



First Congregational Church of La Grange

Accepting All • Reaching Out • Touching Lives

Wedding Handbook

First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
100 South 6th Avenue
La Grange, Illinois
60525

Phone: 708-352-0800

Website: FCCLG.org

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WEDDINGS AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LA GRANGE

We welcome all. Gay and straight, young and old... No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at FCCLG.

Our goal is to help make your day special. Our pastoral staff will work with you to personalize your ceremony; or you may invite your own officiant.

We offer three unique spaces for your ceremony, all of which are air conditioned and handicap accessible:

- The 1906 Gothic Sanctuary that comfortably seats 325 and offers a traditional long aisle, vaulted ceiling, and perfect acoustics for your musical ensemble or pipe organ;
- The intimate Chapel of the Beatitudes that seats up to 75 with its beautiful stained glass and pipe organ; and
- The historic Founders' Room that offers a relaxed and flexible space.

The Sanctuary and Founders' Room spaces are located just steps from our grand outdoor staircase, perfect for a dramatic wedding exit.

We also offer reception space in either the Founders' Room (suitable for large groups) or the Drawing Room (ideal for a more intimate gathering). Kitchen facilities are readily accessible, too. Your caterer will need to coordinate through our wedding hostess for further details.

The oldest church in La Grange, we are conveniently located at the corner of LaGrange Road and Cossitt Avenue, just 3 blocks to the BNSF Metra Train. Nearby free parking is available in the Village garage – entrance on 6th Avenue.

To reserve your wedding date and ceremony space, please fill out your information on the wedding request form on our website. Once your date and space are confirmed via email, you will then need to submit a non-refundable deposit of \$250 either online or to the church's main office in order for your wedding date to be placed on the church calendar.

We hope that the following information will provide answers to many questions you may have about getting married at FCCLG. Remaining questions can be answered via email or during conferences with the minister who will officiate at your wedding.

WHY BE MARRIED IN THE CHURCH?

A wedding is a religious ceremony. Traditionally in the Christian faith, the service of marriage has called attention to the fact that it is a sacred occasion when a couple covenants to spend the remainder of their lives together, and when they vow publicly to love and cherish each other as long as both shall live. It is, therefore, fitting that marriage be solemnized in the setting of a church and by an authorized representative of the Christian faith.

A MINISTER FOR YOUR WEDDING

It is the policy of First Congregational Church of La Grange that one of the church's ministerial staff facilitate your wedding, though not necessarily officiate the wedding. The officiating minister will contact you to schedule future meetings. Because the service of marriage is an intimate and sacred one, it is important that you and the minister become well acquainted.

THE MARRIAGE LICENSE

Because marriage is a civil matter as well as a spiritual one, a marriage license from the State of Illinois, County of Cook, must be secured and presented to the officiating minister before a ceremony can be performed. It is suggested that you bring the license to the officiating minister as soon as you have obtained it so you need not worry about it in the busy hours immediately preceding your wedding day. In Illinois, the minister completes the license and is responsible for returning it to the state. You, however, will receive from the church a special certificate of marriage.

No wedding ceremony can be performed without presenting a valid marriage license. You may apply for your license at one of the following locations:

1. County Clerk Marriage Bureau, 118 N. Clark St. (Randolph Street Concourse), Chicago (312-603-5656).
2. Maywood Court Building, 1311 Maybrook Square (2 ½ blocks north of the Eisenhower Expressway off First Avenue), Maywood (708-865-6010).
3. Bridgeview Court Building, 10220 S. 76th Avenue, Bridgeview (708-974-6150).

Be sure to check for updated information with the Cook County Clerk's Office prior to securing your marriage license.

THE WEDDING HOSTESS

A wedding hostess from the church will be present at the rehearsal and wedding to coordinate the event and be of assistance to the wedding party. The hostess will give particular care to the couple, attendants and the immediate families, provide security for valuables, coordinate flowers, facilitate the processional and handle emergencies. If you plan to have a separate wedding coordinator, (s)he must work with the hostess.

MUSIC FOR YOUR WEDDING

You should arrange for a conference with our church's organist at least 4 weeks before the event to discuss the music to be used in the ceremony. Our organist can be contacted through the church office at (708) 352-0800 or mainoffice@fcclg.org.

The organist will help coordinate and approve musical selections and can play for your wedding. The organist will also make recommendations for outside musicians and/or soloists to perform at your ceremony if you so wish. (You will be required to pay these outside musicians directly for their service.) These vocalists and/or instrumentalists will need to provide the organist with the music they plan to present at least 2 weeks prior to the wedding.

Please note that in some circumstances the organist may charge an additional fee for special requests in which music selections require a great deal of additional preparation (i.e. extra time and effort spent learning new music, collaborating with other musicians or accompaniments which require extra rehearsal time.)

Because the wedding service is a worship service of the church, the music chosen for the service should be reflective of worship and be in keeping with the musical traditions of First Congregational Church. Vocal selections, in particular, should reflect the scriptural view of love and marriage and express the blessing of God on the spiritual union. Secular music that stresses solely the emotional aspect of love, apart from God, is more suitable and effective at the wedding reception.

PHOTOGRAPHY

We respect your desire to obtain a remembrance of this most important day. However, we do ask that the photographer be unobtrusive and not distract attention from the primary focus of your celebration, nor to block anyone's view. We ask that no flash photography be used during the actual service.

After guests have left the sanctuary or chapel, you may pose for as many pictures as desired in the chancel area. Photographs are not to exceed one hour past the wedding ceremony.

Videotaping the wedding is permitted. In the sanctuary, the camera is to be mounted on a tripod at the rear of the center aisle. In the chapel, videotaping is done from the balcony.

FLOWERS

There are several excellent florists in the area familiar with our facilities.

If your wedding is on a Saturday, and you wish to leave the altar flowers for use in our Sunday worship, please let us know ahead of time and the fact that the flowers are from your wedding will be noted in Sunday's worship bulletin.

If you would like to drop flower petals down the aisle, we ask that you use artificial petals as real flower petals can damage the floor.

THE REHEARSAL

Unless yours is to be a small wedding attended only by your immediate family, a rehearsal should be scheduled for a day or two preceding the actual ceremony. All members of the wedding party should be present. The rehearsal time is limited, so please tell your wedding party to plan to arrive 10-15 minutes early in order to avoid being late due to traffic or parking difficulties. The rehearsal itself will last approximately 45 minutes.

HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBILITY

The Chapel is handicapped accessible through the 6th Avenue entrance. The Sanctuary and Founders' Room are handicapped accessible through the Cossitt Avenue entrance. Prior notification of the expected attendance of a handicapped individual is helpful, as an elevator operator must be provided.

NO RICE AT FCCLG

For environmental reasons as well as tripping hazards, rice, birdseed and confetti are not to be thrown following a wedding. Bubbles are now commonly used, but they must not be brought into the building. Please hand them out to guests only after they have left the building.

ALCOHOL POLICY

For insurance liability reasons, alcohol is only permitted on church property during receptions as long as your caterer has a license to serve alcohol.

PAYMENT AND FEES

At the time you reserve the date for your wedding, a \$250 non-refundable deposit is due. Our office will send you a bill 4 weeks prior to the date of your wedding. The balance can be sent at any time, but is due NO LATER than 2 weeks in advance of the wedding service. After this date, only the use of our sanctuary or chapel portion of the wedding fee is refundable.

The cost for your Wedding Package provided by the First Congregational Church of La Grange is calculated as follows:

	Non-Member Fees***
Ceremony Space (choose one)	
Sanctuary: <i>seats 325...includes dressing rooms for the couple and attendants and Drawing Room (with kitchen)</i>	\$800
Chapel: <i>seats 75...includes dressing rooms for the couple and attendants</i>	\$200
Founders' Room: <i>flexible space...includes dressing rooms for the couple and attendants</i>	\$350
Hostess Fee (required)	\$100
Custodial Fee (required)	\$200
Minister Fee (choose one)	
FCCLG Minister	\$325
Outside Officiant	Paid separately
Musician Fee	
FCCLG Organist Fee (required)	\$275
Outside soloist or ensemble (optional)	Paid separately
Reception Room Rental (optional)	
Founders' Room	\$350
Founders' Room with Kitchen	\$400
Founders' Room with Catering Kitchen	\$450
Drawing Room	\$200
Drawing Room with Kitchen	\$300
Extras (optional)	
Altar Candles	\$10
7-Branch Candelabra	\$10
Aisle Poles (30 candles)	\$50
Unity Candle	\$65
Sound Technician	\$75

*** Members should contact the pastor directly for information about fees.