

**Union Congregational Church**  
55 Rhoades Ave  
East Walpole, MA 02032  
508. 668. 1355  
unioncongregationalchurch@msn.com

### ***A Guide for your Wedding***

We rejoice with you as you plan for your marriage and we would like to extend to you the care and support of our congregation. We invite you to share in our worship (Sunday morning at 10:30 a.m.) if you are not already doing so.

This booklet is designed to help you understand the meaning of a Christian marriage service and to help you plan for your wedding. We look forward to celebrating your wedding with you.

### ***The Meaning of the Marriage Service***

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well being of the entire human family. For Christians, marriage is more than a civil contract; it is a life-long covenant through which two people are called to live out their lives together in service to God and neighbor and one another.

A Christian wedding is first and foremost a service of worship before God. All the elements of the service should be appropriate for a service of worship as well as consistent with Christian practices and teachings. The service shall be under the direction of the pastor. Since each wedding is unique, the pastor will discuss your ideas and the different services that can be used.

### ***A Word from our Pastors***

The first step in preparing for a wedding in Union Church is to contact our pastors. If you have not already done so, it is important that you contact them as soon as possible to determine if your proposed wedding date is available and to allow them time to get to know you. Unlike hiring a photographer, engaging a pastor is not a matter of purchasing a service, but rather a forming of relationship. Our pastor(s) is expected to officiate at all weddings held at Union Congregational Church. At their discretion, however, other clergy may be invited to participate or officiate in their place.

Our pastors also require you to attend three marriage-counseling sessions before your wedding. They are flexible, knowing you have a busy schedule and both bride and groom may not be local. They will do the best they can to accommodate your schedules. If you do not feel comfortable with our pastors, you may seek counseling from another pastor or professional. Non-Members will be charged \$65 for each counseling session. Our pastors hope you look on these sessions as an opportunity to grow and learn more about yourself and your soon to be life-partner.

### ***Scripture Readings***

The following are some readings from scripture appropriate for use at weddings. You are invited to choose one or two readings for your marriage service. But please do not feel limited to these passages, they are only suggestions. If you would like a reading in addition to a Biblical text, you may do so *with the consultation of the pastor*.

#### **Reading from the Old Testament**

Genesis 2:18-24  
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12  
Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7  
Proverbs 3:3-6  
Psalms 8, 67, 95, 100, 103, 121, 128, 136, 148, 150

### Readings from the New Testament

Romans 12:9-18  
Matthew 5:13-16  
Mark 10:6-9  
John 2:1-11  
1 John 4: 7-12

1 Corinthians 13  
Matthew 22:35-40  
John 15: 1-14  
Colossians 3:12-17

It is appropriate for members of the bridal party, other family members or friends to assist in the service, which may include their musical talents or the reading of Scripture.

### ***Music***

We encourage you to choose music that reflects the faith of the community around you and God's presence within your relationship, rather than romantic love or sentimentality.

Our music director and organist, Dr. Linda Jiorle-Nagy, will play at any wedding in the Church that requires music. Please call her as soon as you know the dates and times of the rehearsal and wedding. If you would like her input, she will help you select music to be played at your wedding. Be sure to let her know in advance if a soloist or any other musician will be involved in your service. If for some reason Linda cannot play at your wedding, she can recommend other organists who can be contacted.

### ***Hymns***

We strongly encourage the singing of hymns at a wedding service. If you wish the congregation to sing a hymn during the service, the following hymns are recommended:

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee  
Now Thank We All Our God  
For the Beauty of the Earth  
Be Thou My Vision  
God of Our Life  
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling  
O Perfect Love

### ***Flowers***

Because of the central cross on our table, most couples prefer to use two side arrangements rather than a large central one. In addition, a single arrangement may be placed on the piano. The Church has vases for the flowers that may be used. It is important to make sure that the church will be open when the florist delivers the flowers. Some couples wish the flowers from their wedding remain in the church for the next Sunday service, after which they will be delivered to shut-ins. The church welcomes this practice and would be glad to help.

### ***Photographs***

In a wedding, as in all worship services in the church, we request that no photographs be taken during the service. Flash bulbs and people jostling about for a better shot detract from the spirit of worship. It is possible to have pictures taken before, or after, the service in the sanctuary. In addition, we do allow photographers (as well as videographers) to snap shots **without flash or spotlight** *only from the balcony or from the side aisle* during the service. Our pastors **require** your photographer and videographer to contact them before the service.

### ***Bulletin***

If your desire a printed bulletin for your wedding, our office manager will be happy to assist you. She can also supply you with catalogues for ordering bulletin covers appropriate for weddings. Please allow ample time for these to be mailed. If you would prefer printing your bulletins outside the office, make sure you allow time for the pastor to review the rough draft before you send it to the printer.

### ***A Candlelight Ceremony***

The Church has eight large standing candelabras which can be used for a candlelight service. The price of candles rises steadily, however, so the fee changes. If you are interested, please call the office to allow ample time for ordering candles.

### ***Having your Reception at the Church***

The Church Hall has been used by many couples for their reception. It can accommodate up to 200 people for a meal. There is a piano if needed for a band, and a large kitchen that caterers find easy to use. While a bar and mixed drinks are not allowed, you may have a champagne toast.

For many, it is appealing to have the reception in the same place as the wedding so that the two become a natural part of the one celebration. If you would like to consider this as a possibility, please contact our office manager.

### ***Caring for Our Church***

Please circulate word among your wedding party, family and guests that no alcoholic beverages are permitted anywhere on church property, and no smoking is allowed in the building. No confetti or rice are to be thrown indoors or outside of the church. Birdseed may be thrown outside of the church.

## **The Sanctuary Capacity is Approximately 260 people**

### ***Wedding Fees and Honorariums***

	Member	Non-Member
<b>Church and Services</b>		
Pastor	\$200	\$400
Church (1 day)	free	\$350
Church (2 days-rehearsal and ceremony)	free	\$450
Organist	\$150	\$250
Sexton	\$75	\$125
Bulletins	\$20	\$45
Damage Deposit	—	\$100
<b>Herbert Harrison Hall</b>		
Hall and Kitchen Rental	donation	\$200
Sexton	\$175	\$275
<i>over 100 people</i>	\$225	\$325

*\*Sexton fee includes breakdown of tables and chairs.  
Additional fee charged for set up. Please inquire if interested.*

*\*\*If you have circumstances that will not permit you to pay the amount recommended, fees may be negotiated.  
Please speak to the pastor.*

### ***Staff***

Rev. Abigail A. Henrich & Rev. Jon Paul Sydnor, <i>co-pastors</i>	508.668.1756
Rev. Judith Swahnberg, <i>assoc. pastor</i> Dr. Linda Jiorle-Nagy, <i>music director</i>	781.784.5723
Lois Thomas, <i>office manager</i>	508.668.1355
Ralph Todesco, <i>sexton</i>	508.668.3502