

**The Policy of the Board of Deacons
on
WEDDING SERVICES**

Voted May 16, 2012

We at Kingston Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, are pleased to be a part your wedding plans. We look forward to assisting you as you plan this beautiful celebration.

The congregation of the church has given the Board of Deacons the responsibility for all services of worship in the church, including marriage services. Marriages are very special services of worship for the couple, for their families and for their friends. Thus, the church is concerned with making sure that this special worship service will be a significant moment in your lives, as well as an appropriate service of worship for this church.

This guide has been prepared to help you plan for your wedding and to know the traditions, requirements, and expectations of the church. It is our pleasure to work with you to make this one of the most special and meaningful days of your life.

Who may be married at Kingston Congregational Church?

The facilities and staff of the Church are available primarily for members and their immediate families. Applications from non-members will be considered on an individual basis at the discretion of the Pastor, and subject to their schedule of other commitments.

A wedding at Kingston Congregational Church is a Christian service of worship. We presume you desire to be married in a church because you are a person of faith. The wedding is a time of worship, including scripture, prayer invoking God's presence and blessing. Those not comfortable with a wedding in the context of a community of faith should request information from their town clerk about others in the state who can officiate at weddings.

How to begin:

Talk to the Pastor or call the church office to indicate your interest in being married at the church and the proposed date and time of your wedding. The Office Administrator will check with the Pastor to determine whether they will be available to perform the wedding on that date. If they are not available, you may request other dates. If a mutually acceptable date and time is identified, you will be given this guide, the schedule of fees for weddings, and a Wedding Application form. Return the completed and signed Wedding Application to the Pastor or Church Administrator. After it is received, you will be contacted by the Pastor to schedule a meeting to discuss plans for the wedding.

The Service

The United Church of Christ provides an "Order for Marriage." Note that the Pastor does not marry the couple. Rather, the couple marries one another by making a public commitment to each other with their vows, by exchanging rings, and by joining hands in the presence of God and the company of family and friends.

In consultation with the Pastor, you may want to develop a service which will uniquely express the meaning of your marriage. The Pastor is prepared to work with you in developing such a service, including guest speakers or musicians, the selection of favorite readings, or other modifications.

Policies and Procedures

1. OBTAIN a) this booklet, b) the Wedding Application form, and c) the schedule of fees from the Pastor or Church Administrator. Return the completed and signed Wedding

Page 3

- Application to the Pastor or Church Administrator.
2. THE PASTOR OF THE CHURCH WILL OFFICIATE AT ALL WEDDINGS which take place at Kingston Congregational Church. Guest clergy (e.g., relatives or friends who are Pastors) may be invited to take a part in the service, but only at the invitation extended by the Pastor of The Kingston Congregational Church.
 3. THE MINISTER OF MUSIC WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL WEDDING MUSIC. If unavailable for any service, the Minister of Music will make other arrangements in consultation with the Pastor. If music is requested which the Minister of Music does not own, it must be provided by the couple at least two weeks prior to the service. Use of recorded music (e.g., tape recording, CD's) is not available. Guest musicians should not be invited until after consultation with the Minister of Music. It will be the responsibility of the couple to schedule a planning consultation with the Minister of Music well in advance of the date of the wedding.
 4. REHEARSALS. All participants must be present and on time for the wedding rehearsal. Bring with you: the marriage license and any special items to be used. **Please note: if a valid marriage license is not presented before the wedding, the wedding cannot take place.** Fees are due and payable at the rehearsal in separate envelopes. Allow one full hour for the rehearsal. In respect to staff members present, please inform all members of the wedding party that the rehearsal will start on time, even if members of the wedding party or family have not yet arrived.
 5. PREVIEW THE PREMISES, if you are unfamiliar with our church and its facilities. The building is normally open mornings and early afternoons, Monday through Friday.

Photographers

There are to be **no flash pictures** taken during the ceremony, either by guests or by professional photographer. No moving about by photographers or members of the congregation is allowed.

Your photographer is permitted to take flash pictures during the Processional and the Recessional, and may take available light photos during the service from the balcony or any other vantage point out of sight of the congregation, if done in silence. Photographers (or others) may not walk around the main floor or the balcony, or be up front during the service. Please make these requirements known to your photographer and request your photographer to consult with the Pastor prior to the service.

Consider whether you would like some of your photographs taken before or after the ceremony.

You may wish to hire a videographer for you service. The same conditions apply (above) to videography as to photography.

Printed Order of the Service

A printed order of the marriage ceremony is not necessary, although it can be helpful to your family and friends and may be valued as a keepsake. A simple paper program can be created through the church office; if you would like some more than that, please arrange your own printing. The Pastor will be pleased to email you the order of worship upon request.

Flowers and decorations

You may wish to place a floral arrangement on the altar table and/or a small floral arrangement on the table in the entryway. Decorations on the end of pews are not permitted because the aisles are so narrow. Due to serious tripping hazards, aisle carpets are not used at Kingston Congregational Church.

Unity Candle

A unity candle adds beauty and meaning to a service, signifying how the two lives and lights become one. You are responsible for providing the unity candle, tapers, and holders. Some brides and grooms ask florists to provide.

Confetti & Rice

Confetti and rice may not be used inside the church buildings or elsewhere on the premises. Some wedding parties provide bubbles for guests to use.

Alcoholic beverages

Alcoholic beverages of any kind are prohibited on the church premises. Please note: The Pastor may not conduct a ceremony when it is in any way apparent that either bride or groom has been impaired by alcohol or drugs.

Our facilities

THE SANCTUARY seats 150 people without using the balconies (for another 75). It has two main aisles, not a center aisle.

THE FELLOWSHIP HALL is served by a fully-equipped **kitchen**. This area is suitable for wedding receptions of about 100 people, subject to specific regulations governing its use.

Our Staff:

- **The Church Administrator, Shirley M. Schock**, handles all matters of scheduling and use of facilities. The Church Administrator can provide you with this booklet, the Application, and the schedule of fees. Contact at 401-783-5330.
- **The Minister of Music, Eden Casteel, Interim**, offers consultation concerning the selection of music appropriate to the occasion, rehearses with and accompanies soloists, and plays for the wedding service. Contact at 401-932-5589.
- **The Church Sexton, Andy Cournoyer**, sees to the general comfort and cleanliness of the sanctuary and all other facilities being used. The Sexton is present at both the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. Contact at 401-783-5330.
- **The Senior Pastor, The Rev. Dr. Jan Gregory-Charpentier**, meets with the couple, directs the rehearsal, and presides at the wedding ceremony. The Pastor's contact is only with the bridal couple. Contact at 774-573-8079

Planning Checklist:

- ___ Return completed and signed application to Church Administrator.
- ___ Meet with Pastor to plan the wedding.
- ___ Set rehearsal (often evening before wedding at 5:00 p.m or later, lasting one hour)
- ___ Call the Minister of Music to discuss music.
- ___ Contact florist. Explain to florist when and where to deliver all arrangements. Make sure anyone preparing decorations or flowers understands church wedding policies.
- ___ Contact photographer and/or videographer. Inform of church wedding policies.
- ___ Plan and schedule reception.
- ___ Obtain marriage license(s) at local Town Hall. You are responsible for complying with all state laws in application for the license.
- ___ Deliver marriage license and fees to Pastor at rehearsal.

Page 6

__ Don't get so stressed out that you don't enjoy your own wedding. We will work together to make this a beautiful and meaningful celebration for you and your families and guests!