

First Congregational Church of Dunbarton
United Church of Christ
6 Stark Highway North
Dunbarton, NH 03046

WEDDING POLICIES AND FEES

We are so happy that you want to be married in our Church! We hope the following information will be helpful to you as you plan your special day. It is offered as a guide so that your wedding may be as sacred and meaningful as possible!

Christian marriage is a commitment that has its foundation in the faithfulness of God's love. The marriage ceremony is a service of Christian worship in which two people are united and pledge their vows in the presence of God and witnesses. It is one of life's most hallowed moments and should be celebrated with reverence and joy.

The Board of Deacons has established the following policies and guidelines concerning weddings:

Presiding Clergy

It is understood that the presiding Pastor of the Dunbarton Congregational Church will conduct the wedding ceremony. If the couple would like a family member or friend who is a clergyperson or Justice of the Peace to assist with the service, that individual must write or call the pastor and negotiate that involvement at least 90 days prior to the wedding.

Pre-Marital Sessions

Any couple to be married in the church is expected to attend at least two pre-marital sessions with the pastor for the purpose of planning the wedding service. These sessions can be arranged at a time convenient to both the couple and the pastor. The pastor may request additional sessions with the couple prior to the marriage. Individuals with any prior marriages must present valid divorce decrees by the second session. The pastor retains the right to refuse to perform a marriage ceremony.

Facilities

Our traditional white clapboard meetinghouse is located on Route 13 in historic Dunbarton, New Hampshire. For over 175 years it has occupied a place of prominence on the Town Common in this picturesque New Hampshire town. Our "campus" consists of the church building, a lawn, and a small vestry building that houses our church school and offices. Though our historic buildings are beautifully maintained, please know that a few creaks and imperfections come with age!

The interior of the sanctuary has two aisles and three seating sections that will accommodate approximately 225 adults. There is only one restroom located in the vestry building. No restrooms are available in the church. Family members and/or members of the bridal party are welcome to use the vestry prior to the service. If needed, there is a small room off the narthex (entry hall) of the church for the bride's use. The vestry is suited for only the smallest and most informal of receptions. The church lawn may be used for a reception for an additional negotiated fee.

Wedding Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal is generally held the evening before the wedding; however, this event can be scheduled at a time mutually agreed upon by the couple and the pastor. At least one member of the Board of Deacons will be present to assist the pastor and the couple at the rehearsal and during the wedding ceremony. A member of the Trustees will also be present if the size and nature of the event warrant it.

Photography

Neither guests nor the official photographer may take flash pictures during the service. The official photographer may take photos using natural light at any location(s) approved by the pastor. Under no circumstances will the photographer be allowed in or in close proximity to the chancel area during the wedding ceremony. Pictures may be posed in the sanctuary after the service if the couple wishes. The same rules apply to video. The purpose of these rules is to maintain an atmosphere of dignity, worship and reverence with a minimum of distraction. Please inform your photographer/videographer accordingly.

Music

The church has an amplification system, an organ and a piano. We will recommend an organist for the service if you so desire. Though we offer recommendations regarding an organist, all arrangements pertaining to music and fees should be made directly with that individual. Soloists should arrange a time to rehearse with the organist prior to the service. If a musician other than a suggested organist is used, that individual must contact the pastor as soon as possible to coordinate music for the service. Our organ is large and beautiful, yet has its own personality. For this reason, any outside organist must make arrangements to meet with one of the regular church organists before the wedding to receive instructions on its use. A separate fee should be paid to the Dunbarton Congregational Church organist for this training time (see Fee Schedule).

The church uses the New Century Hymnal. If congregational hymns from other sources are chosen, the family should discuss these selections with the organist and make arrangements for their inclusion as inserts in the bulletin.

Flowers

We are more than happy to work with a florist of your choice and will make the church available for planning and setup provided we have ample notification. If you plan to leave some of your wedding flowers in the church after the ceremony, we ask that you let us know ahead of time so that we may include an acknowledgement of your generosity in our Sunday Bulletin!

Rice

Rice is not to be thrown. Birdseed or bubbles may be used outside the building!

Wedding License

Your wedding license must be given to the pastor at the rehearsal. Submission of a valid license is mandatory prior to the performance of the ceremony.

Fee Schedule

Thank you for choosing us to consecrate your marriage before God!