

**RUTHERFORD CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
251 Union Avenue
Rutherford, New Jersey 07070
(201) 438-6324
www.rccucc.com

YOUR WEDDING

1. PREPARING FOR YOUR WEDDING

Let me welcome you to an exciting period in your life. The decision to get married will be one of the most important decisions you will ever make.

Please keep in mind that you are actually preparing for TWO things: a wedding and a marriage. A **wedding** is the actual ceremony of joining together two people into a single unit. To some, this is only a legal matter to be performed by a judge or justice of the peace. For others, a wedding has a more symbolic and religious meaning – they choose to celebrate their union through a rite of Christian worship or other religious service. Preparing for a wedding takes planning and coordination of people and places. How large or intimate, how elaborate or simple the ceremony will be, is your choice in consultation with the wedding officiant

The other thing you are preparing for at this time is **marriage** – a life together with this person you have chosen. During sessions with the pastor, you will have an opportunity to explore your relationship with your partner and your expectations for life together.

As you continue with your plans, remember that you are planning a celebration – a time to be remembered by all who share this day with you. And you are laying a foundation for an enduring life partnership with one another.

Rev. Ronald E. Verblaauw, Pastor

2. SETTING THE DATE AND TIME

The first step in setting a date and time is to consider the pastor's and church's calendar, who your guests will be, and where you wish to have a reception. If you are having a reception for a large number of people in a hall or restaurant, you may wish to set several alternative dates with that facility until the wedding date and time have been finalized.

To reserve a wedding date on our church calendar and obtain a building use form, please call Muriel Corradino, our Office Administrator: 201-438-6324. Office hours are 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Rutherford Congregational Church honors a first request first date reserved policy.

3. PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Because marriage is an important step in your life, and the church's mission includes the support of all families, we want to help you make the most of your relationship and build a solid future. Therefore, two or more premarital sessions are required as part of the preparation for your wedding ceremony in this church. When the pastor meets with you, it gives him an opportunity to know each of you better, help you personalize your ceremony, and to review the vows that you will be taking.

4. AFTER THE WEDDING

As a couple, we encourage you to have an ongoing relationship with our congregation. If you choose to become part of our church family, or if you are already a part of our church family, we offer marriage and family counseling as part of our pastor's ministry. Our pastor will be happy to help you in dealing with crises, adjustments, and family struggles or in other areas of challenge and growth.

5. OBTAINING A MARRIAGE LICENSE

The following criteria must be met before two people can enter a marriage in the State of New Jersey:

- Not be a party to another civil union, domestic partnership or marriage in this state or recognized by this state;
- Be at least 18 years of age.

You can obtain a Marriage License from the New Jersey State Department of Health through the local Board of Health in the town or borough in which either party resides. If neither of you is a New Jersey resident and you wish to be married in our sanctuary, apply for your marriage license at the Rutherford Health Department.

For further information and requirements, please visit this website:

<https://nj.gov/health/vital/registration-vital/marriage-licenses/#1>

BRING THE LICENSE WITH YOU TO THE WEDDING REHEARSAL.

6. THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Marriage is the gift of two persons to one another, bonded together in freedom, upheld as children of God through Christ and the Holy Spirit. The minister does not “marry” a

couple – the two persons marry each other. The minister is a guide and a witness to the marriage. The wedding ceremony is flexible according to the needs and traditions of the couple and their families. During the first premarital counseling session, Rev. Verblaauw will provide you with information for customizing your wedding ceremony in a manner that best celebrates your relationship and personalities.

7. ATTENDANTS

The State of New Jersey requires two witnesses to sign the Marriage License, in addition to the minister and the couple. These persons must be eighteen (18) years of age or older. You may wish to have other attendants “stand up” with you. Children who serve as attendants should be able to follow instructions and stand still for a period of time.

8. PHOTOGRAPHS & TAPE RECORDINGS

Photography is restricted to the processional and the recessional and before and after the ceremony. The pastor will be happy to pose after the service for reenactments. Photographs are restricted because a wedding is a sacred service of worship.

Video or audio recordings may be made. In no way should the use of the equipment detract from the attention to be focused on the worship. Photographers and those making recordings should consult with the pastor before the service.

9. OTHER RESTRICTIONS

Rice, birdseed, confetti, and helium balloons are restricted from being used within the church or on the church’s property. Soap bubbles are permitted to be used only outside of the church building.

10. WEDDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wedding announcements may be published in local newspapers by contacting those publications. This is a task left to the couple.

11. FORMS & RECORDS

Your marriage will be recorded in our church records. Therefore, please fill out the form that comes with this booklet and return it to the pastor. After the wedding, your witnesses will be asked to sign the Marriage License and a Certificate of Marriage which is your record for having had a wedding in a religious setting.

12. MUSIC & ALTERNATE MUSICIAN(S)

Ms. Susan LaFever, our Director of Music, should be the first person consulted as you consider the selection of music for the wedding ceremony. She should be notified of any special music you wish to have, or of any soloists. She can arrange for a soloist at an extra charge. If you desire an alternate musician(s), you must call Ms. LaFever. Our congregation’s contract with Ms. LaFever entitles her to the right of first refusal on all ceremonies requiring the use of music in the church and a “bench fee” of \$275.00, should you choose an alternate musician(s) or use taped or CD music.

13. THE REHEARSAL

Most large weddings require some practice in order to insure that the ceremony goes smoothly. Please plan on a rehearsal a day or two before the wedding.

14. IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Rutherford Department of Health:	201-460-3020
Church:	201-438-6324
Pastor: Rev. Ronald E. Verblaauw	201-838-4254
Director of Music: Ms. Susan LaFever	201-893-5818

15. FEES & DONATIONS

Marriage License – \$28.00; Set by the State of New Jersey.

Sanctuary Use Donation –

Members	\$250.00 (\$100.00 non-refundable deposit)
Non-members	\$450.00 (\$150.00 non-refundable deposit)

Pastor –

Members	\$300.00
Non-members	\$450.00

Pastor’s services include a minimum of 3 premarital sessions, the rehearsal, and wedding ceremony.

Director of Music	\$275.00 - Wedding ceremony only
	\$100.00 - Wedding rehearsal
	\$100.00/hr. – Special rehearsal with soloist(s)

Community Hall / Reception Use

Should you desire to use our Community Hall for your reception, a separate Facility Usage Agreement will be offered to you. Please ask Muriel Corradino, our Office Administrator, for details.

Definition of Membership -

Either the bride or groom must be an active, official voting member of the Rutherford Congregational Church. Active is defined as attending worship at least once per month and financially supporting the church through a pledge.

The non-refundable deposit is due at the time of booking the sanctuary for your ceremony and will secure your date with the church, pastor and musician. All other fees are prior to the start of the wedding rehearsal.