

WEDDINGS
AT
FIRST PARISH OF WESTWOOD, UNITED CHURCH
248 Nahatan Street, Westwood, Massachusetts 02090



Rev. Christopher L. Dodge, Pastor

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The Service of Holy Matrimony is a joyous and solemn rite of the Christian Church. Therefore, the First Parish of Westwood welcomes your interest in being married and is pleased to be a part of your wedding plans. We are eager to help you make your wedding a sacred and memorable occasion, and even more importantly, your marriage a success and a blessing!

In order to accomplish this goal, a general preparation period of six months is standard. The Pastor is always open to conversations in consideration of unique circumstances. *It is suggested that you contact the church office or the pastor as soon as you have decided to get married, even before a date is set.*

Whether your ceremony is in the Meeting House or at another location, attending worship as often as possible in the time of preparation for the wedding is expected. If one or both of you live at a distance, then worship wherever you are – and together whenever you can. You will find that worshipping together will make both your wedding ceremony and your marriage truer expressions of your faith.

PREMARITAL CONFERENCES:

The most important preparation for marriage takes place in your hearts and minds. To help this happen, a pastor normally meets with you a number of times before the wedding. These appointments will provide an opportunity for a discussion of the nature and meaning of Christian love and marriage, and planning for the ceremony itself.

SETTING THE DATE AND TIME:

As soon as you have a date in mind, check with the secretary in the church office to be sure the church's calendar is clear. *Please note that no date can be firm until you have your first appointment with a pastor.* If there is another wedding scheduled for that date, at least a two-hour interval is necessary.

ARRANGEMENT OF THE SERVICE:

Though these matters will be discussed in one of the pre-marital conferences, you should be aware of certain policies from the outset.

- *The pastor of First Parish oversees all services held in our Meeting House.* At his/her discretion, other clergy may be invited to officiate or assist in a service. The pastor is also responsible for the content of each service, and although he/she desires the service to be expressive of your taste, the service must also conform to the standards of Christian faith and worship. Thus, your own preferences in music, readings, etc. will need to be approved in advance by the pastor.
- *Our Organist* will gladly consult with you regarding music selections. If his/her schedule permits, he/she plays for all weddings. A substitute organist will be necessary in his/her absence.
- *Other Musicians* (soloists, instrumentalists) are gladly welcome. Securing their services must be taken care of by the couple. If the organist is expected to accompany them, please take into consideration the need for rehearsal time.
- *Floral Arrangements:* A pair of matching bouquets usually provides sufficient floral decoration. Ribbons, if used, must be tied or taped – *not tacked or nailed* – to the church furnishings.
- *Candles/Aisle Runner:*
 - Candles: Altar candles will be provided by the church. Aisle candles are also available. Unity candles should be provided by the couple.
 - Aisle runner: If a runner is desired, the couple should plan to arrange it through the florist. (Our aisle is 75 feet long, with 11 rows of pews on each side.)
- *Photography:* All photographers and videographers must consult with the officiating pastor in advance for guidelines regarding what is permissible during the ceremony (whether held at the Meetinghouse or at another setting)
- *Bulletins:* Printed bulletins are encouraged, as there is congregational participation in the service. These can be outsourced for printing. The church can also do these at a cost.

THE REHEARSAL:

A rehearsal is standard for a wedding and is normally scheduled a day or two before the ceremony. *If not provided earlier, the marriage license should be presented to the pastor at the rehearsal.*

INVITATIONS:

For printed invitations, we recommend this designation and address:

The First Parish of Westwood, United Church
248 Nahatan Street
Westwood, Massachusetts 02090

FEES:

Recommended Honorarium for the Pastor is \$600

	PARISH MEMBERS	OTHERS
Use of Meeting House	none	\$500
Organist	\$250	\$250
Sexton	\$125	\$125

FEE PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

- The fee for the use of the Meeting House is to be paid as soon as the date and time of the wedding are arranged. The date you specify will be reserved specifically for you only upon receipt of this fee.
- All other fees are to be paid at or before the rehearsal.
 - Checks for the use of the Meeting House should be made payable to “First Parish of Westwood”.
 - Other checks should be made payable to the individuals and given to them personally at the rehearsal:
 - Pastor: Rev. Christopher L. Dodge
 - Church Organist: Sarah Tocco
 - Sexton: Denis Wholey

Once again, we thank you for including First Parish of Westwood in your plans for your wedding ceremony. We will do all we can to help you make your wedding special and memorable.

The church office is open from 9AM-3PM, Monday through Thursday. Please feel free to call the church office at 781-326-5344 or email us at parish1st@firstparishwestwood.org if we can help you in any way.