



WEDDING POLICY

This policy represents the intention of Central United Church (Central) with regard to the conduct of weddings, both inside the sanctuary or chapel and at locations other than the church building.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND BELIEF

We believe the marriage ceremony to be a sacred and holy ritual representing the establishment of a covenant between two people who are fully aware of the spiritual, emotional and legal responsibilities that accompany such a ceremony. We recognize that it is our responsibility to prepare couples for such a commitment through pre-marital counselling. We are committed to conducting wedding ceremonies with dignity and holiness, both inside the sanctuary or chapel or at locations other than the church building.

POLICY

- (a) Membership at Central is not a requirement for couples seeking marriage.
- (b) The incumbent Minister(s) of Central has the right of first refusal on all weddings conducted at the church. If for whatever reason, the incumbent Minister(s) is unable to officiate, another clergyperson who is legally able to conduct weddings in the Province of Alberta may be permitted to officiate, with approval from the Board.
- (c) The Minister(s) of Central can refuse to conduct a wedding if any of the policies outlined in this document are not upheld or if there are concerns as to the viability of the marriage.
- (d) All weddings conducted by the Minister(s) of Central, both in the sanctuary or chapel or at locations other than the church building, must be duly recorded in the Marriage Register by the Office Administrator or other persons authorized to do so. This includes the Renewal of Vows ceremonies.
- (e) All couples who are married at Central must take a Pre-Marital Preparation Course offered by the officiating Minister or other duly authorized marriage counselling service. A Certificate of Completion must be presented to the officiating Minister prior to the wedding if the course is conducted by an outside counselling service.
- (f) The Minister(s) of Central may, at their discretion, conduct weddings at locations other than the church building, if available, recognizing that their first commitment in time is to the members and adherents of Central. Pre-marital counselling for these couples is also required.



- (g) Couples who present themselves for marriage must legally be able to do so according to the laws of the Province of Alberta (Marriage Act of Alberta, 2014) and the Government of Canada (Marriage Act of Canada, 2005).
- (h) Central has not gone through the process of being recognized as an Affirming Church. Unless or until this has been done and the Congregation votes in favour of being an Affirming Church, marriages between same-gender couples will not be performed in the church. All fees associated with wedding services will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Worship Team, the Property Team and the Trustees for ratification by the Board. Such fees may include but are not limited to: the Minister, the organist-accompanist, the wedding host, the audiovisual operators, preparation of a wedding bulletin, rental of the church facility and rental of church equipment. All fees are due and payable one month prior to the wedding day.
- (i) Members and adherents of Central are not granted a reduced fee for services.
- (j) The organist-accompanist of Central has the right of first refusal for all wedding ceremonies conducted at the church.
- (k) If the organist at Central is unable to provide accompaniment, the Board may grant permission for a duly qualified replacement to be hired.
- (l) Taped music or other musical instruments (e.g., guitar, cello, harp) may be used to provide musical accompaniment for the wedding service.
- (m) If audiovisual equipment or the media shout PowerPoint program is required for the ceremony, only duly authorized operators from Central are allowed access to the equipment.
- (n) Wedding hosts provided by the church are mandatory.
- (o) The officiating minister is expected to conduct the wedding rehearsal unless extenuating circumstances arise.
- (p) Central does not host wedding receptions. This does not preclude outside groups from hosting wedding receptions at Central.
- (q) Alcohol consumption or use of drugs, unless prescribed, is not permitted on church property in accordance with the Alcohol and Drug Use Policy of the church.
- (r) Animals, other than duly certified service animals, are not permitted on church property.



ADMINISTRATION

This policy is administered by the Worship Team, the Trustees, the Minister(s) of Central, the Office Administrator and the Wedding Host.

This policy document is a living document and can be changed at any time, with the approval of the Board.

The Board must inform the congregation about the policies that have been established by the Board and will seek ratification of each policy change at an Annual Congregational Meeting.

Final Draft approved by the Board, September 1st, 2018
This Policy has not been approved by the Congregation