

First Parish of Norwell Unitarian Universalist

24 River Street, P.O. Box 152, Norwell, MA 02061

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Weddings: General Information

The Marriage License

In order to be married in Massachusetts you must have a marriage license, which may be obtained from the Clerk of any city or town in the state. The prospective couple must fill out an Intention of Marriage Form and a Record of Social Security Numbers. The license is issued three working days after the intentions are filed and valid in any community in Massachusetts for a period of 60 days from the date the application was filed. The minister must have the license in hand before performing the ceremony. After the ceremony, the minister will complete the form and return it to the city or town Clerk who issued it. If you want a certified copy of the marriage record, you may obtain one after the marriage from the clerk of the city or town which issued the license, or from the Mass. Department of Vital Statistics in Boston.

Preparation for the Ceremony

Arrangements for the ceremony must be made with the minister in advance. A lead time of several months to a year is suggested for the best chance of scheduling the church for the exact day and hour you wish. Planning the ceremony is usually done in two to three meetings with the minister.

On the day of the wedding, the church will be opened two hours in advance of the time of the ceremony to receive flowers and make any final arrangements. If additional time is needed, this should be planned in advance with the minister and sexton. Ushers should plan to be present a least ½ hour before the scheduled beginning of the ceremony.

Birdseed, confetti, rice or fresh flower petals are NOT permitted inside the church buildings. Silk or dried petals are acceptable. No confetti may be thrown outside the church. Stationary candles (provided by the wedding party) may be lit before the service starts. No other candle lighting or passing of candles is permitted. Use of wire to attach flowers, etc to pews is prohibited. We ask that you leave the church, arrangement of furniture, etc. as you found it.

Seating

The church Meeting House can seat up to 200 people comfortably. The maximum capacity is 300, per fire regulations. The Parish Hall comfortably holds 10 tables and 100 chairs. The church aisle measures 50'6" from front door to pulpit, 40" wide carpet and 46" wide pew to pew. There are 13 pews each side of the middle aisle and additional to the outside, front and back.

Photographs

A church wedding is a religious ceremony which should not be disturbed by excessive photography. The taking of a few NON-flash photographs may be taken during the ceremony by the professional photographer only. A professional video using natural light is also permitted. Many couples arrange a brief formal photo session immediately after the ceremony while all the members of the wedding party are present.

Music

Our organist customarily provides music for all wedding ceremonies at the church. You should contact the organist as soon as the wedding date has been confirmed by the church to help plan the music for your ceremony. Special musical request may involve additional charges. Other music arrangements (a different organist, for example) must be approved by our organist.

Sexton

Anyone using the church facilities must pay for the Sexton who will open and close the church, take care of the sound system, and clean up after the wedding. Additional charge is made for the Sexton to clean up the Parish Hall, if used.