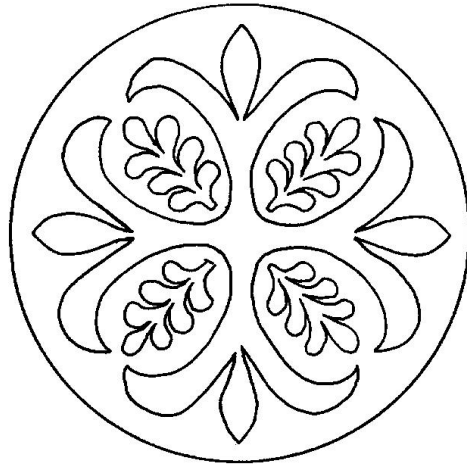


**Guidelines for  
The Celebration  
and  
Blessing of a Marriage  
at  
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**



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## General Understandings

- 1 Christian marriage at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church is celebrated within the tradition of the Episcopal Church in the United States. The liturgy for the service is always the "Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage" from *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1979. The Prayer Book service itself provides for flexibility so that a couple, together with clergy, can plan a service that will be meaningful for them as well as personal and joyful.
- 2 Marriage in the church by a priest, using the rites of the Church, presupposes first that the couple are active members of the community of faith, and secondly, that they intend that the clergy of the parish in which the marriage is solemnized will be the pastors to their marriage, so long as they remain in the area. Occasionally, often because of longstanding family connections, clergy of St. Andrew's are asked to officiate at the marriage of someone who is not currently part of the worshipping community at St. Andrew's. As long as we receive a letter from the clergy person of the faith community in which at least one member of the couple is actively involved, we are happy to honor those requests.
- 3 When a couple is married in the Church, they are making a public statement about their relationship with each other, with the Christian community, and with God. If it

does not seem to St. Andrew's clergy that an engaged couple intends a true Christian marriage and that their marriage is likely to be a demonstrable sign of the spiritual union between Christ and his Church, the couple may not be married at St. Andrew's. Persons without church affiliation or who have no intention of establishing a "Christian Marriage," are more appropriately married by a civil authority.

## Requirements

- 1 Persons intending to marry must give at least 6 months' notice to the Priest.
- 2 At least one of the parties must be baptized.
- 3 The Priest must provide instruction (or ascertain that it has been provided by a competent priest approved by him or her) regarding the nature, meaning and purpose of Holy Matrimony. A schedule for this instruction is usually arranged at the initial interview.
- 4 There must be at least two witnesses to the marriage.
- 5 The Priest may decline to officiate at any marriage, at his or her discretion.
- 6 If either member of the couple has been divorced, special requirements apply. The experience of the Church teaches that time is essential for healing, for learning, and for forgiveness following a divorce. These additional

guidelines seek to assist persons in developing strong marriages after divorce. The divorce decree must be more than a year old. Both parties must show adequate continuing concern for the well-being of former spouses and children from prior marriages. When a person seeks to marry for the third time (or more), the guidelines require that the couple enter into professional couple's counseling with a trained therapist. Such counseling is in addition to the couple's required meetings with the clergy. Additionally, if either member of the couple has been previously married, permission must be obtained from the Bishop, upon recommendation of the parish Priest.

## **Parish Policies and Customs**

- 1 Scheduling Your Wedding** One of the clergy of the parish is normally the officiant at all marriages. The clergy should be consulted immediately as soon as any marriage is contemplated. As a date is selected, the church should be reserved with the Parish Administrator. Under no circumstances should invitations be ordered or sent without first consulting with the clergy. Clergy of other denominations may be invited to assist in the service
- 2 Honorariums to the Clergy** An honorarium to the clergy is traditional. The suggested amount is \$250. Many couples also feel that the joyous occasion of a wedding is

an appropriate time to make a donation to help those in need, which we are happy to facilitate through the rector's discretionary fund.

3 **Altar Guild** The chairman of the Altar Guild should be consulted at least 3 months before the wedding. She will help with decisions that pertain to the Altar Guild. The following come under this category:

a. **Flowers** placed in the church are symbolic of the joy of the occasion and represent an offering to God. They are left in the church for the Sunday service. They may be given in memory of loved ones. The names with correct spelling should be given to the Parish Administrator. Two flower arrangements are used at St. Andrew's. Containers belonging to the church must be used. The containers vary in shape and size. The Altar Guild chairperson can show them to you and give you approximate costs. All flowers used on the altar will be arranged by the Altar Guild.

b. **Brass Pew Markers** In addition to altar flowers, there are brass pew markers that hold flowers. The pew markers can be used in lieu of bows. Pew markers will be taken to a florist of your choice. Florists who are experienced in working with our church can be recommended. If pew markers are used they should be delivered to the church with the bridal party flowers. Please consult with your

Wedding Assistant before scheduling any delivery times. These are the only flower decorations allowed at St. Andrew's.

c. **Candelabra** Four, seven-light candelabra are available. The Altar Guild should be notified if you wish to use the candelabra.

d. **Holy Communion** The Altar Guild chairperson needs to know if there will be Communion at the service and how many will participate.

- 4 **A Wedding Assistant** will be assigned by the clergy to help with arrangements other than those listed above. The Wedding Assistant should be consulted at least 3 months before the wedding. Because the "Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage" is a worship service, the Rector of St. Andrew's is in charge of the details of the ceremony. Please do not enlist a wedding planner.
- 5 **Seating Capacity** The church can comfortably seat a total of 360 people (36 pews/10 people per pew). Additional seating in the chancel may be used if necessary. The chancel pews seat 40.
- 6 **Wedding Bulletins**, if desired, can be produced by St. Andrew's. Cost is based upon its size and the number of copies. Please coordinate closely with Bill Wilds to ensure it follows the required format. If your program will be published elsewhere, it must be approved by the clergy prior to publication.



- 7 **Music** is subject to the approval of the clergy and the organist. Weddings held at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church are services of worship and as such are governed by our canons. According to the canons of the Episcopal Church, it is the duty of clergy *to see that music is used as an offering for the glory of God and as a help to the people in their worship...*
- a. Music needs to be appropriate for a worship service as determined by the clergy and the organist. Secular music must be reserved for the reception. The use of a soloist and the selection(s) to be sung must be approved in advance by the organist. Financial arrangements with a soloist are the responsibility of the couple.
  - b. Please consult with the organist at least 3 months before the wedding. If additional instrumentalists or soloists are desired, they should be scheduled several months in advance.
  - c. The organist's fee, which includes the consultation, rehearsal, and wedding, is \$300.00. If additional instrumentalists or soloists are part of the ceremony, the fee will be increased as negotiated with the organist. The use of a guest organist must be approved in advance by the organist.
  - d. Fees for the organist and other musicians or soloists should be paid one week prior to the rehearsal.

- e. Congregational hymns may be sung and are encouraged in the service. Please consult with the organist as to the appropriate hymns. Some possibilities are:

Hymn 8	<i>Morning Has Broken</i>
Hymn 376	<i>Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee</i>
Hymn 390	<i>Praise to the Lord, the Almighty</i>
Hymn 405	<i>All Things Bright and Beautiful</i>
Hymn 410	<i>Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven</i>
Hymn 416	<i>For the Beauty of the Earth</i>
Hymn 645	<i>The King of Love My Shepherd Is</i>
Hymn 657	<i>Love Divine, All Loves Excelling</i>
Hymn 711	<i>Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God</i>

- 8 **Photographs** may be taken by wedding guests during the service as long as the following guidelines are followed:
- If you would prefer for guests not to take pictures during your wedding**, we recommend creating and posting a sign outside the church entrance asking guests to turn off cell phones and refrain from taking pictures. (We can provide an easel for your sign.)
  - If you would like to allow guests to take pictures using their cell phones during the service**, please follow these guidelines:  
Photographs may be taken by guests with cell phones during the ceremony as long as

- Phones are silenced or in airplane mode
- Picture-takers are respectful of those seated nearby
- The taking of pictures does not disrupt the worship service in any way

Otherwise, pictures may be taken before or after the ceremony. **The wedding bulletin will contain the announcement:** *Please silence your cell phones or put them into airplane mode. If you plan to take picture with your phone during the service, please be respectful of those around you. Cell phone pictures only, please – no tablets or cameras during the service.*

- c. **After the service:** If photographs are to be taken you may wish to add the words: *There will be an opportunity following the service for photography.* If photos are taken after the ceremony, please limit them to 30 minutes, as volunteers are waiting to prepare for Sunday services.
- d. **Information for professional photographer and/or videographer:** A professional photographer and/or videographer may be used during the service provided he/she is stationary and unobtrusive. The Wedding Assistant will advise your photographer/videographer as to the best stationary locations for photographing/recording the ceremony.

9 **Sound:** There is a \$50 fee for the operation of the sound system.

- 10 **Live stream video:** There is a \$50 fee for the operation of the livestream camera. We are able to live stream to the St. Andrew's Facebook page only. We will do our best to find a camera operator.
- 11 **Alcoholic beverages** are not to be consumed on church property during rehearsals or prior to the wedding.
- 12 **Cell Phones** should be silenced or put into airplane mode during the ceremony.
- 11 **Time of the Rehearsal and Wedding** Weddings take place on Saturdays and will not be scheduled before 11:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m. No weddings are to be held on holiday weekends or during the season of Lent. A rehearsal for the entire wedding party is held the day before the wedding at a time agreed upon in advance with the clergy and organist. Please allow one hour for the rehearsal.
- 12 **Using the Parish Hall for the Reception** If you would like to hold your reception in the Parish Hall you must reserve it through the Parish Administrator. The Parish Hall comfortably accommodates approximately 250 (standing) or 100 (seated). Absolutely no other rooms are to be used for the reception. Setup may be done the day before the wedding (see Parish Administrator for exact time). Clean-up after the reception is the responsibility of the wedding party or their caterer and should be done as soon as the reception concludes. Arrangements can be made on a case-by-case basis to hire the parish Sexton to

assist with clean-up. The Sexton's fee should be negotiated directly with him and should be paid at the conclusion of the reception.

The cost to have a reception in the Parish Hall is \$100 for non-members & non-contributors.

- 13 Throwing of confetti**, birdseed or rice is prohibited. Distributing flower petals down the aisle in front of the bride is not permitted.

## **Additional Helpful Information**

1. A Virginia marriage license, issued by any city or town clerk, is valid for 60 days after the day of issuance. If the marriage does not take place within this 60-day period, a new license will need be obtained.
2. Any papers related to a divorce or an annulment must be presented to the clerk issuing the marriage license. If the person is a widow or widower, the date of the death of the deceased must be presented.

*Note: The information above is for information purposes only and is based on current regulations. In case of any legal or procedural question, it is best to consult the issuing clerk or an attorney.*

## **Wedding Planning Checklist**

*Please review page 3 of this booklet for names and phone numbers*

- Wedding and rehearsal dates scheduled with Clergy and Parish Administrator at least 6 months in advance
- Pre-marital counseling sessions scheduled with clergy
- Wedding Assistant contacted
- Chairman of the Altar Guild consulted 3 months before wedding

- Name(s) for memorial flowers given to Flower Memorials Coordinator
- Organist consulted 3 months in advance of wedding
- Virginia marriage license given to Parish Administrator at least one week prior to wedding

## **Schedule of Fees Checklist**

*Please submit checks to the church at least one week prior to rehearsal*

- Clergy honorarium – check made out to officiating clergy (suggested \$250)
- Monetary gift to the Priest's Discretionary Fund
- Organist's fee – check made out to organist (\$300)
- Payment to soloists or instrumentalists, if applicable – check made out to them
- Wedding Assistant honorarium – check made out to the wedding assistant (\$150)
- Payment for flowers – you will be billed – check made out to St. Andrew's Altar Guild
- Payment for sound system operator – check made out to operator (\$50)
- Payment for live stream video operator (if used) – check made out to operator (\$50)
- Sexton (if applicable) – check made out to the sexton
- Payment for use of parish hall/kitchen for reception (non-members) – check made out to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (\$100)