a rehearsal. This is the time when all the wedding party assembles to learn what they will do in the ceremony and how they will do it. For this reason, it is important that everyone in the party be present. Arrangements regarding the rehearsal are made with the minister.
2. The church pews can usually be decorated with markers the night of the rehearsal. They must be fastened to not damage the paint or wood.
3. If you are expecting flowers to be delivered to the sanctuary, be sure to mention this to the minister so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

The Wedding

Please remember that you have chosen to have your wedding in the context of a Christian worship service. You are choosing to make a

life-long commitment to each other in God's presence with your family and friends offering their support and witness. There is much for you to consider in the time leading up to your marriage and the minister will guide you as to what is appropriate for inclusion in the marriage service. We hope this will be a sacred time in your lives, and we will do our best to help it be so.

Be sure everyone connected with this special day knows the schedule of events. Timing is important. Some of the chronology follows:

1. Your photographer should speak with the officiating minister before the wedding to ensure that the best pictures can be taken without interfering with the service. No flash photos are allowed, with the exception of the processional and/or recessional, and the signing of the documents. Stationary videotaping is allowed with the above exceptions; early consultation with the minister must take place.
2. The sanctuary will be opened an hour before the service and flowers could be delivered at this time. If you require other arrangements, that may be arranged.
3. The ushers should be at the sanctuary 45 minutes before the service to see that everything is in order and to welcome early arrivals.
4. Confetti and rice **MUST NOT** be used either inside or outside the church and rose petals **MUST NOT** be used inside the church.

Fees

Members and Adherents:

Minister: \$200

Organist: \$150

Custodian: \$50

Non-Members: (As above plus) Sanctuary rental: \$400

Conclusion

We hope your wedding experience here at Wilmot will be joyful and fulfilling, and we wish you God's blessing as you plan your wedding and your new life together. If there is anything above that needs clarification, or if you have a question not covered in this booklet, please speak to one of the ministers.

Contact Information

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