



## GETTING MARRIED AT DEER LAKE CHURCH

[www.deerlakeunitedchurch.shawbiz.ca](http://www.deerlakeunitedchurch.shawbiz.ca)

### Introduction

Congratulations! You have decided to get married. Now you are beginning to look for a place to celebrate this event. There are many options to consider and we thank you for considering Deer Lake United Church as one possibility. This brochure is designed to help give you insight into our thoughts and beliefs on marriage. We are pleased to support you in this joyous occasion of your wedding day and to share with you some spiritual resources that will contribute to the beginnings of a rich married journey. We look forward to speaking with you further about this important decision.

### Weddings Are Unique

We acknowledge and celebrate that there are many differences in people's backgrounds who come to the church for marriage. Differences in family backgrounds, ethnicity, world view, etc. all cause us to understand the marriage ceremony from unique perspectives. As a result, the marriage event requires careful thought and planning in order for it to be an authentic expression of your special lives and unique relationship. Our hope is that your wedding day will feel like your wedding day and not one that rolled off an assembly line. In order to accomplish this, we will need your commitment to work with our minister during the marriage preparation sessions to design a service that will have integrity for you as a couple and for us as people of faith within the denomination of The United Church of Canada.



### Some of Our Beliefs On Marriage

We are a progressive and inclusive church who understand marriage to be a grace-filled gift offered to two people from God. As such, we feel called to celebrate this ministry with all who call upon us for service. We invite you to approach your wedding in the spiritual context of Christian love. In marriage, we make a covenant with the full intention of a lifelong commitment with one another before God. We believe that the covenant or promise made between the couple and God on their wedding day forms the foundation of their marriage. This commitment of fidelity serves to empower the marriage, more so than the changeable emotion of love. Because of this commitment, it is actually the couple who perform the wedding, not the minister. The minister and the guests act as witnesses to celebrate this new beginning and offer themselves as supports in the future.

We believe that marriage is a deeply spiritual matter and that the wedding ceremony is primarily a gathering of worship. The worship gathering is based upon an understanding of God's love for humanity as understood through the person and action of Jesus. As such, some reading from scripture and prayers are offered as we call upon God to bless the marital union and guide the couple through their life-long relationship.

### Preparation For Married Life

As a community who engages in the ministry of marriage, we feel a tremendous responsibility to the couple coming to be married. The difficulties of nurturing a healthy marriage in today's society are harshly reflected in divorce statistics. In this task, we do not sit in judgment of your suitability for marriage. Our response is to help build upon the existing strengths of your relationship and to assist you in forming a solid future as a couple. To this end, couples attend two marriage preparation meetings with the pastor. During these meetings it is hoped that in sharing your relationship with the pastor you will be enabled to customize a wedding service that is expressive of your unique relationship. This will include the writing or selection of vows as well as suitable readings, etc. Secondly, we encourage couples to attend a marriage preparation course through "The Marriage Project" or other comparable group. Having personally attended the course, we fully endorse it as an essential part of marriage preparation. They have courses running at a variety of times and locations and can be reached at 604-433-6416 or online at [www.themarriageproject.com](http://www.themarriageproject.com). Finally, we present an annual marriage enrichment workshop on the Sunday afternoon closest to Valentine's Day "*Making Your Marriage Last...By Making It First*" which we invite you to attend as you prepare for your wedding. Once you have been married at Deer Lake, we consider you to be part of our spiritual community and hope to grow with you in the future. Many couples return to the church following their wedding for a variety of reasons such as their child's baptism, to attend Sunday worship, attend study groups or to discuss pastoral issues with the minister. We remain open to your future needs as they arise and consider you to be a "friend of Deer Lake" after your wedding.

### **So Far So Good**

You have read this far and are still considering marriage at Deer Lake...great! The next step would be for you to come and meet with our Pastor Rev. Scott Turnbrook. This will give you a chance to discuss your wedding day and ask questions. It may also be helpful for you to attend one of our 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning worship services to help get an idea of our minister's 'style'. In the end, our hope is that you ask the question 'is this the place where we see ourselves getting married?' If this answer is "Yes", the only other detail is to set a date and time for your special day.

### **The Use of an Outside Wedding Officiant**

Normally, the minister from Deer Lake United Church conducts the wedding ceremony. If for special reasons another officiant is desired, this person may act as a co-officiant with our minister. Arrangements well in advance of the service must be made for this co-officiant to meet with the representative at the church to coordinate a ceremony that would be appropriate within the United Church of Canada's theological perspectives and guidelines.

### **Seating**

The sanctuary will seat approximately two hundred and twenty-five people. One hundred and fifty people can comfortably be seated in the main sanctuary and seventy-five in the balconies.

### **Fees**

The last issue that you will likely be concerned with is the total cost of the wedding. While this is one important consideration, we believe that it should be the last of your considerations, so we have placed it at the end of the brochure. The total cost of a 2006/2007 wedding is \$700, which covers fees for the pastor, musician, caretaker, wedding hostess, as well as a building usage fee. The wedding fee is normally paid in two parts. A \$200 non-refundable deposit is required in order to formally book the date and time of your wedding. The \$500 balance is payable one month prior to the day of your wedding or by the end of June (for weddings in July and August). We would like to stress that this fee is not set in stone. If you are absolutely unable to afford a wedding due to severe financial hardships, please speak with the minister for consideration of your situation on compassionate grounds.

### **Weddings Performed Outside The Church**

During an in-church wedding, we celebrate God's presence who blesses the marital union. While we believe God to be present in the church, we also believe that God's presence exists beyond a sanctuary to all other places of creation. As such, we feel it to be appropriate to offer a wedding ceremony in locations other than the church. We do ask, however, that the location be negotiated with the officiant for suitability. The ceremony, planning, and other arrangements will be similar to our church weddings. The cost for the officiant's professional services is \$225 plus travel. All other arrangements for music, etc. must be made separately.



(Deer Lake Beach – a popular photo stop for couples after their wedding)



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