

**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 King Square North (Service New Brunswick), telephone number is (506) 658-2500. Outside Saint John, call (506) 453-2385, for the nearest office. Please bring the license to the Minister **at least two weeks** before the wedding, so that the documents can be prepared. THERE IS A FEE.

**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. It is understood that the regular church organist will preside at the organ: at Westfield Bertis Sutton, at Long Reach Joan Small.

**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.

**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 and Long Reach, all wedding parties will pay organist fees of \$100.00. At Bayswater-Summerville 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 and paid at the rehearsal or before.

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.

**Update February 2017**

In February, 2017 the three congregations of the Two Rivers Pastoral Charge: Bayswater-Summerville, Long Reach and Westfield - voted unanimously to adopt an Inclusivity Statement that proclaims that all persons are welcome to take part in every aspect of church life, including membership, leadership, celebrating life passages and marriage.

See Inclusivity Statement on website.