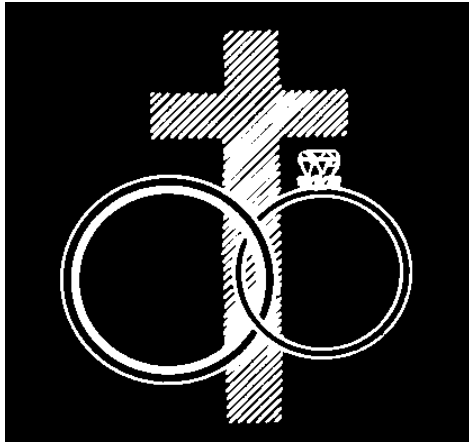


**PEACE DALE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
**United Church of Christ**  
**261 Columbia Street**  
**Peace Dale, Rhode Island 02883**

**Phone: (401) 789-7313**



**MARRIAGE WORSHIP SERVICE**

INFORMATION HANDBOOK

## **INTRODUCTION**

The following material is intended to help you as you prepare for your wedding.

Please take the time to read through all of it. A careful reading will assist us to avoid any miscommunication which may plague us as we plan important events in our lives. Be sure to note any questions you may have, and consult the Pastor if there are any problems. We want your wedding to be a joyful occasion and will work with you to insure a day filled with good memories for the future.

The ministers and staff at Peace Dale Congregational Church will guide and assist you to make your marriage a truly special and memorable occasion in your lives. Certain policies have been established to insure the quality of your wedding service.

### **I. MARRIAGE: WHAT IS IT?**

It is significant that you have chosen to be married through the ministry of the Church. We assume you have come to the Church because you want to be married within the context of the Judeo-Christian tradition, that you identify with the heritage, and that you perceive marriage as the appropriate means to continue your relationship.

When we speak of marriage at the Church, two key words are helpful in remembering the meaning of marriage: Covenant and Commitment. Covenant, while having ancient legal meaning, is also a faith term. The ancient legal understanding of covenant meant “an agreement between two or more parties”. Later, God’s people understood there to be a particular *covenant*, or agreement, between them and God. This covenant was based upon promises God made to God’s people. We believe our God has promised to love, to care, and to assist us forever. Therefore, the Judeo-Christian heritage understands our relationship with God to be a “Covenantal” one. Such an understanding of covenant provides us with a model for the marriage covenant. Just as the covenant with God provides the Church with an identity as the people of God, so too does marriage provide us with a new identity. As we join in the covenant of marriage, we find ourselves becoming part of a new family, complete with new traditions, and new opportunities.

The other key word is commitment. Too often we take commitment for granted when we first decide to marry someone. There is no doubt that every relationship experiences crises. Whether it is a relationship with a friend, a co-worker, or a parent, there are times of stress and uncertainty. The marriage relationship will have such times of crisis, as

well. Such times lead to questions and doubts, pain and hurt. Our first tendency might be to avoid dealing with these types of situations. It takes a deep, conscious commitment to one another, and to your marriage relationship to deal with the problems we will face in life. The commitment you will make as partners in the covenant of marriage will provide the basis upon which both of you can share your thoughts and feelings with one another.

The Church believes that marriage is a gift of God. Together, we join with you in celebrating this gift you have chosen to receive. As you move through life, know that the Church is here to provide support, nurture, challenge, and comfort for you and your new family. We are here not just for your wedding day, but for all the days to come. Congratulations on choosing to celebrate your love by making a covenant commitment with one another!

## **SOME POLICIES FOR WEDDINGS AT PEACE DALE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

### **Scheduling**

Please plan in advance for the use of the Church. The ministers will help you with your personal wishes concerning the wedding. A time for counseling must be arranged, and the date for the wedding set before any other plans are made.

### **Presiding**

The ministers of Peace Dale Congregational Church are responsible for worship leadership, including all weddings. Should a family desire another minister to participate in the service, the request should be made to the Peace Dale Congregational Church minister. The prerogative to extend an invitation to another minister rests with the minister from Peace Dale Congregational Church.

The minister in charge of your service will meet with the wedding party for rehearsals and explain all procedures. Please be prompt at all rehearsals. In order to insure that you meet the state's requirements for a legal union, a valid marriage license from the State of Rhode Island must be in the Pastor's Study at the time of the wedding rehearsal.

### **Music**

Our Church celebrates the gift of music in our worship. As such, the art of music plays an important role in the service of marriage. All music must be approved by the minister leading the service, and the Church organist. Suitability of certain music for the organ, as well as

consideration of the appropriateness of suggested music, will be the decision of the minister leading the service and the organist.

Our Church organist has the responsibility to provide musical leadership for our worship and will have the first right of refusal for providing music at all weddings held within the church requiring organ music. If this option to refuse is exercised, the organist will help secure a substitute by supplying the couple with a list of approved organists to contact. To insure security, as well as an excellent service, the services of other organists may be used only with the permission of the incumbent organist. We strongly encourage each couple to use our music ministry. If you choose to use outside musicians in place of our church's organist, you will be charged a bench fee of \$100.00.

Once your wedding date has been set, you should contact the organist directly to set a date for a consultation. At that time, musical arrangements for your wedding, such as choice of service music, use of a soloist, and specific requests, etc., will be discussed. The basic fee of \$150.00 includes this consultation, a short program of organ music preceding the ceremony, and performing at the wedding ceremony itself. For attendance at any rehearsal (including the wedding rehearsal or rehearsals with soloists and/or instrumentalists) an additional fee of \$25.00 per rehearsal is required. Additional remuneration shall be made for special music requests requiring extensive practice. If music is requested which the organist does not own, it must be provided by the couple a month prior to the service. All musical arrangements must be finalized 30 days prior to wedding date.

A soloist from the church may be arranged through the organist for an additional fee. If you wish to use you own soloist/instrumentalist, you are responsible for paying the fee. Guest musicians should not be invited until after consultation with the minister and organist. Your soloist/instrumentalist must contact the organist to discuss musical selections, provide sheet music if necessary, and arrange for rehearsal time.

### **Wedding Consultants**

Some people have chosen to utilize the services of "Wedding Consultants" or advisors. Should you be utilizing such a service, please remember that the wedding service is a function of the ministry of Peace Dale Congregational Church, and as such, remains the responsibility of the minister. Please remind any consultants or advisors you choose to employ that they are not to assume direction of any of the wedding rehearsal, or service of worship. It is the responsibility of the bride and

groom to make this known to their consultants, if they choose to have one.

### **Photographers**

Professional photographers need to be approved by the pastor. The bride and groom are asked to remind the photographer that flash pictures are not permissible in the sanctuary/chapel during the service. We define the beginning of the service as the time the minister begins speaking. Time-exposure photos of the service may be taken from the rear of the sanctuary/chapel.

All photographers are to be reminded that they are guests of the Church and must follow the rules that the Church has set for a beautiful wedding. A time limit will be required of one hour before the service and thirty (30) minutes after the service.

### **Decorations**

It is the responsibility of the couple to make arrangements with a florist for the wedding decorations, if desired. We suggest simplicity with a minimum of decorations. Ribbon or simple silk floral arrangements may be used to mark pews. Anything that would harm the finish of the wood on the pews (e.g. nails, tacks, tape, etc.) are not to be used; nor are fresh flowers to be used on the pews. Flower tables are available at the Church for your use.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The articles on the altar or chancel area are not to be removed for any type of decorating. The flags will remain in place.

Unity candles are to be provided by the couple. Most florists and card shops carry the candles and candle holders. Any additional rental candelabras must receive approval by the church one month prior to the wedding.

Due to the increased risk of liability injury, our insurance carrier has required us to no longer allow the use of aisle runners, rice, birdseed, or confetti in or around the church building.

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE NOT ALLOWED ON OR IN THE CHURCH AREA DURING ALL TIMES (including rehearsals).**

### **Wedding Fees**

For use of our Sanctuary, which seats 300+, a donation is requested in the amount of \$650.00, which includes exclusive use of the sanctuary for rehearsal and wedding service (one hour prior to the

service and one hour after the scheduled service time). Please be prompt to scheduled rehearsal appointment time. This fee also includes minister's services (pre-marital counseling and leadership of the rehearsal and service), dressing rooms, heating, organist's and sexton's fees.

**A NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT OF \$200.00 IS TO BE PAID AT THE TIME THE WEDDING DATE IS PUT ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR AND THE CONTRACT IS SIGNED. The balance due is payable one month prior to the wedding date. Only local checks will be accepted. If a check is returned for non-sufficient funds, the wedding contract with Peace Dale Congregational Church is void.**

### **Weddings off campus**

The ministers often perform wedding services away from the Church, and are willing to work with you if you desire such an arrangement. An honorarium of \$225.00 in Peace Dale or Wakefield is requested. The honorarium will increase according to the discretion of the minister should the wedding location be outside the Peace Dale/Wakefield area.

### **General Information**

1. Alcoholic beverages, rice, confetti, and birdseed are NOT permitted on the Church grounds/property.
2. A wedding party is on the Church premises for a total of two hours.
  - a. One hour before the wedding service
  - b. Thirty minutes for the service
  - c. Thirty minutes for the pictures following the service
- 3 The Church does not provide for a non-member reception.
4. Receiving lines are not held on the Church premises. Receiving lines are held at the site of the reception.
5. All weddings and rehearsals must start on time. Weddings cannot be delayed. If you are late for the rehearsal, some details will have to be eliminated. A 10 minute grace period will be granted. Should no one arrive by the conclusion of the grace period, the rehearsal will be cancelled. There is often more than one rehearsal per night.
6. Peace Dale Congregational Church takes no responsibility for personal property left behind after the wedding. Please have one person in your wedding party responsible for gathering these items after your wedding.
7. Animals and pets are not allowed in the Church facilities.

8. The order of the marriage service and the total content are at the direction of the minister in charge. Couples may make suggestions of which the minister may make consideration.

### **MARRIAGE LICENSE OFFICES**

South Kingstown, RI  
Office of the Town Clerk  
180 High Street  
Wakefield, RI  
(401) 789-9331

Narragansett, RI  
Office of the Town Clerk  
25 Fifth Avenue  
Narragansett, RI 02882  
(401) 782-0624

North Kingstown, RI  
Office of the Town Clerk  
80 Boston Neck Road  
North Kingstown, RI 02852  
(401) 294-3331