

# *Weddings*



*First Congregational Church of Royal Oak*



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
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**SENIOR MINISTER**

**Rev. John Miller**

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**Trish Noll**

**ORGANIST-MINISTER OF MUSIC**

**Melissa Ambrose-Eidson**

**WEDDING COORDINATOR**

**Christine Blauvelt**

## **YOUR WEDDING AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

We rejoice for you both as you invite us to share in the joy of your wedding. It is a privilege for us to participate in this solemn and significant event. This brochure has been prepared for the purposes of clarification and information as you plan for your wedding at the First Congregational Church of Royal Oak. Our staff will make every effort to see that your ceremony is as full of meaning and beauty as possible.

A church wedding is unlike a civil ceremony. You are asking God to be present with you and to bless the love and commitment you give each other. It is a sacred ceremony, and we encourage you to consider it the first step in a life shared together in light of biblical teachings.

## **A WORD ABOUT CHURCH AFFILIATION**

We neither require a specific confession of faith nor limit weddings to church members only. However, we do recognize that, unlike a civil ceremony, a church wedding is a worship service and is most meaningful when seen in its relationship to the larger worshipping community, the church itself. In coming to our community, you acknowledge the spiritual dimension of your relationship and affirm that you wish God's love to be formative in your marriage, giving it shape now as it unfolds in the future. In that light, we look forward to meeting and becoming friends in the months leading up to your wedding.

## **REHEARSAL**

Arrange your rehearsal with the church office. The bride and groom, their parents, all attendants, and ushers should attend the rehearsal. A rehearsal generally lasts about one hour. A rehearsal is not always necessary; you may discuss this with the Minister.

## **WEDDING SERVICE**

At our church, we offer a Christian service in which the wedding vows are made in a context of worship, prayer and thanksgiving. A typical wedding service includes:

- A Welcome
- Invocation
- Scripture Readings or other readings
- Words from the Minister about the meaning and joy of marriage
- A Song if desired
- The Exchange of Wedding Vows
- The Exchange of Rings
- The Lighting of the Unity Candle
- A Song if desired
- Prayer of Dedication and Benediction
- Pronouncement of Marriage

This is a basic outline of a wedding ceremony, and each couple is invited to work with the Minister and the Wedding Hostess to personalize their service.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING**

You choose your own photographer. We expect the photographer to abide by the rules of the church. These rules are fairly standard and since we do not discuss exceptions on your wedding day, the time to seek clarification is when you meet with the Minister and/or Wedding Hostess.

In general, a picture may be taken of the bride as she starts down the aisle and when the bridal party begins to recess. The photographer may take pictures of wedding party preparations one hour before the ceremony begins. During the ceremony, pictures may be taken in the sanctuary as long as they do not interfere with the proceedings and we can reenact any part of the service afterward.

The use and placement of video recording equipment must receive the prior approval of the Minister. Under no circumstances may people move about the Sanctuary recording the wedding service.

### **PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE WORKSHOP**

We care enough about you and your relationship to require your participation in the "Preparation for Marriage Workshop" offered by the Samaritan Counseling Center of Southeastern Michigan. The schedule of workshops is available on line at [www.samaritancounselingmichigan.com/newsite/?page\\_id=26](http://www.samaritancounselingmichigan.com/newsite/?page_id=26) You are responsible for your own registration and payment of all fees. Where distance makes it impractical to attend workshop meetings, the Center does offer a somewhat abbreviated format on an individual basis. Those who live some distance from the Detroit area may attend an equivalent program in their area providing it is truly "equivalent" and a certificate of completion is presented to the church.

### **STAFF**

The Minister of First Congregational Church of Royal Oak generally officiates at wedding services. Visiting ministers are welcome to participate, but it is the policy of the Church that its Minister will meet with the visiting minister and the couple to approve this arrangement. Please indicate your desire to involve other pastors at the time you make your reservation.

Plan to arrange for at least three conferences with the Minister before your wedding and after you have attended the "Preparation for Marriage" workshop.

The Church's organist (Minister of Music) plays at all weddings. Other vocalists or instrumentalists may participate, but only with the prior approval of the organist. The wedding ceremony is a service of worship and deserves worshipful music. Please discuss your musical selections with the organist early in your planning. Again, we do not require that you adhere to a single style, only that the music enhances the congregation's sense of worship.

**RESERVATIONS AND FACILITIES**

You should set your wedding date with the Church office as far in advance as possible. Filling out the enclosed wedding information form will help us to understand the particular details of your wedding. It is our responsibility to provide a setting within which this significant moment in your lives can be memorably and joyfully celebrated. To that end the Wedding Hostess is available to offer appropriate direction and assistance.

Long experience has taught us how we can best fulfill our responsibilities, and out of our experience we have developed our fairly basic and straight forward policies and rules. When you sign the wedding information form, you and the other participants (including your wedding party, florists, and photographers) agree to abide by the church's policies and procedures.

Turning in the wedding information form and a nonrefundable \$50.00 deposit will secure your wedding date. All fees are due at the time of rehearsal.

Most weddings at First Congregational Church are celebrated in the sanctuary. The sanctuary has a seating capacity of about 300 persons. There is also a small balcony for additional seating. Occasionally, smaller weddings (under 50 guests) may be held in the parlor.

Our building is smoke-free. Smoking is permitted in the parking lot. Alcoholic beverages may not be consumed anywhere on the premises. This includes limousines parked on church property. There are no exceptions to this policy.

**WEDDING FEES**

The cost of the wedding is \$950.00. This fee provides for building operating costs and honoraria for staff members whose participation in weddings is not considered part of their basic duties.

The fee schedule is outlined below:

Church (payable to FCC)	\$200.00
Custodian (payable to FCC)	\$100.00
Organist (payable to Melissa Ambrose-Eidson)	\$250.00
Wedding hostess (payable to Christine Blauvelt)	\$100.00
Minister (payable to John Miller)	\$300.00

**FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS**

The selection of floral arrangements and a florist is the prerogative of the wedding party.

The main aisle of the church is carpeted; no runner may be used.

Placements of floral arrangements and all decorations must receive prior approval of the Wedding Hostess. NO tape, nails or tacks may be used on furnishings. It is preferred that decorations be attached with ribbons or elastic bands.

Candles are provided by the church. A Unity (Wedding) Candle may be used.

Because of maintenance and safety concerns, we ask that no rice, birdseed or confetti be thrown in the church proper or on the grounds.