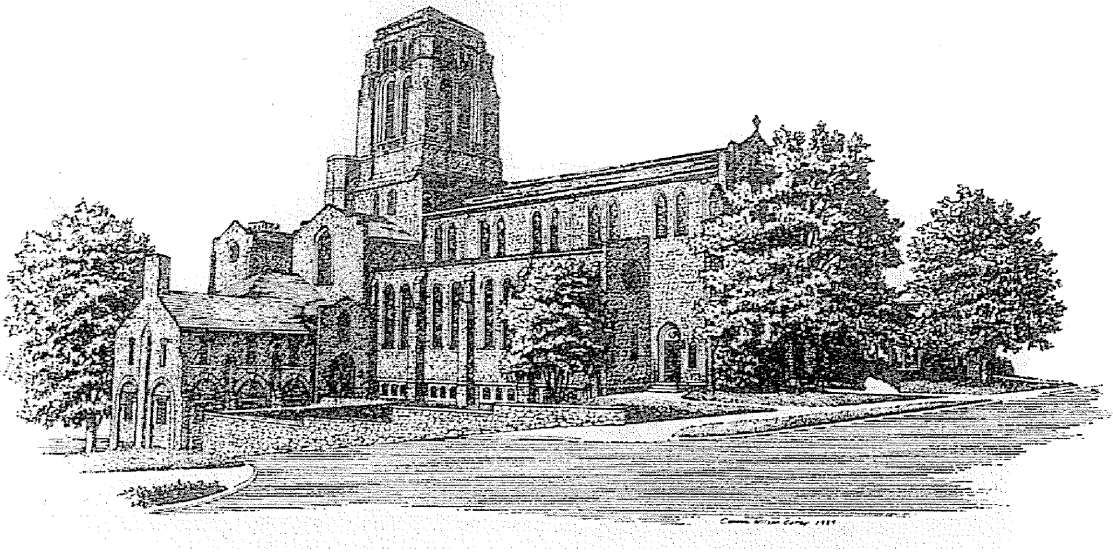


GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE
(Updated 05/24/16)



St. Paul's Episcopal Church
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"O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church: Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen."

Book of Common Prayer, pg 431

Congratulations on your decision to get married!

We are happy that you are considering St. Paul's for your wedding. Our guidelines are used to help couples understand what is appropriate for a Christian wedding ceremony at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. We hope you find it helpful.

Weddings at St. Paul's are generally limited to members of the church. Those who come to the church seeking God's blessing on their relationship should do so with a clear intention of maintaining an active participation in the life of a community of faith. It should be considered normative that marriage take place in the church where the couple intends to worship. Any special requests will be approved by the Rector.

The Clergy of St. Paul's

"Marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God."

Book of Common Prayer, pg 423

The Episcopal Church requires that 1) at least one of the parties be a baptized Christian, 2) the ceremony be attested to by at least two witnesses, and 3) that the marriage conforms to laws of the state of North Carolina and the canons of this Church. Couples will be required to sign this Declaration of Intention:

"We (name) and (name), desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the liturgical forms authorized by this Church.

We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship, encouragement and understanding for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their physical and spiritual nurture for the safeguarding and benefit of society.

And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to see God's help thereto."

When one or both persons have been divorced, the clergy must consult with and obtain consent of the Bishop of North Carolina in order to officiate the liturgy. The clergy will advise the couple of the extra time needed for this process, generally at least 90 days.

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Telephone Numbers

- Wedding Information: Peggy Slater – 336-723-4391
- Clergy: 336-723-4391
The Rev. Dixon Kinser
The Rev. Darby O. Everhard
The Rev. Sara Ardrey-Graves
The Rev. John Shields
- Parish Wedding Directors: Anne Dunn – 336-725-9037
Shannon Wilson – 336-722-2580
Christine Storch – 336-409-8348
- Director of Music & Organist: Dr. John Cummins – 336-723-4394
- Altar Guild Flower Chairperson: Kathy Acton – 336-659-9014

General Information

- 1) All wedding requests will be referred to the clergy who coordinates weddings.
- 2) Wedding dates are not put on the church calendar until the officiating clergy has been in contact with the couple, and ascertained that they understand the required expectations.
- 3) No public announcement of your marriage at St. Paul's should be made until arrangements with the church and officiating clergy have been finalized.
- 4) Other clergy, who have a special relationship with either the bride or groom, may be invited by the officiating clergy to assist in the liturgy.
- 5) Weddings are not scheduled during the Season of Lent, and are not typically scheduled on Sundays. During the period between December 15th and Christmas Day, weddings will be scheduled with the understanding that no conflict can be created with parish activities, and no undue hardship imposed on staff members. Weddings scheduled between December 26 and January 6 will be held in the church with remaining Christmas decorations intact. Other decorations during other seasons of the year will remain intact as well.
- 6) No more than two weddings per day will be scheduled in the church, with a minimum of three hours between weddings. Weddings will not be scheduled after 6:00 p.m.
- 7) The clergy of St. Paul's will conduct all wedding rehearsals, assisted only by one of the parish wedding directors. Our wedding directors receive a fee, and outside wedding directors are not used.
- 8) The marriage license should be taken to the church office one week before the wedding.

Pre-Marital Counseling

The Canons of the Episcopal Church provide that the parties of the marriage shall be "*instructed as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony.*" This is usually done within the context of pre-marital counseling.

There are typically a minimum of six pre-marital counseling sessions. At least two are to be done by the officiating clergy; four may be done with a licensed counselor, approved by the officiating clergy. The couple is responsible for the cost of any outside counseling; however, St. Paul's may provide financial assistance if needed. The couple is responsible for discussing financial assistance with the Officiating Clergy.

Liturgy & Music

- The liturgy for the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is found in the *Book of Common Prayer*. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion, if the Holy Eucharist is celebrated as part of the wedding liturgy.
- The Officiating Clergy has final authority over all music. St. Paul's Organist will play or arrange for a substitute. The couple is responsible for contacting the Organist as soon as possible *after the liturgy has been planned with the Officiating Clergy* for a meeting to discuss music.
- All music for the wedding should be coordinated with the organist/choirmaster. Additional musicians will also be contracted through the organist/choirmaster. Outside choirs are not permitted. The couple may request one of the parish choirs, subject to availability. This should be done no less than 3 months before the wedding.
- St. Paul's will provide a template (either with communion or without) for the wedding liturgy. The church can print these leaflets – costs are noted in Fee section.

All leaflets must meet final approval from the officiating clergy prior to printing.

- We discourage receiving lines in the Narthex or outside the church doors.
- All processions will begin in the back of the church and generally will follow this order:
 - Acolyte
 - Clergy
 - Groom – Best Man
 - Groomsmen
 - Bridesmaids
 - Maid/Matron of Honor
 - Bride – Escort

Decorations

- Any decorations are to be planned in consultation with the Parish Wedding Director. The use of rice, birdseed, rose petals, etc., on church premises is not permitted.
- Altar flowers are purchased and arranged by the Altar Guild, using fresh flowers and greenery. The couple may suggest colors and types of flowers, unless there are two weddings on the same day. When two weddings are scheduled on the same day the flowers will be white. All flowers at the altar remain there for the Sunday liturgies and may be used for distribution to the sick and shut-in. They may be given in memory of family and it can be noted in the Sunday leaflet. The wedding director will coordinate with the couple on wording. The altar is the only place that flowers are permitted to be placed.
- All candles will be white and provided by the church. Pew standards (torches) are available and may be used if desired. These will be set up by the St. Paul's staff. No ribbons or greenery may be attached to the torches.
- No furniture in the church is to be moved.

Photographs & Videos

St. Paul's reserves the right to approve the choice of photographer. The Parish Wedding Director will be responsible for working with the photographer before, during, and after the liturgy.

It is permissible to take non-flash photographs and videotape the service unobtrusively from the balcony. Photographs after the liturgy are limited to a time frame of thirty minutes.

Photographs may be taken as follows:

- Outside
- In the Emma Gribbin Room – with the bride, family, bridesmaids, etc.
- In the Narthex (entrance to the church) as the wedding party is lined up for Procession.
- Processing down the center aisle after the liturgy is over.
- In front of the Altar following the liturgy (for 30 minutes).
- Posed photographs in the church Nave will be taken only after the liturgy.

Rehearsals

- Wedding rehearsals are entirely under the direction of the Officiating Clergy, assisted by the Parish Wedding Director.
- All members of the wedding party are encouraged to arrive on time and to be present at the rehearsal. All other persons who might be present are subject to the direction of the Officiating Clergy in order that the rehearsal may proceed in an orderly fashion.
- The Parish Register will normally be signed by the bride, groom and witnesses either before or after the rehearsal, then by the Officiating Clergy following the liturgy.
- No alcoholic drinks are allowed at any time in any part of the church or on the grounds during the wedding rehearsal.

Receptions

The use of the church facilities for receptions should be discussed with the Officiating Clergy, and will be subject to availability. The reception shall not interfere with any parish functions, specifically Sunday morning activities during the months of September-May. There is a charge for the use of the Colhoun room, which includes the kitchen, and the required use of a St. Paul's sexton. The serving of alcoholic beverages shall be restricted to wine, champagne, or beer. It is the policy of the Episcopal Church that whenever alcoholic beverages are served, an equally attractive non-alcoholic alternative is offered. Music and decorations must be in good taste. Specific information regarding fees and guidelines for having a reception at St. Paul's are available through the Parish Administrator.

Fees

An invoice will be mailed to the person responsible for the bill up to six weeks prior to the wedding. If adjustments need to be made, a subsequent bill will be sent. All fees, except those for musicians from outside the church, must be paid at least one week before the wedding.

Breakdown of Individual Fees:

| | |
|---|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facility/Set-up/Clean-up/Security | 500.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parish Wedding Director | 200.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Altar Flowers | 300.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organist (paid directly to the organist) | 300.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflet set-up fee | 150.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use of the Chapel (Instead of the nave) | 300.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chapel flowers | 100.00 |

Optional:

| | |
|--|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choir (20 people) | 1000.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaflet printing in-house - \$1.00 per leaflet | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soloist and Instrumentalist(s) paid directly; amount decided between couple and musician. | |

It is customary to give an honorarium to the officiating clergy (suggested \$300-\$500). The honorarium should be given directly to the officiating clergy. As an appropriate alternative, a donation may be made to St Paul's and designated to the officiating clergy's discretionary fund.

Guidelines for Re-Marriage The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina

The consultation with the Bishop required under Title I, Canon 19, needs to be in writing, normally no sooner than one year after separation in the previous marriage. Applications in a shorter period should state reasons for the shorter time.

The application for consent of the Bishop shall be made by the member of the clergy who will officiate at the proposed wedding. When the officiating minister is not canonically resident holding a pastoral cure, the application must be accompanied by the endorsement of such a minister who certifies that these guidelines have been met.

Each application for consent of the Bishop shall consist of a letter from the minister, which will include the following:

1. A statement that he or she has met with both parties to the proposed marriage, or, if not, a description of the alternative to such a meeting, and that the Declaration of Intention has been signed;
2. A statement that the final divorce decree has been seen personally and the date of the final decree;
3. A statement that the minister is satisfied that adequate "continuing concern" is demonstrated for former spouse(s) and for any children. (See Title I, Canon 19);
4. The date and place of the proposed ceremony;
5. A statement that all other requirements of Title I, Canon 18 and Title I, Canon 19 not already mentioned have been met;
6. A statement that no other minister of this Church has declined to solemnize the proposed marriage; or, if a minister of this Church has so declined to solemnize, a statement that the applying minister has consulted with that minister, including reasons for application in light of that consultation.
7. In case where either party has had a second divorce, the application for the Bishop's consent shall not be made (a) unless one year has passed since the final divorce decree, (b) unless both parties to the proposed marriage have sought and received professional marriage counseling, and (c) until the counselor has reported to the minister the belief that the two persons asking for permission to marry are in the opinion of the counselor adequately prepared for a lifelong union.

When consent has been given in another jurisdiction for a marriage in the Diocese of North Carolina, the Bishop of North Carolina will affirm the consent, provided these guidelines have been followed, or that exceptions to them have his or her approval.

The solemnization of any marriage under Title I, Canon 19 shall be reported to the Bishop within 30 days after the wedding.