

GETTING MARRIED AT STONEY CREEK UNITED CHURCH

Congratulations on your engagement and upcoming wedding. We're delighted that you are considering Stoney creek United Church for your special day. We want to make this a joyous and meaningful event, and we are more than willing to work with you to make sure it is memorable. Here are some of our expectations to help you through the process.

Here are the answers to some frequently asked questions (**FAQ's**) about the service and the steps leading up to it. Your situation is unique and you will have special concerns, of course, so please feel free to contact us with any question you may have.

FAQ

1. What do I call the minister?

The current minister at Stoney Creek United is Rev. Bob Nightingale. He is comfortable with you calling him Bob, or Rev. Nightingale. Rev. Claudia Adams is also attached to Stoney Creek United Church and may be helping with your wedding.

2. How do I contact the church, the minister and the organist?

There are three ways. You can contact us through the church office at Stoney Creek United Church. The number is 905-662-4963 and Beth Corrigan is our Wedding Co-Ordinator. You can contact us by email at scuc@bellnet.ca and you can contact both the church, the organist and the minister through our website at www.stoneycreekunited.ca .

3. How much will all this cost us?

There are basically four fees involved in a wedding at Stoney Creek United Church. The minister's fee for a wedding in the church is **\$250**; the organist's fee is **\$150**; the co-ordinator's fee is **\$75**; and there is a **\$250** fee for the use of the sanctuary. The fee is due as of the day of the wedding. A fee for a wedding is not a donation to a charitable organization and will not be receipted as such.

4. How often do I have to meet with the minister?

Normally, there will be **two meetings** with the minister. The first is to get to know each other a little and to lay out the steps ahead, plan times for the rehearsal, assess special circumstances, and to take a first look at the actual wedding services themselves. The second will be to finalize details of your service and to have any questions answered that may have arisen in the meantime.

5. Do we have to go through some kind of counselling?

No. You are not required to go through pre-marriage counselling. The minister will be more than happy to do some general counselling in the areas of relationships and communication but that is up to you. There is no point in forcing

you to go through something with which you are uncomfortable or to which you have resistance.

If you would like to attend a marriage preparation program. Courses given by other churches or institutions are quite acceptable. The minister may provide you with information concerning available courses.

6. Can we do a non-traditional service?

The answer to that is a qualified, **YES, within limits**. There are elements of the service that can be done differently, but we are holding the wedding in a church and that has to be respected. Non-traditional music and non-traditional readings may be used if they are negotiated first with the minister.

7. Can we take pictures during the service?

At certain points in the service, notably the kiss and the first time you turn and face each other, the proceedings will stop and people may take photographs. Videos may be done so long as the videographer stays in one place during the actual service. The point of what we are doing is not to take pictures but to make vows to one another in front of friends and family and we will do our best to keep the focus on what we are there for while being reasonable about the mementos of your special day.

8. What about the licence? Who gets that? Where? How much is it? Who fills it out?

You can get the licence at any town or city hall in Ontario but it is only good for 90 days so don't get it too early. These days you can probably find the forms on the Ontario Government website, but it is almost as easy to drop by the town or city hall in your area and pick up the application form which will ask for information about you, your parents, and the date and place of your wedding. It will also tell you what the fees are (currently about \$100), the methods of payment available and the documentation that needs to accompany your application. Only one person needs to return the application and get the licence. Bring the whole licence package to me and I will make sure that it is filled out and returned to the proper government offices after the service.

9. Can I have members of my family or others do part of the service?

Yes. The usual place to include such people is in the reading of the scriptures or alternative readings you may have selected. This, like most elements of the service, is negotiable with the minister. Remember, most of your family and friends will have ideas about how you should do your service. You should listen to them carefully because occasionally they have a good idea. You should thank them all graciously, because they mean well. But you should do your service your way, because you are the one who is going to live with it for the rest of your life. The only one you really have to listen to is the minister, because you are paying him or her to be professional and to know what they are doing.

10. Can I decorate the church with flowers?

Flowers for the decoration of the sanctuary are welcome, but not necessary. We advise that flowers for the wedding be delivered to your home and brought to the Church by an Usher or friend prior to the service. Please check with the caretaker if you are having flowers delivered directly to the Church and be sure you leave the caretaker's name and telephone number with your florist.

11. Can we light a Unity candle during the service?

YES, you can.

12. Is it OK to use confetti, rice or birdseed?

NO! The use of any of these is strictly prohibited around the church. The reason is simple. It gets tracked back into our church and is very difficult to get out of our carpets.

13. Is the church wheelchair accessible?

YES. There is a chairlift that will accommodate a wheel chair and that is accessible at the side entrance from Lake Avenue. There is an accessible washroom on that level and there are spaces for wheel chairs among the pews, very near the front. If there are other issues of accessibility, please discuss them with us.

14. How do I get the process going?

Fill in the attached application and send it back to us. That will start a paper trail that will hold your date open in our calendar. About 8-10 weeks prior to your wedding day, contact the church to set up an appointment with the minister and the two of you can get together and go over all of your questions and begin to choose an appropriate service for your special day.

Once again, CONGRATULATIONS. Marriage is an incredible journey with lots of twists and turns and ups and downs, but by sharing it with the person who means the most to you in the whole world, that journey not only becomes tolerable, but joyous. Getting married may seem hectic and frustrating and confusing at times. There will probably times when you will want to elope or call the whole thing off. The truth is, however, that celebrating this very special day in the life of two people who care deeply for each other with your friends and family gathered around you, will be a memory that will last a lifetime. Try to take things in stride. Two things will help if you remember them. The first is the first rule of life which is, "**DON'T PANIC**" and the second is that your wedding is not really about gowns and flowers and rings and pictures, it is about the love you have for each other and nothing can change that.

Stoney Creek United Church

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www.stoneycreekunited.ca