



Wedding Guidelines at First Congregational Church of Hanover

This document has been prepared to help you in making plans for a wedding at the First Congregational Church of Hanover. There are many details for you to consider, and we have tried here to deal with the questions which come up most frequently. Its purpose is to detail the policies and procedures of the Church as well as being helpful to you. Its suggestions are designed to help make your wedding day the beautiful and meaningful occasion it should be. Marriage is a rite of the church; sacred, holy, and ordained by God. When two persons come to the church altar for marriage, they are participating in a service that expresses gratitude to God for giving the couple the gift of true love.

SETTING THE DATE AND PREMARITAL COUNSELING SESSION

Call or email the pastor to determine date availability. Once a date is agreed upon the pastor will encourage you to read these guidelines. If you agree to the guidelines please contact the pastor as soon as possible to schedule a two-hour pre-marriage counseling session. A \$200.00 Deposit for non/inactive members is due at the first counseling session cash or check payable to FCC Hanover. The deposit can also be paid with credit card or EFT through the church website, fcchanover.org. On the online donation page under directed gifts put the amount in the "other box" and then enter "wedding" in the adjacent descriptive box. This non-refundable deposit guarantees the wedding date will be reserved on the church calendar. The deposit also pays for the use of the sanctuary facility and church office administrative expenses.

PLANNING

The pastor of First Congregational Church will share with you in the planning of your wedding ceremony during a second meeting, no longer than 90 minutes in length. A traditional service has been used over the years and is usually 30 minutes in length. However, its design allows for a lot of flexibility to personalize it for your wedding. Although it is appropriate that the service reflect the interests and needs of the bride and groom, the service has to conform to certain standards of Christian faith and worship. The pastor will work with you in choosing prayers, vows, readings and music selections. For couples who live out of state the counseling sessions can also be done through speaker phone or Skype. Children are not allowed to attend the counseling or worship planning sessions.

VISITING CLERGY

Other members of the clergy are welcome to participate in the wedding ceremony with the minister. However, protocol requires that the pastor be consulted and he then may extend a personal invitation to the guest pastor and discuss his or her role in the service. No wedding can be conducted solely by a guest pastor. The pastor at the second meeting with the couple will do all marriage service planning and conduct the rehearsal. After the second meeting, the pastor will contact the guest pastor and discuss his or her role in the service.

THE LICENSE

The license should be given to the pastor no later than at the rehearsal. Following the ceremony, the pastor will sign and return the license to the city or town clerk who issued it. At some later date, the couple may wish to obtain a copy of this official document from the city/town clerk.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND FILMING

The photographer is permitted to take flash pictures in the narthex and vestry of the church before the ceremony and following it. Flash pictures may also be taken during the processional and recessional. No flash pictures may be taken during the ceremony, since experience has proven that pictures taken at this time detract greatly from the dignity of the service. Cameras without flash and the use of video equipment may be taken from a stationary location within the church designated by the pastor. The wedding party may return to the sanctuary following the ceremony for pictures in the service setting.

Pictures may be taken at will in other parts of the church building.

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom or other person employing the photographer to notify him/her of this policy.

USE OF THE CHURCH BUILDING

The Church sanctuary's seating capacity is 200 people. Use of rice or confetti or flower petals, unless by special pre-arrangement with the pastor, is not permitted. Smoking is not permitted in church buildings and no alcoholic beverages may be served or used on the premises.

THE WEDDING RECEPTION

If it is so desired, the church vestry or Riley Parish Hall are available for receptions. Please check with the church office for availability of the Hall as well as usage fees.

FEES AND HONORARIA

Pastor.....	\$300
Minister of Music.....	\$200
Custodian.....	\$100
Sanctuary.....	\$200 (Deposit for non/inactive members)

Checks to the Minister, Minister of Music and Custodian should be payable to the individual. Names will be provided by the minister. These checks are given to the minister at the rehearsal. The fees may be adjusted at the discretion of the minister in cases of financial hardship. A scaled down wedding can be arranged.

If you have questions, contact Rev. Eric at reveric@fcchanover.org or 781-826-4762. Rev. Eric is normally in the office in the mornings, Monday thru Thursday, Thank you for your interest!