

## Wedding Fees

The honoraria for the Minister, Organist, and Custodian are to be paid by means of a one-time, all-inclusive fee (please note the inserted fee schedule) that is to be paid prior to or at the time the date is set on the church calendar.

Please note: The wedding fee covers use of the church for a total of 5 hours. The usual time allotment is 1 hour for rehearsal, 2 hours prior to the scheduled time of the service, 1 hour for the service and 1 hour following. You may allot your hours in whatever way you deem necessary. Anything more is to be arranged prior to the date and subject to an additional fee for building use at the appropriate hourly rate.

The Social Hall and Friendship Lounge are available for receptions for church members only. Tables and chairs are available for use, but the bridal couple must provide china, glassware, linens and catering. Arrangements should be made as far in advance as possible. No alcoholic beverages are permitted on church property. The custodian must be present for all receptions and there is an additional hourly charge for the building use.

All arrangements are to be made through the church office 414-258-7375.

## A Note of Congratulations from our Ministers:

Congratulations on your decision to be married!

On behalf of the church family here at First Congregational Church, we rejoice with you in your wedding. Our concern is that each wedding be an expression of the couple's love for God and each other. There are many things which need to be examined as a couple prepares to start a new life together, not the least of which is their faith. We will spend some time talking about faith, and other important issues as we work together on your ceremony. The more personal contact we have, the better the wedding will be. We look forward to these meetings, and we hope you will, too.

We consider the estate of marriage to be a most holy and special bond and are pleased that we can play a part in this special time for you. This booklet is intended to give you all the information necessary to make this occasion a meaningful one and assure that the wedding and surrounding tasks run smoothly.

We look forward to meeting with you both and assisting in making this a special and memorable time.

Yours in Christ,

Reverend Steven A. Peay, Ph.D.  
Senior Minister

## Our Church

First Congregational Church stands in a long line of tradition. While this church was ‘gathered’ in 1842, it is part of a Christian movement with its roots in the New Testament understanding of the church and with the Puritans and Pilgrims as immediate ancestors. The Congregationalists are a people who look to the Spirit but also appreciate and welcome the use of the intellect. It is a movement which has been committed to a ‘learned ministry’ and a ‘literate laity.’ Many of the nation’s most prestigious academic institutions (Harvard, Yale, Oberlin) owe their founding to Congregational sources.

Essentially the Congregationalist Churches held to:

- \*One God in Three Distinct Persons (the Holy Trinity): the Father (Creator), the Son (Redeemer), and the Holy Spirit (Sustainer).
- \*The Redemptive Work of Jesus Christ as the Source of Salvation.
- \*The Church as Divinely Instituted, Comprising Both an Invisible and Visible Reality, Headed by Christ and Made Present By Believers Joined in Covenant.
- \*The Authority of the Holy Scriptures as the Rule for Faith and Life.
- \*Two Sacraments (‘Seals of the Covenant’): Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Other ‘holy ordinances’ or ‘rites’ (such as marriage) are not seen as having the same place as the Sacraments or as Biblically instituted.

Great emphasis is placed upon the individual believer’s relationship to a God who relates in a personal manner. Tied with that relationship is the need for the individual to inform his/her conscience and act freely in accord with it; developing a spirituality that is, at once, personal and communal. This understanding reflects very strongly the emphasis and orientation of the Church during its earliest period.

with the organist and your musicians prior to the actual wedding rehearsal. It is your responsibility to provide copies of the special selections performed to all musicians.

## The Wedding Service

The state of Wisconsin requires that a license for marriage be obtained and that the couple fulfill the legal formality of pronouncement. A license may be obtained in any county of the state of Wisconsin and is good for 30 days following the date of issue.

At our church, we offer a Christian service in which the wedding vows are made in context of worship, prayer and thanksgiving. A typical wedding service includes:

- A Greeting
- The Declaration of the couple’s consent
- Invocation
- Scripture Readings (one to four, including a reading from the Psalms)
- A brief sermon
- The Exchange of Wedding Vows
- The Exchange of Rings
- Prayer for the newly married
- The Lord’s Prayer
- Pronouncement of Marriage
- Charge and Benediction

This is the basic outline of a wedding ceremony. Music can be inserted in several places during the service, and each couple is invited to work with the minister to personalize their service. The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper can also be included as a part of the service if the couple so desires.

## **Candles and Candelabra**

The use of our candelabra, both those on the communion table and the seven-branched floor candles, is included in the fee. If you wish additional candles, you will need to make arrangements with your florist. Dripless candles are required for use in the sanctuary. A unity candle may be placed on the communion table.

## **Rehearsals**

If the wedding party consists of no more than four adults, a rehearsal may not be necessary. However, if more than four persons are involved, and especially if children are included, a rehearsal is wise. One hour is ample time for the rehearsal, and all persons involved are urged to be prompt.

## **Music**

If organ music is used in your ceremony, it must be provided by our organist. You may provide your own vocalist, or instrumentalists.

Since a wedding is a religious service, the music, whether instrumental or vocal, should have a religious significance. If a secular or contemporary melody is used, be sure that the lyrics are in keeping with the meaning of a Christian marriage. Please be sure to consult with the organist as to the appropriateness of your selections.

Our organist is an excellent pianist and is familiar with a wide selection of music. You may wish to leave the choice of music to him. Usually, prelude music is played as guests are seated; the processional and recessional are played for the bridal party.

If your vocal and/or instrumental selections require organ or piano accompaniment, please be sure to schedule a separate rehearsal

The Congregational Way places stress on the covenant as the binding force by which the Church is gathered. Through both the Old and New Testaments God made covenant with his people and it is in 'owning the covenant' that Congregationalists believe they become part of God's 'gathered people.' Within the congregation there is a fundamental equality of believers, not, however, because the Church is a democracy. Rather, the understanding is that of scripture, Christ as the head of the Church. What we attempt to do here and now is to carry out God's will expressed in Christ by the grace and operation of the Holy Spirit. The covenant also makes the distinction between a Congregational Church being 'independent.' Since the covenant implies fellowship with other bodies of covenanted believers, the local congregation is self-governing but it is not independent.

It was in that spirit that a group of dedicated Christians were gathered in covenant relationship on March 15, 1842 to begin First Congregational Church. The church is an active member of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches and of the Wisconsin Congregational Association. With our sister 'continuing Congregational' churches we seek to follow Jesus Christ in the Way of Faith, Freedom and Fellowship.

## **Meeting with the Minister**

You will need to meet with the minister at least three times in person. This is important for several reasons. First, it will give you an opportunity to get to know one another, and this will make for a much better wedding ceremony.

Second, it will enable you to discuss issues that will play a central role in your marriage - common values, hopes and dreams, children, religious background and spiritual convictions. Third, it will enable you to talk about marriage in general and your wedding service in particular. Please call the minister at 414-258-7375 so you can meet together about three to six months before your wedding.

## **Invitations**

When ordering invitations, the suggested form for the name and address of the church is:

**First Congregational Church  
1511 Church Street  
Wauwatosa, WI 53213**

## **Photographers**

Pictures are important for families as years pass and memories are recalled. They may be taken before and after in the Bride's Room, the Groom's Room, in the halls and in the sanctuary for a total amount of time of four hours (4) including the ceremony. During the ceremony, pictures may be taken in the sanctuary as long as they are in good taste. No flash pictures are permitted during the ceremony and please, no pictures from the altar during the ceremony.

## **Florist**

Arrangements for floral decorations should be made with the florist of your choice, except at Easter and Christmas time when arrangements may be made with the church office to use the church decorations. In this case, the bride's family makes a contribution to the fund that provides the flowers.

Most local florists will be able to suggest various decorations for your consideration. If your florist is not familiar with our church, he/she should be told that it is not permissible to put tape, nails or tacks into the woodwork and that hurricane lamps are not permitted on the pews. If you would like the flowers to be used at the Sunday church service, notify the church office so appropriate recognition can be put in the bulletin and so there are not duplications of Sunday flowers. The Church provides a fabric aisle runner for use in the nave only.

## **Wedding Hostess**

The Church provides a wedding hostess. She assists at the rehearsal and the wedding and is also available for consultation prior to the wedding.

## **Rice, Birdseed, Confetti, etc.**

We rejoice with you! But we must ask that you cooperate by not scattering rice, confetti, birdseed, tissue flowers or other objects either inside or outside the church building. Please advise your family, wedding party and guests of this requirement. Should the throwing of any of these items occur, an additional fee for cleanup will be charged.

First and foremost, your church is a place of worship. We ask your cooperation in helping to keep your church holy. We do not allow alcoholic beverages on the premises (church or church grounds) and please observe that the church building is a smoke-free environment.

## **The Meeting House (nave)**

In the Congregational tradition the 'church' is a body of people gathered around Jesus Christ. The building in which the church meets is, thus, the 'Meeting House' (also referred to as the nave or sanctuary). You may want to know that there are 34 pews in the nave, seating approximately 366 people. The aisle is approximately 65 feet long. The Chapel, which seats 75 people, may also be used for the ceremony. It accommodates a maximum of two attendants each.