

# St. Paul's Episcopal Church - Weddings

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## *Celebrating & Blessing Your Marriage at St. Paul's*

Welcome to the Episcopal Church of St. Paul! We are very pleased that you have chosen to be married at this Church. We believe this is a time of great joy and anticipation. We want to share with you our experience and wisdom in providing guidelines and suggestions to make your ceremony all it can be and a wonderful memory forever. It is our hope that this information will help answer many questions and relieve some of the anxiety.

Christian practice, Episcopal Church traditions, etiquette, and good taste all are used as resources in the planning of your special day. Much of the symbolism and ritual we use is very ancient and brings to you a deeper understanding of the spiritual aspects of love. If you have other questions, be sure to discuss them with the parish clergy, musician or Altar Guild member involved with your service.

Again, our congratulations and prayers on your anticipated occasion.

### *What to Know First*

**The priest should be consulted before any wedding date is set to assure no conflicts in your planning. A year before is not too early.**

If either party to the marriage has been previously married, there are some special steps which need to be taken. If a previous marriage ended by the death of a spouse this must be noted. If a previous marriage ended in divorce, the Church requires that this be verified and that the circumstances of the previous marriage and its reason for dissolution be examined. The priest then files papers with the Bishop to verify the end of the prior marriage and secure permission to preside at the proposed wedding. The formal word for this process is "Adjudication." This is not an annulment of any previous marriage, and there is no additional cost.

### *Pre-Marital Counseling*

Marriage is a life changing event no matter how long and under what circumstances you have known your intended. It is expected that you will make three appointments with the priest concerning the nature, purpose, and meaning of Christian marriage.

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Sometimes an Engaged Couples Event may replace the more classical form of preparation. Or one may use an outside counselor approved by the clergy. There are also inventories processed through the Prepare Enrich marriage program which may be used at an additional expense.

*(Please note: for those couples living outside a commuting distance to St. Paul's arrangements can be made with the priest at St. Paul's for premarital counseling to take place elsewhere.)*

A Wedding at our Church must keep in mind the rules, laws and canons of the State of Illinois and the Episcopal Church of America.

\*\*\*that at least one person be a baptized Christian

\*\*\*it shall be within the discretion of the priest to decline to solemnize any marriage

A document which formally declares your intention to be married according to the Church is signed and recorded at the Church. Your license must be obtained in the county in which the ceremony is to take place.

## ***About the Ceremony***

**Site and Ceremony:** You are encouraged to make the Holy Communion/Eucharist a part of your ceremony, especially if one member is an Episcopalian. It is assumed that the wedding will take place in the Church unless special arrangements have been made with the consent of the priest.

**Music** is to be planned with the organist and have the approval of the priest. Be careful of the words which may be very sentimental but not appropriate for Church. Your wedding is set in the context of a public religious ceremony reflecting on this parish's reputation.

**Pictures:** We encourage you to have as many photos taken before or after the ceremony as you want. A video camera may be placed in a stationary position and only the professional photographer may shoot pictures during the ceremony without the flash and with minimal walking about. Time for re-posing moments will be allowed after the ceremony.

**Flowers and Candles** are appropriate. (May we suggest leaving the altar flowers for the Sunday worship as a way of including the whole parish in your celebration.) The church has an assortment of vases, candelabra, etc. that may be used. Approval of other items must be procured in advance from the priest. Necessary candles are furnished, but additional decorative candles are at your expense. The use of a "wedding/unity candle" during the ceremony is discouraged. A unity candle lighting or other similar ceremony is a lovely way to begin the festivities at a reception hall.

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**Receptions:** The Parish Hall may be reserved for a reception following the wedding. Catering can be contracted for a reception from professionals or family and friends.

**Rehearsals:** Generally these take place the evening before the wedding at the location of the wedding. All members of the wedding party are expected to be prompt, to silence cell phones, and to direct their attention to the priest to ensure a brief and helpful rehearsal. The wedding license and all checks for fees, donations, and gifts shall be presented to the priest at the time of the rehearsal.

**Bulletins:** The use of bulletins is optional. The order of service is under the control of the priest. The copy must be approved before printing. These may be done by the church office at an additional cost.

**Additional Directions:** It is the expectation of the priest that you and your intended, as well as all the members of the wedding party be **sober and attentive** at the rehearsal and on the wedding day itself. The priest reserves the right to excuse members of the wedding party who do not follow this direction. St. Paul's is also a smoke-free campus.

## ***Suggested Fees, Donations, and Gifts***

There are costs to the Church which you should expect to pay; these fees help us to maintain the Church so that it can be all you want it to be. Your celebration may be very simple or quite elaborate. It's all up to you! Just remember that the assistance of other people's services can be most helpful but for giving their assistance they should be compensated.

Use of the Church and dressing rooms for ceremony and rehearsal	
Non-members	\$ 500.00
Members	\$ 0.00
Custodial Expenses	\$ 100.00
Music/Organist	\$ 150.00
There is an additional <i>per hour fee</i> for the Organist to attend the rehearsal	\$ 25.00
Church Parish Hall and Kitchen for a reception	\$ 75.00

It is customary to give to the priest an honorarium for the time spent in planning and counseling. Currently the customary amount is \$150-\$200, but is to be at your discretion.

We want you to have a wedding ceremony that is everything you need to be happy. By choosing a Church wedding, you are telling others that God, Christ Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are important in your lives and will be long after the day is past. We applaud you in making such a commitment. Preparing for Christian marriage is a responsibility taken very seriously. It is time consuming but we think it's well worth it. We think **you** are worth it!