

Welcome

We welcome those who want to celebrate their marriage in the context of Christian worship at Fonthill United Church. You do not have to be a member of our congregation to be married here. We welcome those of other religious backgrounds or of none, those who may have been married before, opposite couples and same-gender couples to celebrate their marriage in our sanctuary. The purpose of this page is to help you with your planning by providing information about our wedding customs.

Sanctuary

When you come into the church sanctuary, you get the feeling that you are in a sacred place. The church was built in 1937 and was renovated in 1991, so it combines the old and the new. The sanctuary can seat up to 300 people, mostly in classic wooden pews or padded fabric chairs. On each side there is a series of stained glass windows. The church features a long centre aisle, but the chancel (front) is bathed in natural light. The church is located on the south side of Highway 20 at the top of Fonthill, at the intersection of Canboro Road. There is parking in the church parking lot and additional parking is available on adjacent side streets.

Initial Interview

Once you are ready to set the date of the wedding, the first step is to arrange for an interview with the minister. The interview has three parts. First the minister will ask you about your situation in life, your relationship to each other, your hopes and plans for the future, family support and religious commitment. In the second part, the minister interprets the wedding service, and in the third part practical arrangements are made. This is all part of the preparation and may take more than one appointment. To arrange for an interview, please contact the church office at 905 892-6433. To avoid disappointment, this should be done early in the planning stage.

Marriage Preparation

Although we do not require it, we recommend that couples attend a marriage preparation event.

Music

Music is normally provided by the church's organist on the pipe organ, however a piano is also available. Since the marriage service takes place in the context of Christian Worship, the music selected should be appropriate for the occasion. Arrangements for music should be made through William Outred. You may contact him through the church office.

Rehearsal

In all but very small weddings, a rehearsal is recommended and normally takes place on the evening prior to the wedding. People in attendance should include the entire wedding party, ushers, parents of the bride and groom (where applicable), flower girl, ring bearer, etc. Children participating in the service should be at least 8 years old.

Minister conducting the service

The Fonthill United Church minister normally performs the marriage services at the Fonthill church, however if your marriage date occurs when the minister is on vacation, arrangements will be made to have another minister conduct the service. Requests to have your own minister conduct the service will not normally be granted.

Marriage Licence

A marriage licence is required and is available from most City Halls in the Region. In St. Catharines, City Hall is located at 50 Church Street and marriage licences are issued from the Clerk's Department on the Third Floor from 8:30-4:00. In Welland, City Hall is located at 60 East Main Street. The Clerk's Department is on the main floor and marriage licences are issued from 8:30-4:00. In either place, the cost is \$125 and is expected in cash. Be sure to bring a birth certificate or passport, as well as photo identification. The marriage licence is valid for three months from the date of purchase. It should be brought to the church no later than two weeks prior to the wedding.

Flowers

Flowers may be brought to the church at the rehearsal, or immediately prior to the wedding.

Photography

Guests may take pictures before and after the service. A professional photographer may take some pictures during the ceremony if it is done discreetly, without flash. A video camera may be set up, but not moved during the service. Your wedding is a sacred occasion, and we do not want to see the solemnity of the service spoiled by the commotion of taking pictures. After the service, the wedding party may come back to the sanctuary to pose for additional pictures.

Please - No Confetti

Ask your friends not to throw confetti in or around the church. This takes a lot of time to clean up, and results in an extra charge. Birdseed, however, may be used outdoors.

Alcohol

The Government of Ontario Marriage Act requires that no wedding will be performed where alcohol has been consumed or is being served prior to the wedding.

Weddings outside of the church

The minister may be available to conduct marriages outside of the church. In such cases, couples should make their own arrangements for music and the only fee is for the minister. When travel distances are significant, the fee should be increased accordingly.

Only the Beginning

We hope that the experience of being married at Fonthill United Church will be positive, and that it will mark the beginning of an ongoing relationship with the church. Having a church home can be the source of spiritual strength for married life and we would like to welcome you at Fonthill United Church. If you are looking for a church home to help unite you in God's love, we invite you to join this congregation. Our worship services are normally on Sundays at 9:30 am.

Fees

The total cost of a wedding at Fonthill United Church is \$625 and is broken down as follows:

Church Building: \$200

Minister's honorarium: \$200

Organist: \$150

Custodian: \$75

A non-refundable deposit of \$200 is required to reserve your wedding date and it should be brought to the initial interview. The balance of payment is to be made in cash, in separate envelopes for the minister, organist and custodian, and brought to the rehearsal.

Small Wedding Fee

For a small wedding with fewer than 20 people and no music or rehearsal, the fee is \$200.