



## GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS

### I. CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

A wedding is one of the most celebrative occasions for the family and the church family. The church family longs for and prays for enriching, joyful, and enduring marriages. Thus, the congregation seeks to nurture and foster attitudes and practices that promote Christian marriages and Christian families.

In the congregation at Salford, a wedding is a worship event. Due recognition is given to the Creator God by whose design man and woman were to be joined as husband and wife. In a Christian wedding the deep and enduring themes of the faith – covenant, love, mutual respect, and all the Christian graces – are acknowledged as the appropriate context for marriage.

Weddings of members of the Salford congregational family should reflect the convictions and vision of the congregation. The focus of attention should be drawn to the promises made in the presence of God. Simplicity should characterize the entire event.

### II. PLANNING FOR MARRIAGE

When the prospective bride or groom, or both, are members of the Salford congregation, and when the wedding is to be held at the Salford Mennonite Church, one of the Salford pastors must be contacted by the couple before the wedding date is firmly set or plans are made for the wedding. The pastor will be happy to assist in the planning for a meaningful wedding ceremony.

The pastors at Salford will respect the preferences of couples to involve in the ceremony other ministers who may be relatives, friends, or persons who have had significant influence in the spiritual nurture of the couple.

When Salford pastors are involved in officiating at marriage ceremonies, pre-marital conversations/counseling is required and post-marital conversations/counseling is recommended. In pre-marital sessions themes of Christian marriage, effective communication in marriage, decision making, family finances, and more will be discussed. Post-marital sessions (within the first two years of marriage) will address issues of adjustments, hopes and dreams and more.

In pre-marital conversations the pastor may determine that more in-depth counsel may be advisable. Then the additional assistance of a marriage or family counselor will be requested. In pre-marital sessions the pastor may become aware of inappropriate life-style or dating practices and call for adjustments before proceeding with wedding plans.

The Salford congregation is eager to place its blessing and benediction upon those united in Christian marriage.

### **III. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

- A. Photography is discouraged during the ceremony. Pictures can be taken before and after the worship service. Video is permitted from the audio box, the rear of the auditorium or the sides of the auditorium. Video must be from a tripod and with discretion.
- B. Candles may be used on the window sills and on a table at the front. The church has 12 glass chimneys to cover candles on the window sills or 12 oil lamps for the window sills. The church also has two freestanding floor candelabra (seven candles on each side). If candles are used at other locations, this must be in consultation with the Facilities Manager. Good quality, dripless, smokeless candles are to be used. Candles and/or flowers may not be placed on the piano.
- C. Flowers and/or ribbons may be attached to the end of the pews with ribbon or string (no tape).
- D. Food or beverage may not be served in the foyers.
- E. We suggest that you ask the Facilities Manager to rope off the benches in the back half of the church.
- F. Tobacco and alcohol are not permitted in the building or on the grounds.
- G. Only the foyers, nursery, rest rooms, pastors' offices and the sanctuary may be used. The other sections of the building are not included in the rental, unless by special exception by the Minister of Church Programs.
- H. We prohibit the use of rice or birdseed.
- I. If a runner is desired, the length should be at least 90 feet.
- J. Any property damage is the responsibility of the persons making the reservation.

### **IV. MUSIC**

- A. Since singing together is an important act of worship and singing unites the worshipers, we suggest that congregational singing and/or groups will contribute meaningfully to the sacrament of marriage. We discourage the use of taped music. If tapes are used, they must be played at a moderate volume level, as determined by audio person.
- B. The music chosen must be fitting for a worship service.
- C. The baby grand piano may be used. It will be unlocked by the Facilities Manager.
- D. The installation and removal of an organ or other large instruments must be arranged through and approved by the Facilities Manager.

### **V. SCHEDULING**

- A. Reservations will be accepted no more than one year in advance.
- B. Reservations must be scheduled through the administration office.
- C. Salford members have priority in reserving a date.
- D. It is expected that couples who reserve the church are Christian. Requests by persons of other religions must be reviewed and approved by the elders.
- E. Two weddings may not be scheduled for one day.
- F. Only two weddings for non-members will be scheduled in one month.

- G. Wedding rehearsals should not begin before 6:00 p.m. and are limited to 1 ½ hours. The building must be vacated by 9:00 p.m. The administration office will mail a copy of these guidelines to the officiating minister so that he/she is aware of the time limits for rehearsals.
- H. The reservation is considered firm and confirmed after:
  - 1. Approval by the Salford pastoral team and Facilities Manager.
  - 2. Upon receipt of the completed Request for Use form and payment

## **VI. USEFUL INFORMATION**

- A. Every wedding is recorded on CD and one free CD is given to the bride and groom. If audio or projection equipment will be used, it must be reserved and operated by persons authorized by the Facilities Manager.
- B. A file of suggestions for weddings is in the pastors' offices and may be borrowed. The file includes litanies, scriptures, prayers, hymns and spiritual songs, and programs.

## **VII. RENTAL FEES**

- A. Arrangements for renting of the facilities are made through the Administration Office. See fee schedule for rental costs.
- B. The bridal couple is expected to adequately compensate all persons, including the minister, involved in the wedding service.
- C. In the event an applicant requests cancellation of a confirmed reservation, a 10% processing fee will be withheld as a donation to Salford Mennonite Church with remaining monies returned to the applicant.