

Guidelines for the Celebration & Blessing of a Marriage



Congratulations!

Your wedding is an important event. It is important to those taking the vows of Holy Matrimony, to your family, to the Church and the whole community. In this sacrament of the Church, sacred vows are exchanged and God blesses the couple as they begin their new life together.

Getting started

By requesting to be married at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, you express a continuing commitment to be a part of this Christian community and the Episcopal Church at large. Although there may be exceptions, this means that the bride or groom is a pledging member of St. Paul's, or in the process of becoming a member, or that the parent(s) of either the

bride or groom are active pledging members of St. Paul's.

Our Rector, the Rev. Alan Champ Mead, may approve the wedding of a couple who are not members in special circumstances. In all instances, because weddings at St. Paul's are religious ceremonies and sacramental in nature, it is required that at least one member of the couple be baptized.

A call to the clergy is the first step. In most cases, 60 days from the time of the first meeting it is necessary to complete the pre-marital counseling and other arrangements for the wedding.

The Rector gives final approval to all requests (including dates) and assigns officiants for weddings. Please note that weddings are not held in Lent and are not scheduled for Sundays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Holy Week (the Saturday before Palm Sunday through Easter Day), and the weekend of Diocesan Convention held in October. Weddings are not scheduled later than 6:30 p.m.



Provisions in The Book of Common Prayer

The Book of Common Prayer is the foundation for all Episcopal worship services and provides the liturgical framework in which a wedding is celebrated. The service for The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is from this prayer book. In planning the ceremony, couples will be asked to choose from alternatives within the prayer book. Every faith community has its own traditions and we ask that ours be respected. Please understand that our prayer book does not make provisions for non-Episcopal traditions (such as a unity candle or vows written by the couple).

Marriage Preparation Team

From your first meeting with a priest, many people will be helping you along the way.

Officiating Priest: Clergy of St. Paul's officiate at all weddings. In special circumstances, the Rector may invite other clergy to assist the St. Paul's priest or to preach. A request for a particular priest should be made known at the initial inquiry meeting.

Wedding Coordinator: Within a few weeks of your wedding being scheduled, you will receive a phone call or e-mail from the Wedding Coordinator, JoAnn Kumler, who will arrange a meeting with you to assist you with planning (253-2191 or lkumler@sbcglobal.net).



Counseling: Much time and effort will be focused on your wedding ceremony and reception. It is important to also develop a sound foundation for your ongoing marital relationship. The Episcopal Church requires its clergy to counsel with the prospective bride and groom on the meaning of Christian marriage prior to the wedding. Counseling may be conducted by the Officiating Priest or another priest. Counseling generally requires a minimum of three sessions. Additional meetings will

take place for the discussion of the meaning of the wedding ceremony and for decisions on the choices of readings and prayers to be used in your service.

Music: St. Paul's music staff will work closely with you and serve as a valuable resource as you select music for your wedding service. St. Paul's staff organists play at all weddings unless other arrangements are approved by the Associate for Music. A separate brochure with information and fees concerning music is enclosed in this wedding folder. Please contact Frank Boles, Associate for Music, before planning music for your wedding (ext. 30 or fboles@stpaulsindy.org).

Florist: Floral arrangements should enhance, but not dominate, the worship service. Your florist is asked to work with the Wedding Coordinator when planning for and placing all flowers for your service. Guidelines for florists concerning size and placement of arrangements will be provided by the St. Paul's Wedding Coordinator. Please note that only fresh flowers are to be used for the Altar arrangements. Aisle candles are available; they may be placed down the length of the center aisle and decorated with flowers or bows. Aisle runners are neither practical nor safe, and are not used. No real flower petals may be dropped as part of the procession because they stain the floor.



Assistant to the Rector: Marilyn Vargo (ext. 12 or mvargo@stpaulsindy.org) will assist with your marriage certificate and bulletins for your service.

Bulletins for the liturgy are prepared by the church. After the couple has finalized their choice of readings and music, a draft is shared with the couple to ensure that the bulletin accurately reflects the service as planned by the couple and the Officiating Priest.

Procedures for procuring your wedding license can be found in your wedding folder. The license must be brought to the Assistant to the Rector at least 14 days prior to the wedding to ensure proper recording of your marriage.

A Marriage Certificate will be ready for you immediately after the ceremony.



Photographer: We work to maintain a joyful and sacred atmosphere in the wedding service. Professional photographers understand this, and they will



agree to minimize distractions and respect the sacred nature of the building and of the liturgy. Flash photography at anytime during the service is not allowed. As with the florist, the photographer will work under the direction of the Wedding Coordinator and the Officiating Priest. It is important for your photographer to arrange a consultation with the Wedding Coordinator before the rehearsal takes place.

Professional photos may also be taken either before or after the service. It is helpful to start two hours before the service begins so photos are completed before guests begin to arrive. If you choose to take photos after

the ceremony, you should plan to complete these forty-five minutes following the service.

Please inform your guests that, except for the professional you retain, photography is not allowed during your wedding liturgy. A note asking people to refrain from taking pictures or shooting video during the service will be included in your wedding program.

Professional videotaping of your wedding is permitted from the rear of the church. Special lighting may not be used, and the videographer should remain at a stationary tripod. It may be helpful for your videographer to attend the rehearsal to become acquainted with the space. The videographer will work under the direction of the Wedding Coordinator and Officiating Priest.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers: If Communion is part of the service, Lay Eucharistic Ministers will be secured by the church.

Ushers: Ushers assure that the congregation is seated in a timely manner. They help fill the church from front to back. They seat the families of the bride and groom. At St. Paul's it is not our practice to separate those attending the wedding by seating them on a particular side of the church based on their relationship with those being married. One usher for every fifty guests is usually sufficient. The bride and groom choose the ushers.

About your Wedding Rehearsal

The purpose of the rehearsal is to help you and your party to be more comfortable on the day of your wedding. Rehearsals normally take place the evening before your wedding. Every effort should be made to have the entire party present, including readers, so that the rehearsal may start on time. Most rehearsals take less than one hour.



Facilities

Church: The main sanctuary of St. Paul's Church can seat up to 500 guests. The Chapel of the Good Shepherd can seat 35 guests.

Receptions: St. Paul's has several available spaces that can be used for a wedding reception. The Lilly Room is a formal environment with a full kitchen and is located in the Church Building. It can accommodate approximately 60 people. Adjacent to the Lilly Room is the Roberts Library. It may be used independently or it may be added to the Lilly Room to enlarge the space. The Parish Hall, located in the Parish Center, is a less formal meeting space with a full kitchen and can accommodate approximately 150 people for a sit down dinner. The Garth is a nice venue for a smaller outdoor reception. The use of these facilities, which are available for a fee, is secured through Marilyn Vargo (ext. 12 or mvaro@stpaulsindy.org). Please note that while St. Paul's does permit alcohol, there are specific policies regarding its use, which will be provided on request if you are considering booking your reception here.

Sexton: The Church provides a sexton for necessary custodial services to prepare the church before the service and to clean up after your wedding or reception. This fee is included in the flat rate charge to have your wedding at St. Paul's.

Wedding Fees & Room Rates

As of July 1, 2009:

Pledging Members: This fee covers expenses otherwise borne by the church such as Wedding Coordinator, Sexton, bulletins, aisle candles and counseling assessment fee. **\$500**

Non-Members: For non-member weddings that are approved by the Rector, the basic wedding fee of \$500 will be charged plus a \$750 church usage fee. **\$1250**

Receptions: Lilly Room: \$300 / Parish Hall: \$500 / Roberts Library: \$150 / Garth: \$300

Honorarium for Priest: This is at the discretion of the couple. All honoraria are placed in the Clergy Discretionary Fund which is used for charitable and religious purposes.

St. Paul's Music Fees: Please see the Music Fee brochure.

**All fees are billed by St. Paul's. Payment is due 30 days prior to the wedding date.
All payments should be sent to the attention of Marilyn Vargo at St. Paul's.**

