



Marriage Policy of St. James' Anglican Church

Marriage is a gift of God and means of his grace...It is a way of life that all should reverence and none should lightly undertake

From The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage, The Book of Alternative Services p.528

Marriage is a sacrament – a grace offered to two people for their growth together in love and holiness. The sacrament of marriage is an outward and visible sign of God's love and mirrors Christ's love for the Church. It is a high calling and sacred trust between us and the Holy Trinity. The sanctifying grace of this sacrament will always be with us. If you are discerning a vocation to married life, here are the steps we invite you to read and consider if you wish to celebrate the sacrament of marriage at St. James'. Preparation for celebration of the sacrament begins with conversation with a parish priest.

I. Preparing for the Celebration of Marriage

Baptism and Membership

At least one member of the couple must be a baptized Christian¹. Weddings at St. James' usually involve people who are members of our worshipping community. Those who attend the liturgy of the Parish whether regularly, or occasionally, are members of the Parish². Marriage is a sacrament celebrated in community and we seek to support and uphold you throughout your married life together.

If one or both persons are divorced, each must produce the decree absolute of the divorce to the priest. The priest must also be satisfied that the applicants understand the nature of Christian marriage as stated in Canon XXI (On Marriage in the Church) and have reasonable hope that they will continue in that relationship during their lives together³.

Attendance at Mass

Couples are expected to attend Mass at least twice a month in the months before their wedding. This is an opportunity to develop relationships with other members for

¹General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, "Concerning Marriage in the Church" in *The Book of Alternative Services* (Toronto: ABC, 1985), 526.

² St. James' Anglican Church, *Invitation to Membership* (Vancouver: St. James', June 2010), 3.

³ "Canon XXI On Marriage in the Church" in *Handbook of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada* (Toronto: General Synod, 2010), accessed July 11, 2011, http://images.anglican.ca/pdf/handbook/221_canon_XXI.pdf.

mutual support, begin or maintain a spiritual discipline of worship together, and be nourished by the sacrament of the Eucharist. The Mass is the central act of worship in the Church. All our actions, beliefs, and hopes are meant to reflect this gift of God's divine life, forgiveness and welcome.

Regular attendance at Mass will also help you prepare your body, soul, and mind for full participation in the wedding Mass.

Timeline

In order to adequately prepare, St. James' requests that couples approach the rector, who may be contacted via the office 6 months before the intended date. A marriage may not be conducted with less than sixty days notice⁴. Banns will not be published.

Meetings

Couples can expect to meet with a priest at least 4-5 times over the course of their preparation. During these meetings a priest will cover practical details of the ceremony, review the marriage liturgy including scripture readings, offer instruction on the sacrament of marriage, meditate upon the vows, and discuss any other questions you might have. The clergy of St. James' work as a team and preparation and celebration of the marriage may be undertaken by different members of the team during the course of your preparation.

Planning for the wedding ceremony is done by the clergy and the couple to be married. Wedding planners are not permitted to be part of the planning process at the Church. They are not permitted to be present at rehearsals.⁵

Marriage Preparation Course

It is a requirement of the diocese that all couples attend marriage preparation courses or counselling sessions. Further information will be made available to you, upon meeting with a clergy member.

Marriage License

A marriage license must be obtained from a Marriage License Issuer. Information on how to apply for a license and a list of issuers is available on the Vital Statistics website: <http://www.vs.gov.bc.ca/marriage/howto.html#apply>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Wedding Policies," Church of the Advent, accessed July 11, 2011, <http://theadventboston.org/geninfo/weddings.htm>.

The license is valid for three months from the date of issue. Each person must be over the age of nineteen to apply for a marriage license. Please fill in the sections requiring parents' names and birthplaces, but do not sign the license. The marriage license must be submitted to the church office one week before the wedding. Upon submission of the license, payment for the Church, Music, Order of Service, and other options must be made (i.e. Parish Hall rental, Flowers).

*Wedding Rehearsals**

Wedding rehearsals are scheduled one day before the ceremony. Only the following people are required at rehearsals:

- The Bride
- The Groom
- The Bride's escort for walking down the aisle
- All attendants (bridesmaids, groomsmen, flower girls, ring bearers)
- The ushers
- The parents (if they wish)
- Additional persons taking part in the liturgy (e.g. those reading, saying prayers)

*Punctuality**

On the wedding day:

- The ushers are to be at the church 30 minutes before the wedding.
- The Groom and his attendants are to be at the church 30 minutes before the wedding.
- The Bride and her attendants must be at the church 10 minutes before the wedding.

For every five minutes past the ceremony start time, a \$10.00 fee will be charged. If extra prelude music is required due to tardiness, the organist will charge an additional fee to be determined.

II. The Rite of Marriage

All marriage rites celebrated at St. James' include:

* Adapted from "Marriage Services", St. Francis in the Wood, accessed July 11, 2011, <http://www.stfrancisinthewood.ca/marriage.html>.

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- The Gathering of the Community
- Prayers
- Scripture readings (2-3, including a Gospel reading)
- A sermon
- A hymn or hymns
- Wedding declarations and vows (no alterations permitted)
- The blessing of a ring or rings (including water and incense)
- The Blessing of the Marriage in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (the couple kneeling)
- The Signing of the Register
- The Dismissal

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage with the Holy Eucharist
or
A Nuptial Mass

Normally, where both bride and bridegroom are baptized, the celebration of marriage at St. James' takes place during Holy Mass. In this way, the self offering of one spouse to the other in the covenant of marriage is united to "the offering of Christ for his Church made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice."⁶ Christ's self-giving love known in his Body and Blood is the model of love and commitment for Christian marriage.

A sample Nuptial Mass booklet may be viewed here (insert link).

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage

In the event that the bride or groom is unbaptized, or for other pastoral exceptions, a rite of marriage may be celebrated without Mass at the discretion of the Rector.

⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Translated by Geoffrey Chapman. (London:Cassell, 1994), 363.

Photography

Photography is permissible at these times:

- The processional
- The signing of the register
- The recessional

A designated wedding photographer may take photographs at other points, but may not use a flash and must maintain a discreet and respectful distance. If desired, a video camera may be set up in the choir loft.

III. Arrangements for Music, Flowers, Reception

Music: Hymns and music are selected in consultation with the priest at a meeting with the couple. The music must maintain the dignity of the sacred space. The church organist provides the music at the service. The cost is \$165 for the church service, which includes a consultation to choose the music. If the Organist is required to be present at the rehearsal with the wedding party, the fee is \$60 per hour. If a guest organist is permitted to play at the service, the regular fee will still be paid to the resident organist.

If an additional soloist, instrumentalist, or choir is to be hired, the charge for contracting each person is \$20 per person hired. Any additional rehearsals with these people would be at \$40 per hour. It is not permissible to play pre-recorded music.

Flowers: The St. James' Flower Guild can prepare wedding flower arrangements for the church and make pew markers available. The cost is determined at a consultation with the head of the flower guild.

Reception: The Parish Hall can be booked to host your reception. This includes the use of a kitchen, tables, and chairs. It *does not* include food service equipment (e.g. trays, dishes, cutlery). The cost to rent the parish hall is \$150 for parishioners. The capacity of the Parish Hall is 125 people buffet style and 150 people for stand-up style with refreshments. Set-up, decorating, and clean-up is solely the responsibility of the wedding party. Booking of the parish hall is made through the office.

IV. Fees for Church, Clergy, Order of Service

Church: The booking fee for use of the church is \$100 for parishioners. A building manager or assistant building manager must be present 30 minutes before the ceremony start time until 30 minutes after the ceremony. The fee is \$20/hour.

Clergy: The suggested donation to the officiating priest is 10% of the wedding budget. All donations go to the Clergy Discretionary Fund.

Order of Service: The church office prepares and prints the Order of Service for the Wedding. All information (e.g. names of attendants, choice of music, scripture readings) must be submitted to the office a week before the wedding. The Order of Service booklet offers the full text of the rite so that all may participate and follow the liturgy. A sample Order of Service may be viewed here (hyperlink). The fee for the Order of Service is \$100.

Payment: All fees for the Music, Church, Order of Service, Flowers, and (if applicable) Parish Hall rental must be paid one week before the ceremony. Donation to the clergy may be made at this time as well.

V. Table of Fees

	Parishioner	Non-parishioner
Church	100.00 Building manager - 20.00/hr	200.00 Building manager - 20.00/hr
Clergy	Suggested donation 10% of wedding ceremony budget	Suggested donation 10% of wedding ceremony budget
Order of Service	100.00	100.00
Music	Organist - 165.00 Organist at rehearsal (optional) - 60.00/hr. Soloists - 20.00 Soloist rehearsal - 40.00/hr.	Organist - 165.00 Organist at rehearsal (optional) - 60.00/hr. Soloists - 20.00 Soloist rehearsal - 40.00/hr.

Flowers	To be determined in consultation	To be determined in consultation
Parish Hall for Reception (optional)	150.00	250.00

Approved by Rector and Wardens 13 September 2011

Sources Consulted

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Catechism of the Catholic Church. Translated by Geoffrey Chapman. London: Cassell, 1994.

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Thomas, Gary. *Sacred Marriage*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.

Appendix A - Notification of Guilds, Staff

Adequate and timely communication of wedding liturgies is needed for preparation by all relevant guilds and ministries. An email, or other communication if necessary, in the following form below should be sent out two weeks before the intended date to all heads of guilds, the office, and support staff.

LITURGY

Name: E.g. Nuptial Mass for X and Y

Date:

Description: Rite

Attendance:

Mass booklet details: e.g. hymns

Officiant:

MCs & SACRISTAN

-Ceremonial needs:

-Liturgical colour: White

-Celebrant:

-Deacon:

MUSIC

The text of the hymns will be included in the MBs: Y/N

Prelude:

Signing of the Register:

Mass Setting:

Hymns:

Postlude:

OFFICE

-Draft and complete Mass booklets

-# of copies

-Parish Hall booked for reception: Y/N

NARTHEX

-Open narthex by: time.

-Guest book: Y/N

FLOWER GUILD

-The family has liaised with Margaret Vickers: Y/N

BUILDING MANAGER

-# of reserved pews for the Wedding party

-start time and end time (i.e. 30 minutes before ceremony and 30 minutes after ceremony)

BELLS

-time:

Please confirm your availability and that of your Guild for deployment.