



## What to know if you would like to hold your Wedding, Civil Union, and/or Reception at Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC Oak Park, IL

**Welcome!** We are excited to know you are thinking about [Pilgrim Congregational Church](#)'s lovely "Queen Anne Revival Style" building for your wedding, civil union and/or reception. The original church building, currently the Pilgrim Memorial Chapel, dates to 1889 and is the oldest structure continuously used for worship in Oak Park. Pilgrim is also on the [Register of Historic Places](#) in Oak Park. With stain glass windows in the chapel and sanctuary as a backdrop, Pilgrim is a beautiful spot for a wedding, civil union and/or reception.

As part of its ministry, Pilgrim Congregational Church is committed to accommodating those who sincerely wish to be married at our church. We offer our facilities and staff for weddings of both members and non-members. If you are interested in holding your wedding, civil union and/or reception at Pilgrim Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, you should consider that Pilgrim Congregational Church practices radical hospitality, making room within the life of this faith community for people of differing



ages, races, abilities, orientations, faith practices, and political persuasions. We are intentional about our faith development and offer a range of opportunities for members, friends, adults, teenagers, and young children in and from the wider community to join us for worship, for meditation, for education and small group discussions, and a wide range of special events.

We believe the wedding ceremony is a service that celebrates a covenant made between two people who love each other and are committed to one another. When a couple decides to marry in a religious ceremony, they acknowledge God and a faith community as part of their commitment to one another.

We believe that marriage marks the beginning of a new relationship for you and your spouse, and the ceremony deserves prayerful attention. Pilgrim Congregational Church honors marriage and stands ready to support you as you embark on your new life together. To that end, you will meet with the Senior Pastor before scheduling your ceremony, and the pastor who performs the ceremony may counsel with you a few times prior to the final rehearsal. These sessions will help you to prepare yourselves for marriage, as well as choose the type of ceremony you desire.

As an [Open and Affirming \(ONA\) Church](#), Pilgrim is also supportive of the LGBTQ community and your right to marry. We believe that God blesses all couples whose marriage is united in love, and we are thrilled to celebrate this transformative moment with you.

## Presiding Minister

The Senior Pastor on staff at Pilgrim Congregational Church will be the Presiding Minister at all weddings held at Pilgrim. They will have primary responsibility for establishing the order and conduct of the wedding service with you. If you wish to include other clergy in your ceremony, please make your request to the Presiding Minister.

Once you have met with the Senior Pastor and he or she agrees to have Pilgrim host your ceremony, a wedding date and time will be established. In order to allow appropriate time for planning and preparation, we encourage you to choose wedding dates far in advance.

If an outside wedding or civil union consultant has been employed, it is requested that his or her involvement be limited to preparations for the rehearsal, ceremony, reception and other non-church activities. The actual rehearsal and wedding or civil union service are the responsibility of the staff of Pilgrim Church.

## Special Events Coordinator

To help ensure that everything runs smoothly, Pilgrim will appoint a Coordinator as the primary Pilgrim Church contact person to facilitate arrangements and details of the events to be held at the Church. The Coordinator will meet with you to discuss arrangements for minister participation, music, musicians, fees, space setup, decorations, and the use of the facility and grounds. A tour of the rooms and spaces available for use will also be conducted at this time. The Coordinator is a member of Pilgrim Church staff and will work with the Senior Pastor and/or other ministers in charge of your wedding or civil union as well as other staff and volunteers who may be involved.



Ceremonies may be held on any Friday, Saturday or Sunday afternoon or evening, except those marked as "blackout dates," which are those dates that weddings cannot be booked due to extensive church activities including Holy Week (Palm Sunday thru Easter Sunday), Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. Seasonal decorations are put up during Advent/Christmas and Easter and may not be removed or changed for your ceremony.

## Ceremony Packages

Please also review [What You Need to Know About Using Space at Pilgrim Congregational Church](#) and submit your completed [Weddings & Civil Unions Reservation Form](#) to Pilgrim Congregational Church Office at 460 Lake Street, Oak Park IL 60302.

We believe the bride(s) and groom(s) should have the ceremony of their dreams and endeavor to help make that happen at Pilgrim Congregational Church, with a full wedding celebration option including hundreds of attendees and live music or an intimate affair with family and close friends. You decide what you want and how much you want to spend with your choices of space and services desired.