



*A caring, sharing, loving community.*

## **Wedding Policy**

Dear friends,

### **Congratulations on your engagement!**

We are glad to hear that you would like to consider celebrating your marriage with l'Église Unie de la Grâce United Church.

Marriage means love, partnership and commitment. We believe that human love is rooted in God's love. Marriage is a chance to celebrate love and make important promises. This is not done alone, but before God and surrounded by your community. We would be glad to welcome you and your guests in the church building and to accompany you in this important step.

Grace United Church has two church buildings:

- 8 Mill Road, Chelsea, Québec
- 646 chemin des Érables, Rupert, Québec

Below, you will find information about wedding costs and common questions.

### **Cost**

Building Rental: \$300

Caretaking fee: \$100

Minister: \$250

*These costs are intended to help the church with operational expenses (like heating, building maintenance and the minister's salary). When you are ready to reserve your wedding, you will need to provide a deposit of \$200. The balance will be due by the rehearsal. Cheques can be made out to "Grace United Church."*

## **Contact**

For more information or to book your wedding, please call the church office at 819-827-1212. Leave a message and the church administrator will get back to you shortly.

If you have questions for our minister, please email [eglise.grace.minister@gmail.com](mailto:eglise.grace.minister@gmail.com) or call 819-593-1112.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Is a bilingual ceremony possible?**

Yes! Our minister, Rev. Natalie Istead, is fluent in English and French.

### **How many people can the churches hold?**

Each church can hold at least 125 people. It may be possible to fit more people in some circumstances; if you are planning to have more than 125 guests, please ask our minister to make sure everyone will fit.

### **Can we hold our reception at the church?**

Neither building has a large hall, but receptions can be held in the sanctuary (worship space), in other rooms or outdoors. Please let us know what you are envisioning, and we can discuss whether it is possible. If your wedding is in Rupert, we would suggest Rupert Hall as a good wedding reception venue. Rupert Hall is a two-minute walk from the church. It is a bright, modern and convenient building in a beautiful countryside setting.

**Can we decorate the space?** Yes! However, decorations need to be approved in advance by the minister. We ask that couples avoid the use of confetti or rice, as well as the releasing of helium balloons. Please arrange for a friend or family member to remove the decorations after the service.

### **What about music?**

There is an organ in Rupert and a piano in Chelsea. There are also electrical outlets in both buildings, which could be used if you would like to bring a keyboard. The church pianist is not available for weddings. However, we do have a list of other local musicians available.

### **What about sound?**

Both churches have good acoustics. If the officiant is able to project his or her voice, a microphone will not be necessary unless guests are hard of hearing.

There is no sound system in Rupert. In Chelsea, there is a microphone available. There is also a good quality sound board which can be used to play recorded music. If you require this technology, please let us know ahead of time. There will be a small fee for the help in setting it up.

**Is there parking available?**

In Rupert, there is a fair-sized parking lot and driveway. Any extra cars could be parked on the road.

In Chelsea, the parking lot could fit about a dozen cars. (More if double parked.) There is plenty of extra parking available at the Freshmart plaza, which is just across the street.

**Are the buildings wheelchair accessible?**

In Rupert, the sanctuary (worship space) is accessible. Unfortunately, the washroom and session room require stairs.

In Chelsea, the building is not wheelchair accessible.

**Are there washrooms?**

In Grace's Chelsea location, there are two washrooms available.

In the building in Rupert, there is no running water. However, a composting toilet is available in the building.

**One or both of us is previously divorced and/or we already have kids. Can we celebrate our marriage in the church?**

Yes, we are delighted to celebrate your marriage. If you would like, children can be included in the wedding ceremony. (Children are often flower girls, ring bearers or members of the wedding party. Children can also be part of a blessing or prayer for the new family.)

**We are a gay or lesbian couple. Can we celebrate our marriage in the church?**

Yes! It would be a joy to celebrate your marriage.

**Do you require marriage preparation courses?**

These are highly recommended, but not mandatory. If you are interested, we can direct you to local or online options. Many couples also find one or a few sessions of counselling helpful as they transition into a new phase in their relationship.

If our minister will be officiating, she will need to meet with you to talk about your understanding of marriage, as well as your hopes and expectations for the ceremony.

**We already have another officiant in mind. Could he or she preside at our wedding?**

Yes, this is usually possible. Please check with our minister first. The officiant needs to be licensed to perform weddings in Quebec. He or she will be fully responsible for the online publication of banns, as well as the signing and submission of necessary government paperwork at the wedding.

**We are looking for a secular celebration (or to be married in a religious tradition other than Christianity.) Can we still be married in the church?**

Yes, you are very welcome to use the building!

If you are looking for a ceremony in another religious tradition, or an entirely secular ceremony, we'd suggest that you bring your own officiant. Our minister is licensed to perform marriages in the Christian tradition. She is glad to work with you, whether you are very religious or completely unfamiliar with the church. She can also arrange for more or less religious ceremonies. However, if you are looking for an entirely secular ceremony, we'd recommend finding a secular wedding officiant.

**Can Grace United Church's minister preside at weddings outside of the church building?**

Yes. If your wedding is in a different venue, our minister could still officiate at the ceremony. The wedding would need to be in Quebec, in order to respect the restrictions of our minister's marriage license.

**What else should we know?**

No alcohol is to be consumed by any member of the wedding party prior to the rehearsal or wedding. This is an important legal requirement.

Please plan to arrive on time for the rehearsal and early for the ceremony. You don't want your guests to be worried where you are. Nor do you want to be stressed because you are running late. By planning to arrive early, you can relax and enjoy the wedding.

*Please feel free to be in touch with any other questions! Rev. Natalie Istead can be reached at [eglise.grace.minister@gmail.com](mailto:eglise.grace.minister@gmail.com) or 819-593-1112.*

