

St Paul's United Church 62 Peter St N. Orillia, ON L3V 4Z1	POLICY	Page 1 of 3
Subject: Weddings		Date Effective: 2018 Date Reviewed: Date Revised: June 26, 2018
Issued by: Leadership Team		Approved by: Leadership Team 2018

I. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR WEDDINGS

We believe that...

1.1 Marriage is one of God's gifts through which Christians and other people of faith make a covenant with one another and God. (General Council, 1984)

1.2 Marriage from a spiritual perspective is based upon faithfulness expressed in:

- Choosing each other above all others
- Risking and being vulnerable in the relationship
- Willingness to give the relationship the patience, understanding and work required to help it grow
- Accepting and nurturing the other for their unique gifts in a life long commitment which is spiritual, emotional and physical

1.3 Our St. Paul's mission statement calls us to *strive to achieve God's creative purpose in all aspects of our family lives*. For many people, this includes marriage. The church, therefore, has a unique opportunity and responsibility to support couples as they move into a marriage relationship believing, as we do, that healthy relationships are central to spiritual well-being.

1.4 Unlike many organizations, the church does not exist to serve only its members. Rather, its members share in the mission and ministry of God's reign in the world out of their commitment to Jesus Christ.

1.5 Our ability to provide income tax deductions for donations, a subsidy from the government, implies that we have a responsibility to help strengthen the fabric of relationships within society. The government gives churches this subsidy because it deems that churches make a valuable and positive contribution to the community at large. Two of the last few things that the public turns to the church for are weddings and funerals. Responding to these requests in a positive, helpful manner is an important way of serving the community.

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1.6 By responding to people who desire marriage in a positive and meaningful way, we not only contribute to society but provide ourselves a practical way to share with people an effective experience of the Christian life and faith.

1.7 The very best relationship development course available should be provided and required. Studies indicate that when such a program is taken previous to six months before the marriage or in the year following the wedding, marriage outcomes are more positive and successful.

1.8 The provision of weddings should be self-funding, on a fee for service basis.

1.9 Special provision should be made for those demonstrating financial need. Currently, financial need is determined by limited income and no catered reception.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WEDDINGS

We recommend that...

1.10 Should there be more weddings than the minister(s) are able to willing to conduct, other clergy, recommended by the minister(s) and approved by the Board and Presbytery, can conduct weddings.

1.11 Should the Director of Music be unavailable to play at a wedding, a list of organists provided by the Director of Music be made available.

1.12 Couples may choose to hire live musicians, in which case, the Custodian will be paid an additional fee to operate the church sound system, if it is required.

1.13 Couples may choose to have prerecorded music instead of an organist, in which case, the Custodian will be paid an additional fee to operate the church sound system.

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1.14 Couples have the option of having no music.

1.15 The church office not provide bulletins for wedding services.

1.16 The fees for services be as follows:

- Minister \$400.00
- Organist \$350.00
- Custodian \$200.00
- Sound system for the service \$150.00
- Suggested donation of \$500 from couples using the sanctuary for which a tax receipt will be provided

1.17 Reduced fees be offered to couples who have little income and who are not having a catered reception.

1.18 Banns of marriage (a wedding license) be offered to couples who attend church regularly and who qualify under the Provincial Regulations.

1.19 Fees be reviewed every two years or as required.

2.1 This wedding policy applies to any couple meeting the legal requirements for marriage in the Province of Ontario and the guiding principles for wedding and criteria defined by St. Paul's United Church.