



UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA WESLEY UNITING CHURCH

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WEDDING GUIDELINES

THE CHURCH and YOU

YOU WILL BE MADE VERY WELCOME

You are not obliged to be a member of the Church in order to be married. However, we believe that the Story and People of God enrich our lives in many ways, and encourage you both to find ways appropriate for you to nurture your spirituality.

For those who wish to consider membership of Wesley Church, please talk to our ministers. People whose membership has lapsed, or who are members of other churches can be admitted either by re-affirmation of faith or by agreement of the Church Council. We celebrate and welcome new members annually when we commemorate the anniversary of the Uniting Church in June.

Initial Enquiry

It is wise for you to inquire as soon as a date for the wedding is proposed. In the first instance, the request is made to the church office or directly to our Minister, Rev Dr Sarah Agnew.

Completion of a booking form with written confirmation of date of the proposed wedding should be sent to the Church office after the initial discussion with the Minister.

We do not normally arrange weddings prior to 10 am or after 7 pm and weddings are not normally conducted on Sundays. However, the Minister is willing to discuss any special request.

Eligibility

You are not required to be members of the Church. It is simply expected that those who are married in the Church will approach with sincerity the experience of Christian marriage which the wedding service symbolises.

There are certain legal requirements that apply to any marriage - notably that there is no existing marriage, and that if either party is under the age of 18, the parents' written consent will be given, as well as the consent of a Judge or Magistrate.

Different Religious Traditions

We are able to consider the marriage of people of different religions, provided the Minister is satisfied that both parties are aware of any potential difficulties that may be inherent in their different beliefs. The Minister will expect to discuss this prior to any arrangements being made.

Divorced Partners

Normally, the Minister is able to re-marry a divorced person(s). The Minister is not permitted to officiate at the marriage of a divorced person unless the Decree Nisi has become absolute at least one calendar month prior to the wedding, and is available to be sighted before the final interview.

Interviews

At the initial interview with the Minister bring with you your Birth Certificates (extracts are acceptable or, in certain cases, passports or Naturalisation Certificates), and in the case of re-marriage, the Death Certificate or Decree Nisi/Absolute.

Pre-Marriage Course

It is recommended that all couples who wish to be married at Wesley will attend a pre-marriage course, except where it is not reasonably practicable.

A brochure outlining approved organisations offering programmes of Marriage Counselling and Marriage Education will be given to you at the preliminary interview.

We advise couples being married in Wesley Church to participate in the Prepare Course which is a professional counselling instrument used widely in Australia by most marriage celebrants. Prepare is designed to help you get your marriage off to a good start. Prepare will help you build upon the strengths you have as a couple and will assist you in more clearly identifying areas of your relationship that may need attention.

The cost of Prepare is \$100 for the computer read-out and the 3½ hours of consultation. The Minister will talk to you about arrangements for doing Prepare.

Rehearsals

It may be helpful to arrange for a rehearsal of the wedding ceremony, possibly in association with the final conversation, a day or two before the wedding. The minister will discuss this with you.

Documentation

All documents necessary for the wedding are supplied by the Church - one being completed at the first interview - and the others at various stages prior to the wedding. Other documentation is completed on the wedding day.

The Wedding Day

The ceremony is conducted by the Minister according to the rites of the Uniting Church in Australia. Variations in the service may be allowed after consultation with the Minister. Participation in the Service by family members or friends is encouraged. The duration of the ceremony from arrival to the time of leaving the Church is approximately 35 minutes. We request guests not throw confetti or rice whilst in the Church grounds. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Orders of Service

You may wish to have printed your own Order of Service. Consultation with the Minister as to the content must take place before proceeding to printing.

Music

We shall arrange for our Organist, or a deputy, to play at your wedding. The Organist can arrange for one of the choir principals to sing if desired, the fee for this being negotiated with the Organist. Please consult with the Minister on music chosen for the ceremony. You may choose your own hymn or hymns (normally one or two) in conjunction with the Minister.

Flowers

Two large vases of flowers are provided by arrangement with our florist for Friday and Saturday weddings. These remain in the Church for the Sunday services. However, we endeavour to use the colours you prefer with flowers in season at the time. By arrangement with the Office you may add other vases of flowers or pew decorations if you wish. There would be an extra cost if these are provided by the church florist.

For weddings on days other than Friday and Saturday, the bridal party is entirely responsible for the supply of flowers. You may ask our florist to arrange them for you. The account would be your responsibility.

Photography / Video

Photographs may be taken outside the Church, both before and after the wedding, and also during the signing of the register. The minister will ask that photographs not be taken during the ceremony, in particular, the vows. Please discuss professional photography and video recording arrangements with the Minister.

Witnesses

The wedding documents need to be witnessed by two persons, who must be over the age of 18 years. In the event of two such witnesses not being available in the wedding party, an arrangement will need to be made for witnesses who have observed the wedding to be available at the signing of the register.

Parking

There is normally ample parking in the Church grounds and in the adjacent streets. Access to the Church car park is from Fitzroy Street just off National Circuit (behind Rydges Hotel). Wheelchair access is available.

Expenses

A flat fee of \$999 includes the Minister, Organist, Flowers, Attendant, Insurance and Church hire. A non-refundable deposit of \$100 is required at time of booking via direct debit, cash or cheque made payable to "UCA Canberra Central Parish". We ask that payment of the balance be made at the time of the final meeting prior to the wedding, or posted to the Church Office before the wedding day.