

HISTORY OF THE DOVER CHURCH

The pilgrims and the puritans who settled colonial New England in the 1600's brought with them their congregational way. It is in this tradition that The Dover Church is rooted. We began as the 'Fourth Parish Congregational' of Dedham in 1748 and our first fulltime minister, Benjamin Caryl, started serving the church in 1762. In 1784, when Dover became an independent town, the church became known as the First Church in Dover.

After a significant fire, a common occurrence in those days, the current sanctuary was built in 1836. The steeple bell, commissioned in 1838 and cast by George Handal Holbrook, a one-time apprentice to Paul Revere, is still in use today with its original fittings.

During the height of the Unitarian movement in New England, the church divided into the "Evangelical Congregational Church" and the "First Parish, Unitarian," worshipping across the street from each other for 100 years. After this peaceful separation, the congregations merged in 1938 to form our present church, The Dover Church.

Today we are an inter-denominational church with primary affiliation with the United Church of Christ and also in standing in the Unitarian Universalist Association.



WEDDINGS at The Dover Church

A Christian Community Church in the United Church of Christ

Established 1762

Rev. 2011

Dear Friends,

Weddings are times of joy and covenant ... and confusion. The joy and the covenant are wonderful and The Dover Church looks forward to sharing it with you. We even look forward to ironing out the confusions! As you begin your journey together, you are joining a long line of couples who have affirmed and shared their commitment to a Christian marriage and to each other since this church's origins in 1762.

A wedding in this church is first and foremost a service of worship celebrating the presence and blessing of God.

This booklet should help you with many of the questions couples ask us. You will also have your own particular questions and we look forward to helping you find the answers.

Congratulations on your wedding!

Sincerely,

The Dover Church

DAY OF THE WEDDING

1 1/2 hours ahead Sexton opens the church

1 hour ahead Church coordinator arrives
Ushers arrive
Pastor may also arrive
Flowers should be delivered

45 minutes ahead Photographer arrives to set up and meet with coordinator or pastor

30 minutes ahead Organist arrives
Groom and best man arrive and meet in the pastor's office

20 minutes ahead Reserved seating people arrive

5 minutes ahead Bride and attendants arrive
The bride may choose to arrive earlier and wait in the church library

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

The Dover Church is committed to accommodating those who sincerely wish to be married in our Meeting House. If either the bride or the groom is a member of our church, then the couple may express a preference for a particular pastor and that wish, within limits of schedule and reason, will be met. If neither the bride nor the groom is a member of The Dover Church, then the pastoral leadership for the service is at the discretion of the church staff. The officiating Dover Church pastor will be responsible for and have authority over both the arrangements and the service. For example, the officiating pastor and other Church representatives will assure that the wedding conforms with the traditions of The Dover Church.

We ask that all couples married in The Dover Church have pre-marital counseling. When possible one of the pastors will conduct the counseling, which includes six sessions of about 1 1/2 hours. If the pastor is unable to schedule the counseling, he or she will find you another pastor or other professionals who can guide you through the process. In addition, the pastor's services include planning your service, leading the rehearsal, and officiating at the wedding.

You may invite other ordained clergy to participate in the service. However, it is especially important to discuss guest clergy participation with The Dover Church before setting arrangements in motion. The Dover Church clergy shall normally be the 'minister of record' for marriages witnessed in this church. The Dover Church Deacons, the lay spiritual leaders of the church, support the right of each pastor to perform or to decline to perform a marriage.

COSTS

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Check payable to:</i>
Sexton	\$150 Andrew Tucker
Organist	\$300 Michael Kraft
Sanctuary	\$500 The Dover Church
Clergy	\$500 Rev. Maxwell Olmstead

Please bring all checks to the rehearsal, as your wedding day will be busy enough.

DAY OF THE WEDDING

We extend our very best wishes as you plan for your marriage ceremony. Please don't hesitate to call us. We're here to help make your wedding a special celebration.

God bless you both.

THE DOVER CHURCH COORDINATOR

The Dover Church has a tradition of coordinating weddings. We strongly recommend that you call the church office as soon as possible so that you make contact with the church coordinator before your rehearsal. This person will be at your rehearsal and wedding.

At the rehearsal, you will be introduced to one of the church coordinators. She will be present at the ceremony to take care of last minute logistics, the processional, and to help with a smooth running service. The pastor and coordinator will discuss your wishes about how your guests are to be seated and any other pertinent details. Details may include flowers, photographer, handling of children, handicapped access, rest rooms, bell ringing, and candle lighting.

If you have any questions, you are welcome to speak with the church coordinator ahead of time. Call the church office at 508-785-0957 and this contact information will be given to you.

ORGANIST

According to the bylaws of the Guild of Organists, the church organist has right of first refusal to play the organ at all weddings at The Dover Church. If s/he is not available, then permission will be granted for you to find an alternative organist. Organist fees are also determined by the Guild of Organists.

The organist will contact you to speak directly about the choice of wedding music.

Organists are not required to attend the rehearsal.

THE MARRIAGE LICENSE

A marriage license may be obtained from the Clerk of any city or town in the Commonwealth. Marriage licenses are valid for sixty days from the date you file your intentions. Both parties must be 18 years of age or older, and each must present a valid driver's license or birth certificate. There is a minimum 3-day waiting period between your filing and being granted a license.

The license should be given to the pastor no later than the time of the rehearsal. The pastor will complete the form and return it to the town or city. You will be given a church certificate of marriage. If you desire copies of the municipal certificate as well, this must be arranged with the town clerk.

To find out how to obtain a marriage license in Massachusetts, go to www.mass.gov and search 'Marriage License.' For Dover specifically, go to www.doverma.org/town-government or call The Dover Town Clerk's Office at 508-785-0032 ext. 226.

PROGRAMS AND PRINTED MATERIAL

Providing an Order of Service often makes guests feel welcome and comfortable. The church administrator will gladly provide an illustration of the church if you choose to use it on your Order of Service. Your printer may offer suggestions as to placement and size.

Directions to the Reception may be made available in the narthex.

Any printed material should be reviewed by the church coordinator and minister beforehand.

PARKING

Parking is free and plentiful. There are two lots. One is adjacent to the church. The other is in the town parking area which connects via two sets of stairs and a shady walkway.

Limousines may park out in front of the church as long as they respect the entrance and exit signs. Please respect all No Parking and Handicapped Parking signs. Larger weddings will necessitate police supervision at your expense.

We encourage your early arriving and fully mobile guests to park in the lower parking lot.

CANDLES AND RINGING THE BELL

Altar candles are provided by the church. The altar candlesticks provided by the church are either brass or silver.

The Holbrook Bell, cast in 1836, is still in its original fittings. As much as we invite its use at weddings, some care must be exercised. We ask that you discuss ringing the bell with either the pastor or wedding coordinator so that instruction may be provided.

AISLE RUNNERS

Aisle runners don't work well in our antique narrow aisles. We do not recommend them.

RECEIVING LINE AND RECEPTION

We can arrange to have a receiving line in the Taylor Garden or sanctuary if you choose. Please plan this at the wedding rehearsal with the pastor or wedding coordinator.

Receptions may be held at the church either in the Taylor garden or in Kraft Hall. Reservations should be made in advance to assure availability.

SEXTON

The sexton's duties include the opening of all church buildings, preparation and cleaning of all areas inside and out, and cleaning up and closing of all buildings.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Because this is a house of worship, the Board of Deacons has requested that all photography and videography be unobtrusive and that no flash photography be used during the wedding service. Please inform your family and friends of this policy. Video cameras are permitted and may be placed in the balcony, in back of the church, or in the pews on either side of the chancel. Only the lighting already available in the church may be used. We understand the importance that married couples place upon the preservation of their wedding day in photographs. Our church wedding coordinator will work closely and cooperatively with your photographer the day of your wedding.

Please communicate the following to your photographer:

Under no circumstances are photographers/videographers to move around the church or interfere with the flow of liturgical action during the service, the processional and the recessional. Our church has lively acoustics and ALL camera noise is clearly audible.

There will need to be a prior understanding with the minister and the church coordinators as to what will be an acceptable level of intrusion.

Please advise your photographer of the expected attire of the wedding guests, so that they may dress appropriately.

REHEARSAL

The rehearsal is an important preparation for your wedding service. The wedding rehearsal is normally held the day before the wedding. The bride and groom, their parents, and all members of the wedding party should attend. If there is to be a dinner or party, it should be held after the rehearsal.

It is important to arrive promptly at the agreed time. The church schedules one hour for the rehearsal, which is directed by the pastor.

DRESSING ARRANGEMENTS

You are welcome to change into your wedding clothes at the church. We have a private library complete with air conditioning in the summer and a cozy fire in the winter. Our two rest rooms are handicap accessible. Please be advised that there are no full length mirrors.

FLOWERS AND CONFETTI

Flowers can adorn the church in many ways. A single flower arrangement is traditional and appropriate on the altar table. Additional arrangements can be put on the sanctuary window sills and in the narthex. Over the years, some couples have chosen to provide some form of pew marker, either ribbon or flowers for the pews which are to be reserved for the families. The church coordinators will be happy to discuss further ideas with you.

Please let the church coordinator know the name and phone number of your florist at the wedding rehearsal in case of a delivery difficulty on the wedding day. Flowers should be delivered one hour before the service.