

WOODCLIFF UNITED CHURCH POLICY FOR THE CONDUCT OF WEDDINGS

This Policy represents the intention of Woodcliff United Church (WUC) with regard to the requirements of couples seeking the services of WUC for a wedding ceremony.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND BELIEF

The conduct of weddings is part of the ministry of the church. While not a sacrament, it is a sacred and holy ceremony that recognizes the commitment of a couple to journey together in a mutually satisfying spiritual and emotional relationship that is legally binding. WUC acts as an agent of the Province of Alberta in legalizing marriages; therefore, WUC must fulfill the legal requirements imposed by the province in the conduct of weddings. While we honor the personal faith of all people, it is an expectation that wedding ceremonies conducted at WUC will be held in the context of the Christian faith tradition.

POLICY

- Any couple legally eligible to be married, according to the laws of Alberta, may apply to the Minister for the conduct of a wedding ceremony at WUC.
- WUC welcomes all couples, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, who seek a Christian wedding ceremony.
- A government issued Marriage License must be obtained by the couple and submitted to the Church Office at least 2 weeks in advance of the wedding ceremony.
- Couples wishing to be married through the services of WUC do not have to be Members of WUC.
- Couples are required to attend a Pre-Marriage Preparation Course conducted by the Minister, Calgary Presbytery, or other duly accredited counselling agency.
- It is expected that the Minister of WUC will conduct the wedding ceremony. If the Minister is not available, WUC will arrange for a Supply Minister authorized by the United Church of Canada (UCC) and the Province of Alberta to officiate at weddings.
- If a couple wishes another Minister from the UCC to officiate or assist at their wedding ceremony, any such arrangement must be made in consultation with and with the approval of the Minister of WUC.

- Ministers from other denominations may assist at a wedding ceremony with approval from the Minister of WUC. The conduct of the ceremony rests with the Minister of WUC.
- Wedding Commissioners are not eligible to conduct wedding ceremonies at WUC.
- The Minister may agree to conduct a wedding ceremony in a location other than WUC.
- The Minister may decline to conduct a wedding ceremony in consultation with the Council Executive.
- If piano or organ accompaniment is required for a wedding ceremony at WUC, the Music Director of WUC has the right of first refusal.
- A fee schedule for the conduct of weddings at WUC will be established by the WUC Council and reviewed at least every two years. The Minister may waive only her/his fee for services. All other individuals normally paid fees for their services at a wedding ceremony may waive only their own fee. The fee for use of the property and building of WUC may be waived only by the WUC Council.
- A nonrefundable deposit is required at the time of booking.
- Fees for the wedding ceremony must be paid in full to the Church Office 1 month before the wedding.
- All weddings conducted by the Minister of WUC must be recorded in the Register for Marriages held in the Church Office, included in the Annual Report of WUC, and sent as statistical information to General Council.
- Individuals who perceive their situation may involve an extension or exception to this Policy are welcome to discuss this with the Minister or a member of the Council Executive.

ADMINISTRATION

This Policy is administered by the Minister and Council of WUC.

Approved by the Congregation at the 2016 Annual Congregational Meeting

Date: _____

Signatures:

Council Chair

Council Secretary

GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines for the conduct of wedding ceremonies at Woodcliff United Church. Discretion may be used in applying these guidelines, depending on the varying circumstances.

- Under normal circumstances, couples asking WUC to conduct their wedding should do so at least 90 days in advance of the service.
- All weddings must be booked through the Church Office to ensure that there are no scheduling conflicts.
- The Church Office ensures that the Minister is available or a Supply Minister authorized by WUC.
- The couple must meet with the Minister at least 1 month before the ceremony to plan the service.
- Couples are permitted to write their own wedding vows in consultation with the officiating Minister.
- All music for the ceremony is chosen in consultation with the Minister and Music Director (if participating in the ceremony). Musical instruments other than piano or organ are permitted. Recorded music may be used during the service.
- Photographing/Videoring of the service is permitted in consultation with the officiating Minister.
- Only qualified technicians from WUC may operate the audiovisual and computer equipment owned by WUC.

- A rehearsal for the wedding will be conducted prior to the wedding, usually on the evening before the wedding day. The wedding rehearsal is conducted by the officiating Minister.
- The Music Director and Audiovisual Technician are not required to attend rehearsals.
- Floral arrangements, free-standing flower baskets and other appropriate wedding decorations are permitted in the sanctuary, in consultation with the Church Office. Decorations may be attached to the sanctuary chairs using ribbon, string or elastic. No adhesive tape, glue, tacks, staples or like materials are permitted. If candles are used they must be dripless and placed in candle holders.
- No confetti, rose petals, rice, bird seed, bubbles or like materials may be used inside the church building. Only bubbles may be used outside on the church property.
- It is the responsibility of the officiating Minister to ensure that the completed marriage license is sent to the Department of Vital Statistics for Alberta within 48 hours of the wedding ceremony.
- The Church Office issues a Certificate of Marriage (non-legal) to the couple as a record of the wedding.

REFERENCES

Service Alberta: Getting Married

United Church of Canada: Marriage Policy Statements

WUC Duty of Care Policy

WUC Policy for Creation, Revision, Approval, and Removal of Policies

WUC Property and Building Use Policy (in development)

WUC Technology Policy (in development)

Original Approval Date:	Review Dates:	Next Review Date:
March 13, 2016		