

Marriage Policy

Preamble:

All marriages observed at St. Andrew's respect our life in Christ.

A marriage service at St. Andrew's is a worship service, which respects the Reformed and Presbyterian traditions within the Church of Christ. Holding a marriage service within our church provides an opportunity to welcome and invite those who are growing in faith and an opportunity to strengthen their commitment to a Christian way of life. It is expected that a couple desiring marriage in our Sanctuary has already made a commitment to St. Andrew's, or is seeking a church home in which to grow.

The desire to be married is not to be taken lightly, but reverently and sincerely in the presence of God. Substantial pre-marriage counseling and instruction is provided by the Minister, in support of the couple's commitment to each other and to the Gospel of Christ. Marriage involves space allocation, planning and the use of the church staff and resources

Policy and Guidelines:

The Minister of St. Andrew's Church will preside over and conduct all marriages or at the Minister's discretion, another minister will conduct the Wedding Service and the Kirk Session will be informed of any minister conducting such services.

Normally, marriage services at St. Andrew's are reserved for those who are members of, or who are seeking St. Andrew's as their church home.

In addition, upon request, individual consideration will be given to a couple in the following circumstances:

- When one of the partners has another church home in the vicinity, but their church building is unavailable. In this case a letter must be provided from their Minister, outlining reasons why the marriage cannot be conducted in their home church.
- When an out of town couple has a church home in their future place of residence, but due to family circumstances, wish to have the ceremony in Ottawa. In this case, a letter of agreement from the home Minister is required.
- When the couple or one of the partners has, in the past had a significant pastoral relationship within the church or congregation.
- When one or more of the couple or partners is either the child or grandchild of a current member of St. Andrew's congregation.

The Kirk Session will provide confirmation for all marriage services. Marriages at St. Andrew's concur with the overriding doctrinal policy of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

It is understood that the Minister has the right to turn down requests, which do not fall within the above stated parameters, without consultation with Kirk Session.

All couples are expected to participate in a Christian marriage preparation course and will be required to present a certificate of completion. Referral to an appropriate course will be given on request.

A marriage brochure will be provided to each couple, which describes in detail the expectations, procedures and fees. The costs include the services of the Minister, the Director of Music and Church Officer and a contribution to the general budget of the congregation.