

PLANNING YOUR MARRIAGE

A Guide For Those Who Plan To Be Married In Grace-Westminster United Church



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MARRIAGE IS FOR ADULTS

In marriage we offer one another the promise of life-long companionship, rich expression of human affections and sexuality, and nurture for the children. Marriage as an institution can undergird each relationship and provide stability for society. We affirm the value of marriage and that the church must work both to redeem and care for the institution and to support those entering into a covenant relationship with each other.

Marriage is for adults. It is for those mature enough to give of themselves to each other in mutual honour and love. It is for those who, together and with the help of God, are prepared to meet anything that life has to offer. It is for those who are convinced that they have found the one person with whom they wish to spend the rest of their lives.

A good marriage is made up of a mixture of many ingredients. Love, honour, respect, forgiveness, good humour, responsibility, and maturity mixed together make for a sound and happy marriage.

A poor marriage also has many ingredients. Selfishness, sulkiness, irresponsibility, and unforgiving spirit, a lack of honour and respect for each other, and self-centeredness, mixed together produce a life of misery, trouble and unhappiness.

The familiar reasons why marriages get into difficulty are:

- (1) Excessive drinking;
- (2) Financial problems which are never quietly discussed and jointly resolved;
- (3) Marriage at an age when one or both members of the marriage are too young to have gained the maturity required;
- (4) Religious differences which have never been sufficiently discussed or resolved;
- (5) Basic breakdowns in communication, with accompanying inconsideration of the other's feelings and needs.

This latter concern often expresses itself in the other four prime problems, and should be the area of prime concern in planning your marriage. Be aware of this. If any of the above problems are a part of your relationship at this time -- step back and take a good look at your relationship before you proceed. If you are not prepared to correct problems between you now, you will be less successful in correcting them when married. If you see real difficulties between you, there is no shame in canceling your plans or postponing them at this time. Whatever embarrassment might be involved now is a small price to pay in the avoidance of the unhappiness incurred in a bad marriage, which is difficult and painful to terminate.

Marriage is not an escape, either from home, an awkward situation, or from yourself. Marriage is not just a romantic adventure which you can get out of as soon as the going gets rough. Marriage is not security from loneliness and boredom. A marriage based solely on any of these may well be letting you in for a life that holds the prospect of much unhappiness.

At this point we are willing to be of as much assistance as we can in thinking through not just the wedding arrangements, but the concerns of marriage. Your Ministers here at Grace-Westminster United Church have some training in marriage counseling and considerable experience gained from many weddings. There are issues they will want to discuss with you which will be both practical and personal. Please understand that when issues are raised with you, that it is done in your interest and with concern to help you find in marriage many of the hopes and purposes to which you look forward in your life together. In the long run, however, your marriage will only reflect the love and commitment to each other which you bring to it. Your marriage will be what you make it; so plan wisely, with good counsel and the benefit of a willingness to accept the guidance of the God whose blessing you seek by asking for a Christian marriage.

Grace-Westminster United Church will provide services of marriage or blessing following

a civil marriage, for same-gender couples upon their request.

Legal Requirements:

1. A Marriage License: (\$50.00) - may be purchased at most jewelers and must be applied for at least two clear days before the date of the wedding. In Saskatchewan the minimum age at which a person may marry is 16 years (except under special circumstances or a Court Order). Under 18 the consent of both parents or guardians is essential and the Consent Forms should be brought to the minister with your license. Widows or widowers should be able to provide a death certificate and divorced persons must provide a "Decree Absolute". The license is good for 90 days so may be applied for well in advance.
2. It is illegal for a minister to marry anyone whom he/she has reason to believe to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
3. Witnesses: It is permissible for the attendants (Best Man and Bridesmaid) to be under the age of 18, but there must be two adult witnesses, at least 18 years of age, in attendance, to sign the Marriage Register.

A Church Wedding:

A Church Wedding is a service of worship through which you are joined in holy matrimony until death. You are married in the presence, and are seeking the blessing, of God. You promise to live together according to the ordinance of God. Such a service should have dignity, good taste, reverence, beauty, simplicity and sincerity. The same holds true when there is only the couple and the witnesses without the congregation. Plan your wedding according to your means. Many aspects of a wedding can be expensive and are not always necessary. Plan according to your own wishes, tastes and finances, and not by someone else's standards. Remember, that a church wedding need not be costly. It is the reception and the clothing which usually cost the money.

The Use of the Church:

All marriages are conducted by the Minister in the Sanctuary or the Chapel. As this is a sacred service, it is the feeling that it should be conducted in this place, which has been dedicated for worship. Please do not ask for that which is not in keeping with worship.

Pictures: Pictures may be taken by the designated photographer through the service in consultation with the ministry. Pictures may be taken during the entrance and departure of the wedding party, at the signing of the register and as the party arrives at the front of the church. However, we request you to ask your friends and relatives to refrain from taking pictures during the service itself.

Videos: Should you choose to have a videographer - we ask that the videographer consult with the ministry.

Flowers: We ask that you consult the minister about the placing of flowers.

Confetti: We also ask that confetti not be used on church property. Even when used outside the church, it tracks in for weeks.

Pew Markers: For decorating purposes, pew markers can be attached with rubber bands to the pews, and should be there well in advance of the service.

Fees: The Council of Grace-Westminster United Church has set a standard fee for weddings in our church to help defray the costs of keeping the church here and available for your use.

The fee is : (effective January, 2008)

Use of Church

\$595.00

Use of Chapel:

\$400.00

For weddings outside the church: Service of Minister \$250.00

A \$50.00 non-refundable deposit is required at time of booking, with the balance to be paid in one lump sum to Grace-Westminster United Church two weeks in advance of the ceremony.

Cheques to be made payable to: Grace-Westminster United Church.

The Ceremony:

A church wedding is a service of worship, and should be considered as such. The Order of Service that we use comes in a white booklet form. This booklet is presented to you when you meet with the minister. In order that the content of the service may be basically of your own choosing, the booklet provides many options. It is given to you in advance, so that you may together choose the respective items of vows and worship you prefer. You will be provided with a marriage certificate on the day of the wedding.

The Music:

The Church Organist - We prefer that our Church Organist play for the wedding. If you request someone other than our Church Organist, it must be cleared through the Minister and our Organist. It is desirable to meet with the Organist and review music in terms of preference and suitability.

Our Church Organist will help choose suitable music for the service and will accommodate you as much as possible. Sacred music of the church is preferable at the ceremony. Current secular music may be used on occasion during the signing of the register with the consultation and consent of the Minister and Organist.

We prefer that taped or recorded music not be used, unless in consultation with minister.

The Bridal Processional - The traditional processional or wedding march is used by some, and

may be used if really desired. We invite individualities and commend a hymn tune such as:

"Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven" #30

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" #19

Or

The Music: (continued)

"Trumpet Tune in D"	(Purcell)
"Trumpet Voluntary"	(Clarke)
"Largo" (Xerxes)	(Handel)
"Jesu Meine Freude"	(Bach)
"Canon in D"	(Pachelbel)
"Arioso"	(Bach)
"Processional"	(Hopson)

Recessional: "Trumpet Tune in D"	(Purcell)
"Trumpet Voluntary"	(Clarke)
"March in C"	(Purcell)
"Maestoso excerpts from "Organ Sonatas"	(Mendelssohn)
"Hornpipe"	(Handel)
"Fanfare"	(Handel)
"Let The Merry Bells Ring"	(Handel)

Vocal Solo:

"I Will Sing New Songs of Gladness"	- Dvorak
"My Heart Ever Faithful"	- Bach
"One Hand, One Heart"	- West Side Story
"O Lord Most Holy"	- Franck
"O Perfect Love"	
"The Lord's Prayer"	- Malotte
"Wedding Prayer"	- Dunlop
"Wedding Song" (There is Love)	
"Perhaps Love"	- Denver

The Hymns suggested previously may also be sung as solos. If the music chosen is not too common, the bride should be prepared to provide a copy of the music for soloist and organist.

Popular songs will be considered if the words are appropriate for a service of worship.

The Rehearsal:

If yours is to be a formal wedding, plan on a rehearsal in order that you and your wedding party may be thoroughly familiar with the service. It is well to have as many as possible of the wedding party present, including attendants, ushers, anyone giving the bride in marriage. Please be prepared to meet with the minister after the rehearsal.

It is requested that the license and fees (if not paid in advance) be provided at the time of rehearsal.

(See extra Notes in Appendix attached)

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APPENDIX

- (A) A Thorough Medical Examination prior to your marriage is a desirable practice. We recommend that it serves your best interests to take into marriage the confidence of good health, or to have identified and treated any latent complaints or illnesses. A healthy 'you' is the best wedding gift you can give your partner.

- (B) Advance Reading - it is desirable that you do some advance reading on the Physical and Sexual side of marriage. As titles change frequently, we do not recommend specific books, though we do encourage procuring a book by a Medical Doctor or preferably a team of doctor and clergy person which is frank and detailed. It is good planning to take into your marriage a sound understanding of one's own physiology and how the physiology of one's mate works, and of how the privilege of sex in marriage can be best used as a creative blessing in married life.

- (C) If there is any other area which either of you wishes to discuss, please feel free to do so. Write it on a piece of paper or arrange for a private interview.

- (D) Premarital Courses are available in the City and we strongly encourage couples to attend one of these. They are available from the following:
 - The Family Services Bureau 244-0127
 - Catholic Family Services..... 244-7773

As courses are available at different times at these agencies we recommend you phone them as to the most suitable course for you. We are pleased when a couple attends a course from any one of the above.

(E) Certificates of Marriage - Clergy or marriage commissioners will supply the couple with a certificate of marriage. A request for an official government "Certificate of Marriage" (as opposed to those issued by the clergy or marriage commissioner), must be obtained from the Director of Vital Statistics, in Regina, for a small fee. (These certificates are often required as proof of marriage for other authorities).

Write to: Department of Vital Statistics
1919 Rose Street
Regina SK S4P 3V7

include information for reference: Date of Marriage
Place
(a photocopy of the church Names
certificate will work for the Current Address
information)
Price \$20.00 - state wallet size or intermediate size.

(F) Change of Name - Questions may arise regarding the change of surnames after the marriage ceremony. If so, have the couple contact Vital Statistics, in Regina, at 787-3092. Once married contact Vital Statistics they will forward a notice of name change to you.

A Word on Behalf of a Continuing Church Relationship:

We hope that you have come to ask for the ministries of the Church, and probably for the use of church facilities for your wedding, because you sincerely want the blessing of God in your marriage. If that is your desire, then we are pleased to be of assistance to you in whatever ways we can further that purpose.

We would point out, however, that to receive the benefits of God's presence in your marriage, you must look well beyond whatever a church wedding may provide.

The effectiveness of a religious faith in your home will only be truly found when together you seek to relate your personal lives and your marriage to God in the days and years to come.

This is not easy, but if you will exercise the discipline of attending and participating in the worship and work of a congregation near where you live, we are confident that you will find such practice will help you to find a stronger sense of common purpose, a heightening of your own love, and a stronger set of values in terms of what you want from marriage and what you contribute to marriage.

If you live near us and can come to Grace-Westminster United, we will be glad to see you, to work with you and hopefully, in time, with the family which will be yours. If you are in another community, we hope you will still seek out a neighbourhood church. Either way, we hope you will find somewhere to go to exercise and practice your faith, because we believe it makes a difference.

Grace-Westminster United Church
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