



ST. PAUL'S  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# HOLY MATRIMONY

At

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**  
815 East Grace Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
804-643-3589  
[www.stpaulsrva.org](http://www.stpaulsrva.org)

# MARRIAGE AT ST. PAUL'S

## Welcome

We are happy that you are considering St. Paul's Episcopal Church as a location for your marriage ceremony. If you are an active member of St. Paul's (see below for details), and have reviewed our policies, you may schedule an initial meeting with one of our priests. At the initial meeting, you will review possible dates and times and establish a schedule for your premarital counseling.

## Weddings in the Episcopal Church

A wedding in the Episcopal Church is a service of worship and as such is governed by *The Book of Common Prayer*, Canon Law and the laws of the state of Virginia. *The Book of Common Prayer* is the foundation for all Episcopal worship services and provides the liturgical framework in which a wedding is celebrated ([BCP](#)). For same-gender weddings, an adaptation of that liturgy follows guidelines set forth by our bishop, ([Same Gender](#)).

## To be Married at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, it is required that:

- One or both persons are baptized Christians
- One or both of the couple is an active member who has regularly attended worship at St. Paul's for at least a year (or children of an active, pledging, attending member)
- One or both of the couple has regularly contributed to the life of the St. Paul's community for at least one year.
- The marriage conforms to the laws of the State of Virginia and the Canons of the Church.
- The ceremony be attested by at least two witnesses
- Other requests will be considered at the pastoral discretion of the rector.

## Applying For Marriage

The first step is to call the Rector or Assoc. Rector to set up an appointment to meet. To allow time for premarital preparation and instruction, you must contact the church at least nine months prior to your desired wedding date. Permission from the Rector (and the Bishop in the case of remarriage) to proceed must be obtained before the wedding is scheduled or any other wedding plans or arrangements are made final.

## Scheduling

Weddings at the Parish are typically scheduled on Fridays or Saturdays, usually during those seasons of the Church year with a focus on celebrating new life. Marriage liturgies are not scheduled during: Lent, Holy Week, or Advent or the Christmas season. Weddings can be held between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

## In Case of a Previous Marriage

If one or both of you has been divorced from a previous marriage, permission to solemnize your marriage must be obtained from the Bishop of the Diocese. Please inform the officiating priest so that proper steps may be taken. You will also be asked to submit a copy of your divorce decree to the Church office.

In making such decisions, the bishop will consider:

- The depth of understanding of the individual as to why the previous relationship did not endure
- The continuing care of and consideration for the former spouse and for any children involved in the relationship
- And faithfulness to the dissolution agreements of the previous marriage

## **For Those From Other Churches in the Diocese of Virginia**

At the invitation of the officiating priest other diocesan clergy or clergy from other traditions are welcome to preach or offer prayers during the service.

## **Pre-Marriage Counseling**

While the wedding ceremony itself is very important, the development of a solid foundation for your ongoing marital relationship is of greater significance. Because we want to support your living into your wedding vows in an intentional and faithful way, Clergy in the Episcopal Church are required to instruct couples in the meaning of Christian marriage, to assess their readiness for such a relationship, and to prepare them for the wedding service. Permission for the solemnization of the marriage shall not be given until after the first or second session and all couples are required to complete at least four sessions of premarital counseling to deepen your spiritual relationship with each other. Sessions are to be arranged and scheduled directly with the clergy. In some cases, clergy may also encourage counseling with a professional therapist.

*<sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful. Colossians 3:14-17*

## ***Details Pertaining to Wedding Ceremonies***

We are very happy to assist you in having your marriage celebrated at St. Paul's and our parish family will do whatever it can to make your wedding a special day for you. We ask that persons being married at St. Paul's abide by the following guidelines.

### **Date**

Please be aware that after an initial conversation with the clergy concerning your wedding date, that date is firm only after we have received your information form and a check to cover the appropriate fees noted below. To ensure your preferred date, please tend to this as soon as possible. The check should be made payable to St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

### **Music**

St. Paul's music staff will work closely with you and serve as a valuable resource as you select your music to ensure that these selections are appropriate and fitting for your wedding. Because a wedding is a service of worship, the liturgical guidelines for music are subject to the same standards as music for any other worship service. Please make an appointment with the St. Paul's Director of Music, Chris Reynolds, at extension 5406 to discuss the music for your ceremony at least eight weeks prior to your wedding.

The Church's staff organist will play at all wedding at which organ music is desired. Hymns sung by the entire congregation are appropriate and encouraged. When vocal solos are desired they are normally sung by the St. Paul's Episcopal Church professional soloists.

In addition to the organ, other instruments may be included as they reflect your relationship with God. Additional instrumentalists or soloists are secured by the director of music. If you wish to have a different organist, the invitation should be extended by the St. Paul's Organist and the St. Paul's Organist, will receive the normal honorarium even though s/he does not play for the service. If more than two consultations are required, there will be a fee of \$50.00 for each additional meeting.

Please note that only sacred music suitable for St. Paul's Church worship services may be played in the Church. Music with secular or commercial associations, especially textual, is not appropriate. Please consider these selections for your receptions. All music must be approved by the music staff.

### **Flowers**

Flowers for the interior of the church may be provided by your florist. Wedding flowers are a gift to the church and usually remain in place for Sunday services.

Locations in which flowers are appropriate:

- 2 arrangements in front of the rear altar (brass vases available at church)
- 1 arrangement on pedestal in church narthex (entrance hall)
- Pew markers, up to four on each side of main aisle, total of eight

Flowers are not permitted on the free-standing altar.

Arrangements for time of delivery of flowers prior to the ceremony must be made in advance with the church Facilities staff.

If your florist is not familiar with the interior and facilities at St. Paul's Church, questions about locations and arrangements for flowers may be directed to the church's Altar Guild prior to your wedding.

Name of Florist: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Rice, birdseed, confetti, rose petals, or things thrown are prohibited in the Church and outside church buildings for reasons of maintenance and safety.

### **Children in the Wedding Party**

Children in the wedding party must be at least 5 years old and must be supervised by a designated adult. This is to ensure their comfort and enjoyment as they participate in your wedding.

### **Alcohol**

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is first and foremost a service of worship. The service is also a celebration. Members of the wedding party are required to refrain from consuming alcohol until after the service. No alcohol or any degree of intoxication will be tolerated at the rehearsal or the wedding itself.

### **Facility**

Any questions or special arrangements for the use of the church facilities should be directed to the Wedding Coordinator and/or Carter Johann (ext. 5401)

### **Photographers**

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 the liturgy. To preserve the integrity of the wedding as a service of worship, photographs are forbidden during the service and wedding guests should be so informed. However, the official photographer may take pictures or videotape until 30 minutes prior to the service, and then during the service from the balcony, using available light and without flash, and without moving about. Pictures taken in the church following the wedding must be completed within 30 minutes. The Altar Guild will begin to prepare for Sunday services after 30 minutes of photography.

**A Photography agreement outlining rules for photographs and videos is attached. All photographers must sign the enclosed "Photography Agreement" and return it to the Church at least one month prior to the wedding. This includes the official photographer and any others who may be taking pictures.**

### **Videography**

Video taping of your wedding is permitted from the balcony of the church. Special lighting may not be used and the videographer should remain at a stationary tripod. You may wish to invite your videographer to your rehearsal so that he or she may be better prepared on the day of the service.

### **Service Leaflet**

A printed order of service, available for the entire congregation, and produced by St. Paul's, is a requirement. It will enable the witnesses of your wedding to participate fully in the service. It is an important record of your service which can be kept to reflect upon in the years to come. The Worship Office has a detailed understanding of the liturgy of the Episcopal Church and will design the leaflet and arrange for it to be professionally printed. In this way, you will be assured that your leaflet will reflect the elegance and tradition of our liturgy. You will be able to see a copy of the leaflet before it is printed. You will need to advise the Worship Office of the number of printed orders of service you require at least three weeks prior to the wedding day.

## **The Rehearsal**

The rehearsal at the church is an integral part of the wedding event and is typically scheduled for 5:00 p.m. the day before the wedding. Rehearsals will start on time. Attentive participants in the rehearsal helps every person, regardless of his or her role, become more familiar and comfortable with the worship space and the liturgy itself – thereby helping everyone to be more fully present to you and to God on the day of your weddings. The following are present at the rehearsal: all members of the wedding party, the parents, and others who are helping as lesson readers, ushers, or offering bearers.

The rehearsal itself is conducted by the officiating priest in the church. Wedding consultants may be of great assistance to you and your family in other details, but all matters pertaining to the service itself shall be handled by the clergy, the Wedding Coordinator and the staff at St. Paul's.

## **Parking Spaces**

Parking spaces may be reserved directly in front of the church for the discharging and picking up of members of the wedding party. Please speak with Carter Johann to make sure the necessary spaces are reserved.

Your guests may park in the St. Paul's garage.

## **The Wedding License and Certificate**

You may obtain the license at the office of the Circuit Court Clerk of the town or city in Virginia in which you reside. The license is valid for 60 days. You should bring it with you to the wedding rehearsal. The clergy will not perform the marriage without an official license from the Circuit Court Clerk. The license will be signed by the witnesses, usually the best man and the maid or matron of honor, before the ceremony. The officiant will sign after the ceremony. The officiant will then return the license by mail to the Circuit Court Clerk of the city where it originated.

# WEDDING FEES

The following fees are due following the first counseling session with the officiant:

St. Paul's Building (covers Altar guild, Sexton, & Security)\_\_\_\_\_ \$1000.00\*  
Must be paid once wedding date has been decided to reserve church

## Musician Fees:

Organist: \_\_\_\_\_ \$350

Cantor: \_\_\_\_\_ \$150

Instrumentalists: TBD with the instrumentalist and Quartet/Octet: \$150 per singer

Clergy Discretionary Contribution (\$300 - \$500) \_\_\_\_\_

(Separate check with "Rector's Discretionary Fund" noted in check" memo"; this contribution will be put to use in service of those in need)

# WEDDING INFORMATION

This form must be returned with the accompanying fees before the wedding date is confirmed as permanent. Also include your Flower Requirements. Thank you.

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding  
(last name of Partner 1) (last name of Partner 2)

Wedding date: \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Rehearsal Time: (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of guests: \_\_\_\_\_ Holy Eucharist: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Partner 1 – Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ First Marriage: Yes\_\_ No\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Father's full name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's full name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_

**Partner 2 - Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ First Marriage: Yes\_\_ No\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Father's full name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's full name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_



Birth date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address after Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

Another contact for information if needed:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

For Office Use Only:

Clergy Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Organist: \_\_\_\_\_

## **St. Paul's Wedding Timeline**

### **A Checklist for Bride and Groom to be**

As Soon As Possible: Schedule your first counseling session with your Officiant.

After your first counseling session: Send check for wedding fees to St. Paul's. (After which, your wedding date will be secured.)

4 Months Out: In consultation with the Officiant, decide which lessons you would like to have in your wedding.

3 Months Out: Contact Director of Music, Dr. Christopher Reynolds to discuss music for the service.

2 Months Out: Coordinate flowers with florist.

2 Month Out: In collaboration with the Officiant and Director of Music, order of service finalized.

1 Month Out: Return signed Photography Agreement(s)

**Wedding Photography Agreement**  
**ST PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**Richmond, Virginia**

**Before the service:** Photographs utilizing artificial light sources may be taken up until 30 minutes prior to the start service.

**During the service:** The official photographer may take pictures during the service from the sides of the upstairs gallery, using available light only, without flash, and without moving about. At no time may anyone other than the organist be on the lowest, central section of the gallery. These guidelines also apply to still and video photography.

**After the service:** Pictures taken in the church following the wedding service must be completed within 30 minutes.

To preserve the integrity of the wedding as a service of worship, photographs by wedding guests are forbidden during the service and wedding guests should be so informed by the bride and groom.

These policies will be strictly enforced.

*This agreement must be signed by each photographer.*

Name of Photographer \_\_\_\_\_

Company (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_