CHRIST CHURCH GABRIOLA

COUNCIL POLICY

SECTION: **Worship**

SUBJECT: **Weddings**

APPROVED: **September May 20, 2021**

FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS:
CCG believes marriage is a covenanted commitment that has as its foundation the faithfulness of God's love. The marriage ceremony is the glad occasion in which two people unite in the mutual exchange of covenant promises. A Christian marriage ceremony is a service of worship offered to God. The presiding pastor acts as the official representative of the church in this covenant-making ceremony which seeks God's blessing.

DENOMINATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SHARED MINISTRY:
CCG is a shared ministry between the Anglican Diocese of BC and United Church of Canada. A marriage held at CCG must be officially registered with one of the two denominations.
Shared Ministry Agreement (2020): *"Services for special occasions such as baptisms, weddings and funerals will follow denominational guidelines and church policies."*

POLICY:

1. **All couples legally entitled to be married in Canada are eligible to be married at Christ Church Gabriola.**

2. **Denominational Policies**
   The couple must comply with the policies of the denomination with which they would like their marriage registered. Information from the current denominational policies (2021) is as follows:

   Anglican Diocese of BC: "… *all parishes require that at least one member of the couple is baptized and that the couple participates in marriage preparation (the form of which varies). In this diocese, marriage is available on an equal basis to any couple who meets these criteria and is legally entitled to be married in Canada."* For more information: ***https://bc.anglican.ca/programs/life-events-services***

   United Church of Canada: "*In the United Church, we see each person as a unique, loved creation of God and welcome all people to the full life of Christian community, including marriage. We believe God intends loving relationships to be faithful, responsible, just, healing, and sustaining of the couple and those around them, and that such relationships require preparation and nurture."* For more information: ***https://united-church.ca/community-faith/welcome-united-church-canada/what-we-believe/marriage***

3. **Marriage Preparation**
   Couples are strongly encouraged to participate in a marriage preparation program. CCG recommends using one of the following preparatory courses. The minister is available to support the couple as needed:
   - https://courses.communicationdiva.com/p/marriageworks/
   - https://morethanfriends.live/

4. **Marriage Ceremony**
   - **Marriage License**: The couple must obtain the provincial marriage license and deliver it to the minister at least three days prior to the wedding date.

- **Minister**: Wedding ceremonies are generally performed by the CCG minister. If the minister is not available, they will recommend another local licensed minister. If the couple's preferred minister is from outside CCG, permission for them to perform the ceremony must be granted by the CCG minister. (see fees below)

- **Sacred Ceremony**: The ceremony must acknowledge the sacred and include prayer and a reading from scripture. The minister has a variety of resources available to support and guide the ceremony planning.

- **Decorations**: During the seasons of Advent and Christmas the church is decorated with greenery and candles; thus, decorations need to be planned accordingly. Please treat the building with respect when planning and decorating the space (i.e. use painter's tape on surfaces and no holes in walls). No decorations or objects, including flowers on the organ.

- **Music**: Music at a church wedding creates an atmosphere of sacred celebration in keeping with the joy and dignity of the occasion. The couple is responsible for provision and payment of a musician. The minister can provide the contact information for our church musician and other Gabriola musicians at the request of the couple. Use of church organ must be approved by incumbent minister.

- **Photography**: Formal pictures taken before the ceremony must be completed at least 30 minutes before the scheduled time of the wedding. During the wedding anyone taking pictures needs to be considerate of the sacred ceremony taking place. With prior arrangements, videotaping is permissible.

- **Wedding Program**: The couple is responsible for creating and printing their Wedding Program.

- **Rehearsal**: The minister will conduct the rehearsal and everyone who has an active role in the wedding should plan to attend.

5. Fees

- **Minister**: The time required for preparing and presiding at wedding ceremonies is not included in the incumbent minister's regular duties or salary. As such, a fee is $300 is requested.

- **Building Use**: For weddings held at Christ Church Gabriola, a building-use fee of $150 is requested.

- **Sound System**: Our sound equipment must be operated by an individual who has been trained. A fee of $50 for sound system operator is requested if sound system is used.

- **Reception**: Due to limited space, use of the church facility for a reception must be approved by the incumbent minister. See the CCG Rental Policy on the CCG website for fees (ChristChurchGabriola.ca).

- **Please make all fees payable to Christ Church Gabriola.**