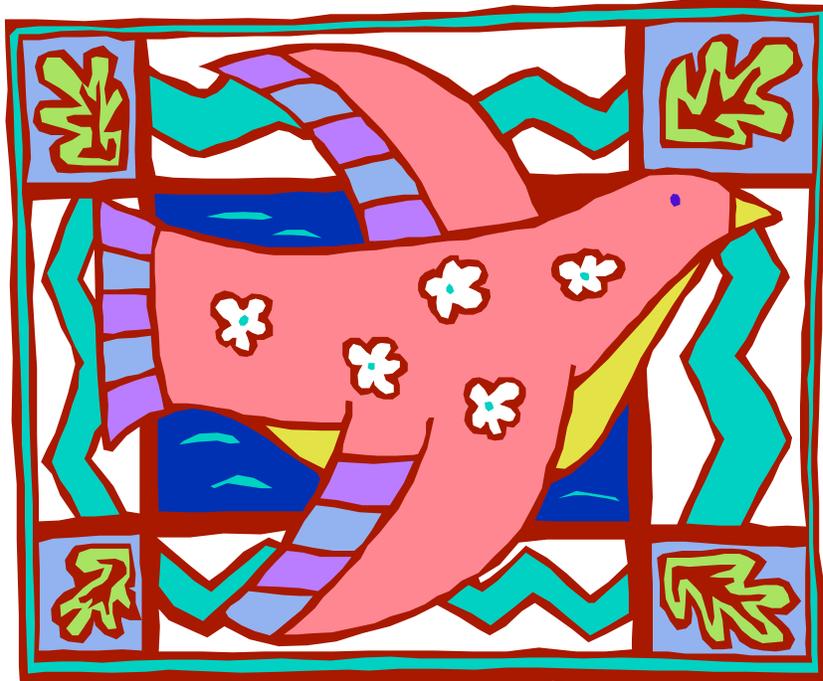


Weddings



First Congregational Church of Natick

United Church of Christ
2 East Central Street
Natick, MA 01760
508-653-0971

The Reverend Victoria Alford Guest
The Reverend Summer Shaud

For the Partners in Marriage

Congratulations on your wonderful news! This is an exciting time in your lives. The First Congregational Church of Natick extends to you its welcome as you begin to make plans for one of the most meaningful events of your lives. We are proud of our church and want to make its facilities available to you, whether you are a life-long member, or new to this community.

We consider it a privilege and a joy to meet, talk, and plan with you as you prepare for your life-long venture. Your wedding is a sacred occasion and, as such, is worthy of your careful preparation, well in advance of the wedding day. Whether you have six months or six weeks, ten guests or two hundred, we hope your wedding will be a joyous and memorable experience for you and your guests.

Careful advance planning will enhance the meaning and joyfulness of the occasion. However, with so many details to arrange, the more time you allow yourselves for planning, the better.

Usually there are three pre-wedding meeting sessions so that we can discuss the meaning of Christian marriage, as well as plan the details of the ceremony. In these meetings, we will discuss various issues that are important to consider in such a serious commitment as marriage.

In special cases, other clergy may be invited to participate in your ceremony. Please feel free to discuss this and any other questions you may have with us.

Included in this booklet are resources, which, if you wish, can be used to enrich your wedding service. Many details and questions will be answered at the wedding rehearsal, when the entire wedding party will go through the order of service.

We look forward to being part of this important celebration in your lives!

*The Reverend Victoria Alford Guest
The Reverend Summer Shaud
Lynne Parker, Wedding Coordinator*

Wedding Music

Music is an integral part of the wedding ceremony. It sets the mood and the tempo for the service. It also serves to bring the participants and congregation together in the spirit of worship. Selections should add to the dignity of the service and highlight its joy.

Our organist is available to meet with you to offer suggestions or give you the opportunity to hear how the music sounds in our space. He can also assist in determining if the music is appropriate.

It is expected that the church organist will play for the wedding ceremony. We have both a piano and an organ in our sanctuary. Another organist may participate in the wedding ceremony only with the approval of our organist. A couple, of course, may choose not to have music at their service, or may choose other instruments. You may also want to consider the singing of congregational hymns.

Vocal or instrumental soloists can add greatly to the service. Here again, care should be taken to select appropriate music. It is expected that performers will rehearse sufficiently to insure the best possible performance. Music is usually selected in consultation with the organist, and couples may request particular pieces. Selections for the soloists should be arranged well ahead of the wedding with the organist and the soloist to allow adequate rehearsal time.

The couple is responsible for getting in touch with our organist, Tom Foster (phone: 716-410-4450; foster.pianist@gmail.com).

The Marriage License

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has established laws regarding marriage. The Pastor not only represents the church, but also acts as functionary of the Commonwealth; therefore, a proper license is required before proceeding with the marriage celebration. The license should be delivered to the Pastor at the time of the rehearsal. After the wedding, you will be given a "Certificate of Marriage" from the Church. The Pastor will sign and return to license to the Town Clerk and photocopies may be procured from that office about a week after the wedding.

The Wedding Day

It is the responsibility of the marriage partners to arrange for safety of the property of the wedding party during the ceremony. The church cannot be held responsible for lost articles.

Flowers

Flowers should be in place in the sanctuary at least one hour before the ceremony. Flowers for the wedding party may be delivered to the church, or you may prefer to have them delivered to your home. Ribbons and/or flowers on the pews should be secured with masking tape, not tacks. If you desire other kinds of decorations, please consult our Wedding Coordinator.

Pictures

Pictures are memorable keepsakes, but the taking of snapshots may interfere with the solemnity of the service. Flash pictures or videos with lights are not permitted during the service. The marriage partners should convey this to their families and guests and be very specific about this with the professional photographers.

The general practice is that professional photos and videos can be taken from the center aisle during the processional of the wedding party, but once the ceremony begins, the photographers work from the back of the church or the balcony (excluding the choir loft balcony). Close-up shots of the exchange of rings or other parts of the service may be re-staged after the ceremony. The professional photographers should consult with the minister before the service begins.

The Reception

If you would like to have the reception at the church, the Vestry may be reserved for the occasion, as well as the adjoining kitchen. You will have to provide your own caterer. (Please see Schedule of Fees for non-church family members who wish to use the Vestry and kitchen and the associated fees for our Sexton.)

Alcoholic beverages may not be served on church property. Guests are also required to observe the “No Smoking” policy. Confetti and/or rice are not to be used. It is the responsibility of the couple to acquaint the wedding party and guests with these rules prior to the wedding rehearsal.

Sample Wedding Ceremony

The following is a sample “traditional” wedding ceremony for you to use in preparing your own ceremony. Please feel free to change this sample to best suit your own needs and ideas. Remember, the ceremony should celebrate your love for each other in the presence of God.

1. Welcome

2. Opening Prayer

3. Declaration of Intent and Promises

_____, will you have _____ as your wife/husband/partner/spouse and be faithful to her/him alone, and will you honor her/him with your love, with the warmth of your comfort, in hardship and in ease, in laughter and in tears, from this day forth?

4. Blessings of the Couple

(The parents of the partners are invited to offer their blessing on the marriage. The congregation can also be invited to pledge their support to the couple, or a question can be asked of the families and the congregation together.)

_____ and _____, do you as _____’s parents give your blessing to _____ and _____, affirm their choice of one another and pledge your continued support as they build their new life together?

Do you as the families and friends of _____ and _____ give your blessing to _____ and _____, affirm their choice of one another, and pledge your continued love and support as they build their new life together?

5. Scripture Readings (and poems or songs, if desired)

Usually two readings are done; at least one of the readings is from the Bible. Below are some suggestions for these Scripture readings to get you started:

The Gospels:

Matthew 5: 1-12 Luke 10:38-42
Matthew 5: 13-16 Luke 11: 9-10
Matthew 6: 25-33 Luke 13: 20-21
Matthew 7: 24-29 John 2: 1-11
Matthew 22: 35-40 John 15: 9-12
Mark 4: 30-32 John 15: 11-17
Mark 10: 6-9 John 17: 20-23

The Epistles:

Romans 8: 31-39
Romans 12: 1-2, 9-18
I Corinthians 13: 1-13
II Corinthians 5: 16-18
Colossians 3: 12-17
I John 3: 18-24
I John 4: 7-12

The Old Testament:

Genesis 1: 26-31a
Genesis 2: 18-24
Song of Solomon 2:8-14, 8:6-7a
Isaiah 40:28-31

6. Reflections by the Minister

7. Vows

(Your vows are the focal point of the service; they are the promises you make to each other. You may create your own or select/adapt from these samples below.)

a. *“Traditional”*

I, _____, take thee to be my wedded husband/wife/partner/spouse, to have and to hold, from this day forth, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part.

b. *United Church of Christ*

I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband/partner/spouse, and I promise to love and sustain you in the bonds of marriage from this day forward, in sickness and in health, in plenty and in want, in joy and sorrow, as long as we both shall live.

c. _____, I take you for my wife/husband/partner/spouse from this time onward, to join with you and share with you all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all the circumstances of our life together, to be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being.

d. I _____, take you, _____, for my wife/husband/partner/spouse and these things I promise you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you; I will respect, trust, help and care for you; I will share my life with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and with you I will try better to understand ourselves, the world and God; through the best and worst that is to come, as long as we live.

e. I _____, take you, _____, for my wife/husband/partner/spouse. I ask you to be none other than yourself. Loving what I know of you, trusting what I don't yet know, I promise to be your loving and faithful wife/husband/partner/spouse in plenty and in want, in joy and sorrow, in sickness and in health, as long as we both shall live.

f. I, _____, want you, _____, to be my wife/husband/partner/spouse, to be the companion of my life. In faith and fidelity, I will share with you the joy and the sorrow that life may hold for us. Through sunlight and shadow, I shall hold you, honor you and trust you. It is you I need and you I love. Accept me as you wife/husband/partner/spouse. I accept you as my wife/husband/partner/spouse.

g. I, _____, want you, _____, as my wedded wife/husband/partner/spouse, to share my life openly with you and to speak the truth to you in love. I promise to honor you and to care tenderly for you, in hardship and in ease, to comfort you lovingly in sorrow, to rejoice with you in gladness, to cherish and encourage your fulfillment in life, and to have and to hold you from this day forth.

h. I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband/partner/spouse. And I do promise and covenant before God and these witnesses to be your loving and faithful wife/husband/partner/spouse, in plenty and in want, in joy and sorrow, in sickness and in health, as long as we both shall live.

i. _____, I join with you today to be partners in marriage and partners in life. I take you as my spouse, knowing that there is much yet for us to discover. I take you with all the memories we already have and with all the dreams we hold. I promise to strive to be the most loving companion I can be in times of success and struggle. I promise to support your individuality and to strengthen our commonality. I commit myself fully to you as your partner in life.

j. _____, I will cherish our friendship and be with you all through all of life's joys and sorrows. I will share my dreams and thoughts and offer inspiration so that you may be the best person that you can be. I will help us to create a home for ourselves (and our children), that by our love, it is filled with peace and happiness. I will love you forever.

8. Blessing and Giving of Rings

A word of love is spoken when the rings are exchanged:

1. “ _____, I give you this ring in token and in pledge of my constant faith and abiding love.”
2. “ _____, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you. May it always be a reminder that I have chosen you, above all others, and that from this time forward, you are my spouse/partner/companion/wife/husband.
3. “ _____, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you, my covenant to be your spouse/partner/companion/wife/husband for life and to be faithful to you, and as a reminder of God’s presence in our life together.”

(Lighting of a Wedding Candle or the singing of a solo is an option following the Exchange of Rings.)

9. Marriage Prayer

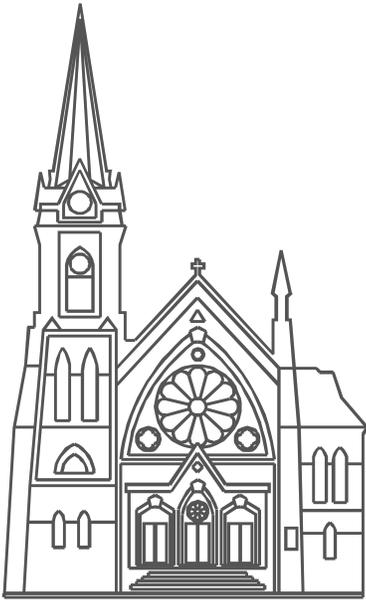
10. Declaration of Marriage

11. Benediction

12. Recessional

First Congregational Church of Natick

Wedding Fees:



PASTOR*	\$500.00
ORGANIST*	\$300.00 <i>(Plus \$50 charge for rehearsal or work with soloists)</i>
WEDDING COORDINATOR*	\$150.00
SEXTON*	\$75.00 MINIMUM <i>(Beyond 4 hours, an additional \$17 per hour)</i>
USE OF CHURCH FOR NON-MEMBERS (WEDDING & REHEARSAL)**	\$450.00 <i>(see inserted Wedding Reservation Request form)</i>

*All fees/honoraria should be brought to the rehearsal. Please make these checks payable to the individuals below who are providing the services listed.

**A non-refundable deposit of 50% of the total building fee (Sanctuary and Vestry, if Vestry is needed for Reception) is required to reserve a date. The remaining balance is due on the day of your rehearsal. Please make your check payable to First Congregational Church of Natick.

Pastors	Reverend Victoria Alford Guest The Reverend Summer Shaud	508-653-0971 508-653-0971	pastor@fcc1651.org summershaud@gmail.com
Wedding Coordinator	Lynne Parker	508-653-0971	admin@fcc1651.org
Organist	Tom Foster	716-410-4450	foster.pianist@gmail.com
Custodian	George LaBarge	508-653-0971	admin@fcc1651.org

OTHER GUIDELINES:

- The center aisle is 65 feet long.
- No tacks should be used to secure pew decorations. Please consult the Wedding Coordinator or Sexton for recommendations.
- We request that no rice or confetti be thrown in the church or on church property.
- Alcoholic beverages may not be served on church property.
- Guests are required to observe our strict “No Smoking” policy.

Wedding Reservation Request

Names of Partners: _____

Date/Time of Wedding: Date _____ Time _____

Date/Time of Rehearsal: Date _____ Time _____

Number of people attending: _____

Rooms Required in addition to Sanctuary: Vestry Kitchen

Caterer (if using Vestry) Name _____ Phone _____

Other Requirements: _____

Building Use Fees:

\$450.00: Use of Church Sanctuary for non-members _____ 50% *non-refundable* deposit required with reservation

\$300.00: Use of Vestry/Kitchen for Reception (4 hours; excludes use of dishwasher) _____ 50% *non-refundable* deposit required with reservation

\$375.00: Use of Vestry/Kitchen for Reception (4 hours with use of dishwasher) _____ 50% non-refundable deposit

\$400.00: Use of Vestry/Kitchen for Reception (4+ hours; excludes use of dishwasher) _____ 50% non-refundable deposit

\$475.00: Use of Vestry/Kitchen for Reception (4+ hours with use of dishwasher) _____ 50% non-refundable deposit

Deposit _____ (50% of total building use fee (*non-refundable*))

Balance Due at Rehearsal: _____

Checks should be payable to The First Congregational Church of Natick. The balance is due at the rehearsal.

Person Responsible for Arrangements:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Home: _____ Business: _____

Signature _____

Deposit Amount Received: \$ _____ Date Received: _____

***Please return this copy with your deposit within 2 weeks.
A confirmation will be returned to you. Thank you!***

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508~653~0971