

Westminster United Church

1680 Dougall Ave. at Tecumseh Road West, Windsor, Ontario, N8X 1S3 - Ph. 258-1471

Marriage and Wedding Information, Policy, Guidelines and Fee Schedule

We are happy that you are thinking about being married at Westminster. In our congregation your wedding normally takes place in the context of a worship service in which you declare your love for each other publicly and in the presence of God, seeking God's blessing on your marriage. As a church, we are in the business of "marriage" more so than "wedding!"

Marriage Education

Preparing for marriage as well as preparing for the wedding is essential. You will be encouraged to participate in some marriage preparation sessions either with the minister of Westminster or through some other recognized agency or church. Please discuss your marriage preparation with the minister. There may be a Weekend Event at Westminster in the early part of the year for you to participate in, or, in some cases private sessions can be arranged. As well, we can direct you to Marriage Preparation courses that are available outside of Westminster. Marriage Preparation sessions normally include topics such as: Communicating, Finances, Family Relationships, Sexuality, Legal Aspects of Marriage and Values. These topics are intended to strengthen your marriage and address issues that might otherwise lead to problems later on. The classes with the minister are structured to be informal and non-threatening.

Officiating Clergy

Normally, the minister of Westminster will officiate at your wedding service. If you would like to have some other minister participate in the service, please discuss this with Westminster's minister. If another minister is to be involved in the service it is in proper order for the invitation to be extended to her or him by the minister of Westminster. Guests are always encouraged to take a role within the service.

Organist

Our church organist will normally play for your wedding. Any other arrangements will need to be discussed with the minister and the Director of Music at Westminster. In all cases any guest musicians need to discuss wedding plans with the Westminster organist. There are many aspects to be considered before including guest musicians in your service.

Photographing Your Wedding

Your wedding is a service of worship. As such, we want to have as few distractions as possible. No flash pictures may be taken during the service and your professional photographer will need to be in a stationary, unobtrusive location. We will ask that your guests not take pictures during the service except at specified times such as Processional, Signing of the Register, Recessional. Video-taping is permissible providing the camera is in a stationary position and does not require additional lighting.

Fees

It is customary, and as a courtesy to those giving their time and talent for your wedding service, and as a courtesy to the Westminster congregation whose regular offerings maintain this church, the Board of Westminster has authorized the following fee schedule:

- a) a donation of **\$150.00** for use of our sanctuary; * (\$50.00 for a small chapel wedding)
(This amount must be submitted as a 'booking fee' along with the 'Marriage Information Sheet' when you book your wedding.)
- b) **\$150.00** for the Minister to conduct the service in the church;
- c) **\$100.00** for the Organist, (there may be an additional cost for soloist accompaniment and rehearsal);
- d) **\$100.00** for the Custodian;

These fees should be placed in separate envelopes with the appropriate name on the outside, and must be left in the church office along with your marriage license **at least three working days prior to your wedding.**

YOUR WEDDING SERVICE

**There are a number of things to think about as you plan your wedding service.
Here are some thoughts that you might find helpful.**

THE PROCESSIONAL

How you enter the sanctuary is important! Traditionally, the bride entered with her father. This is normally not the approach undertaken today. Generally couples enter with their parents, or sequentially in an attempt to balance the entrance. The minister will be happy to discuss these and other alternatives and innovative ideas with you.

THE MUSIC

All music must be spiritual or evoke a sense of God's presence whether it is sacred, classical or popular. All music in the service must fit within the music guidelines provided, (i.e. be appropriate to worship and praise of God). The formerly traditional 'Bridal Chorus' from Wagner, and Mendelsohn's 'Wedding March', are not appropriate. The minister and/or Director of Music will provide explanation and suggest alternatives for you.

THE BLESSINGS OF YOUR FAMILIES

In the United Church of Canada the service of Christian marriage does not have a place for the former tradition of 'giving away' the bride. In its place, parents and/or families, and guests will be asked for their blessing and support for your marriage.

THE SCRIPTURES, READINGS, PRAYERS, VOWS

Normally the minister will organize the service and Scripture verses, etc. If you have special readings or material you would like included, this is certainly appropriate. You may want to write your own vows. The minister can provide guidelines and suggestions to you.

SIGNING THE REGISTER

The signing of the register will take place in the sanctuary so that your guests will be able to witness this part of your wedding service.

CHILDREN IN THE WEDDING PARTY

It is not recommended that young children be part of your wedding party. If you choose to have young children stand with you during the service, it is suggested that there be family or friends sitting nearby to attend to the children if necessary with as little disruption of the service as possible.

BULLETIN COVERS

If you decide to have a printed 'Order of Service' for your wedding you will need to supply the bulletin covers. The ministers or the church secretary will provide you with some samples and a list of suppliers. The printed bulletin covers cost approximately \$12.00 per hundred and are available through Church Supply Stores. The bulletins can also be prepared and duplicated in the church office (advance notice is required).

FLOWERS

If flowers or other decorations are placed in the church, time of delivery is to be arranged with the church office or the custodian.

REHEARSAL

The rehearsal will *usually* be scheduled for the evening proceeding your wedding.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

By law, a marriage license must be purchased at least three days before the wedding service. In some cases, in lieu of a license, the marriage may be solemnized under the authority of 'publication of banns' provided that the bride and/or groom are "in the habit of attending worship". Once you have purchased your marriage license you may submit it to the church secretary for completion and safe keeping. This needs to be done at least a week prior to your wedding.

