

Riverside United Church Marriage Policy

Preamble:

Riverside United Church (RUC), as a member congregation of the United Church of Canada, carries the authority to register marriages in the Province of Ontario. This civil authority is balanced with the desire that relationships be based on covenant vows offered to one another before God and a community of family and friends. Since a minister's authority to perform a marriage ceremony is derived from his/her relationship with RUC, it is the responsibility of Council of RUC to provide direction to the minister(s) on conducting marriage ceremonies. This policy reflects that understanding and direction.

Marriage Policy:

1. Couples who are married through RUC must have a desire to be married in the context of Christian worship.
2. Couples who are married through RUC must be eligible for a marriage licence within the province of Ontario. This would include same sex couples.
3. Riverside United Church Council has the ultimate responsibility for approving decisions about weddings, based on the recommendation made by the minister(s) after discussion with the couples wishing to be married.
4. Marriages registered by RUC may take place either at the Church or off-site as agreed between the minister(s) and the couple wishing to be married.
5. Weddings will not take place on the Easter weekend.
6. Couples wishing to be married will undertake some preparation (e.g., marriage preparation course, counselling with the minister, etc.) acceptable to the minister prior to the marriage ceremony.
7. Staff members have the option to participate in marriage ceremonies according to their personal beliefs and comfort level.
8. Couples wishing to involve other minister(s) or organist will need to consult with the resident minister and/or Music Director. In the case of an alternate organist, the Music Director will be paid the regular fee unless the alternate organist has an acceptable level of prior experience with the organ owned by the Riverside Churches. This fee is tied to the use of the organ. If the organ is not required, the use of alternate musicians will not be subject to any fee.

Approved by Riverside United Church Council on 12 January, 2011.