

Wedding Policy

All weddings at West Parish Congregational Church UCC are services of worship which shall be performed by a minister of this church or someone approved by the Board of Deacons. Family members and friends of the couple may assist in leading the ceremony. The church performs weddings for couples regardless of sexual orientation.

Premarital counseling is required of all couples.

Music must be appropriate for the service of worship. If organ music is desired, this church's organist will be consulted. The organist may give approval for another organist to play at his/her discretion. Scores for music not owned by the organist will be provided by the couple at least 2 months before the wedding. Other instrumental and/or vocal music may be used in addition to or instead of organ music.

The wedding couple may prepare a program if they wish. It must be reviewed by the minister prior to printing.

This church does not allow photography during a service or worship, with the exception of a camera mounted on a tripod in one place in the balcony. Photographers must meet with the minister prior to the wedding ceremony.

The marriage license, donations and honoraria for the minister and organist are to be presented at the time of the wedding rehearsal, held one or two days before the wedding.

If neither one of the wedding couple is a member of WPCC, or a child of a member, the couple is asked to make a donation for the use of the building. (See Schedule of suggested donations and fees.)

No rice, confetti, or petals may be tossed inside the church.

Alcohol and smoking are not permitted on church policy.

Wedding Procedures

West Parish Congregational Church believes that the decision to marry is a major life decision, best made as a joyous response to the Grace of God. The following procedures are intended to help to you deepen your appreciation of that grace and celebrate it with that the officiating minister (s), the other members of your wedding party, and the community which gathers to help you begin your marriage.

Before the Wedding

At least 6 months in advance of your intended wedding date, contact the minister of this church to arrange premarital counseling. With the approval of the pastor, another counselor may be chosen to do this work.

If another minister us to officiate, WPCC's minister is to be involved with the planning of the wedding.

Marriage "in the church" is often taken to mean a wedding in a particular building. A church, however, is a community of people. Regardless of whether members of this congregation are involved in your wedding, we do worship God here where you will be making your sacred vows. In order for you to become acquainted with this congregation in the spiritual home, we ask that you plan on worshipping with us before the wedding.

The Wedding Service

The wedding servie itself is a service of worship. During the service God is glorified, thanked for bringing you two together, and asked to bless your marriage with spiritual presence and guidance. You are encouraged to take part in the planning of the service, so that the promises you make the scripture and other words spoken or sung may express your love and dependence on God in ways meaningful to you both. At the same time, the wedding service is an opportunity for others not only to witness and support your entrance into marriage, but also to praise God and be reminded of the significance of God's presence in your lives. Family members and friends of the wedding couple may assist in leading the ceremony.

Music

Since the wedding is a worship service, music must be appropriate for the worship of God. IF you plan to have organ music or piano music (there is a grand piano in the sanctuary), please ask out organist to play, and supply him/her with written scores as needed at least two months before the wedding. If you plan to engage a different keyboardist, permission to do so is to be sought from the church's organist. Other instruments may be used instead or in addition to the organ. Vocalists are also welcome. All music must be approved by the WPCC minister. Scores of music not owned by the organist will be provided by the wedding couple at least 2 months before the wedding.

Photographs

Photographs during the service itself – that is, after the processional and before the recessional – are not permitted, with the exception that a still photograph without flash or a videotape recording from a fixed location in the balcony may be made during the service. Prior to the ceremony, the photographer must meet with the officiating minister (s). Please arrange with your photographer to take photos in the sanctuary before or after the service. Please be sure your photographer and friends are aware of this policy. The church will be available for 1 ½ hours before your ceremony is scheduled to begin and up to ½ hour following the conclusion of your ceremony, unless the reception is at the church.

Rehearsal

A rehearsal is held one or two days before the wedding at a time convenient to those involved. All primary participants are to be present, including the musicians and ushers. The marriage license is to be given to the officiating minister at this time and final payments are due.

Reception

If you would like to hold a reception in this church building, please schedule it at the time you reserve the sanctuary for the wedding. The Chapel and the Dining Room are available for this purpose.

Smoking and Drinking

Neither alcoholic beverages nor smoking are permitted on church property. Please ensure that your wedding party, guests, photographer and musicians know this.

Cleaning Up

Please delegate someone in your wedding party to see that flowers and other decorations, flower boxes, wrappers and anything brought in for the wedding are removed. Bird seed, biodegradable confetti or flower petals may be used outside.