

**Two Rivers Pastoral Charge
The United Church of Canada**

Celebration of Marriage Policy

Greetings and congratulations from the Two Rivers Pastoral Charge, United Church of Canada. Our pastoral charge includes the churches and congregations of Bayswater-Summerville, Long Reach and Westfield.

We are pleased that you have chosen to celebrate your marriage in the context of the Christian faith. We hope and pray that you will find love and joy in your life together. The information provided in this letter concerns the policy and expectation of our Churches. While we invite you to celebrate your marriage within the church buildings this policy applies whether the marriage takes place within the church buildings or off-site.

The marriage Service is first of all a Service of Christian Worship and this should be kept in mind when choosing music and readings and when planning the worship. Both music and readings must be discussed with the minister.

The **FIRST STEP** in arranging a marriage is to **consult the Minister** regarding the date and the hour you have in mind. All requests for marriage need the approval of the Session of the Church. Please do **not** extend invitations or make arrangements regarding the time and date before this has been confirmed with the Minister. Should you wish to have a second Minister or Priest assist in the marriage ceremony the Minister of the Two Rivers Pastoral Charge will invite that person on your behalf.

License

The marriage license may be obtained at 15 Kings Square North (Service New Brunswick). Telephone number is 658-2500. Outside Saint John call 506-453-2385 for the nearest office. This license is valid for three months and is presently available at no charge. Please bring the license to the Minister **at least two weeks** before the wedding, so that the documents can be prepared.

Music

The marriage is a Christian service of worship, and the music is to be appropriate. All music, either vocal or instrumental, must meet the approval of the organist and the minister. At Westfield it is understood that the regular church organist, Bertis Sutton, will preside at the organ.

Decorations

We realize your day is special, and that it may be necessary to move some of the furnishings within the Church sanctuary to accommodate the service. We ask your consideration in ensuring that whatever has been altered be put back in place immediately following the wedding. If you plan on leaving flowers for the Sunday Worship, please notify the minister so that your gift can be recognized. Pew markers are to be attached with masking tape. We ask that **no confetti** be used on the church property.

Photographer/Video

Since the marriage is a Christian service of worship, distractions should be kept to a minimum.

Photographers are asked to discuss the guidelines with the officiating clergy. The general rule is that pictures may be taken by those gathered for the wedding during the Processional, Signing of Register and Recessional. The marriage may also be recorded on Video if the video camera is stationary.

Fees and Honorariums

There is a charge of \$200.00 for Westfield, \$100.00 for Bayswater - Summerville and Long Reach for your wedding whether in the church or off-site. Fees can be waived by the Session for those regularly involved in the life and work of the church, but a donation would be appreciated whether the marriage is on site or off-site.

At Westfield all wedding parties will pay fees for the organist, \$100.00. At Bayswater-Summerville and Long Reach the fee is determined between the organist and the couple.

The honorarium for the minister is \$100.00 on site and \$120.00 offsite. These fees may also be waived for those regularly involved in the life and work of the church or on the ability to pay.

The fees/honorariums should be placed in envelopes indicating the persons for whom they are intended.

We the Session of the Two Rivers Pastoral Charge want to offer you all the support we can. If there is anything we can do to help in your marriage preparations, or in your life as a married couple, please contact any member of the session or our minister. If you have any concerns or questions about the policies or information outlined in this letter, please contact us immediately.

May you know the blessing of God's love to be with you always.

Approved by the Two Rivers Pastoral Charge Session June 25, 2003

Update June 2006

After a year of education and discernment the three congregations voted whether or not to accept same-sex marriages. Long Reach and Westfield voted yes. Bayswater-Summerville voted no. Consequently same sex marriages may be covenanted at Long Reach and Westfield. Of course, a request for a same sex couple would be treated the same as any request for marriage, that is, need the approval of Session.