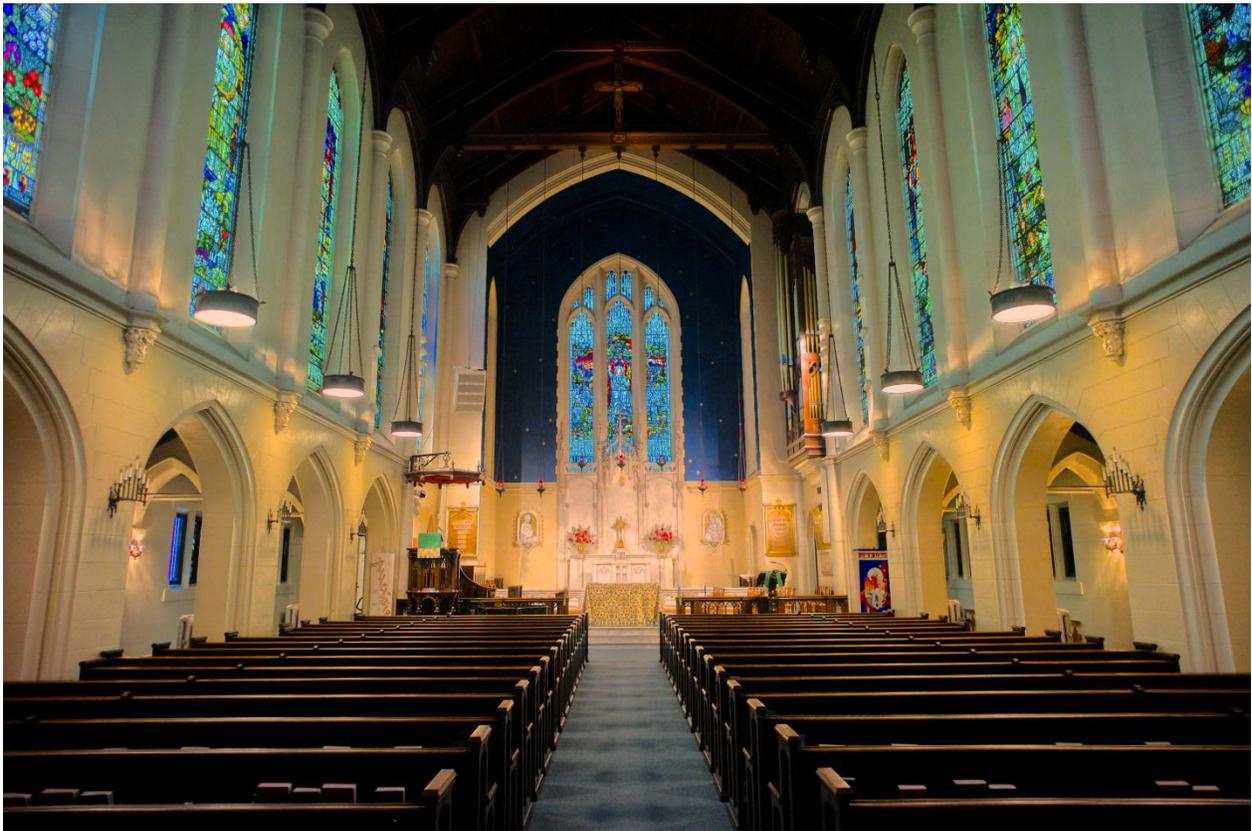


# Weddings at St. Luke's Episcopal Church San Francisco, CA



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## INTRODUCTION

At St. Luke's, we believe that marriage is a lifelong, spiritual commitment - one that is intended by God for the mutual joy of God's creation, man and woman and same-sex, for the help and comfort they give to one another in prosperity and adversity.

One of the most challenging and rewarding of human relationships, marriages and blessings gain great support by being lived out in a community of faith where they can be strengthened and nurtured by others seeking to grow in love, forgiveness, justice, and compassion. Thus, our primary interest is in helping you prepare for your life-long commitment.

We understand, however, that the *wedding* itself - with all its attendant preparations and decisions - has a way of eclipsing the sacrament of *marriage* at this stage of inquiry. In reading this booklet, you are taking your first step in letting us help you prepare for *both*.

So we want to be clear about where we stand, what we believe and practice, what marriage preparation with us is and is not, and what we can offer you in deciding where and how your wedding will be celebrated.

If you wish to go further, here is the process:

- Review this booklet. If your own beliefs and needs are at odds with ours, then please accept our best wishes as you search further for a place to be married. Either way, we hope that questions raised by this book will help in your planning. Perhaps you will find that you need to worship with us for a while, "come and see" what we're about, as you search. We welcome you to join us at any time; and we are open, at any time, to begin or resume a conversation with you as you embark on this journey together.
- If, after reading this booklet, you find that you wish to pursue marriage and a wedding at St. Luke's, please phone our parish office arrange an initial meeting with the Rector or another priest.
- Within two weeks of the initial meeting, we ask you to read, sign, and return the Wedding Agreement with your deposit. This document is our contract with each other, guaranteeing our mutual commitment to this preparation process, the wedding event, and hopefully, an ongoing relationship. Once we have received your Agreement and your deposit, you may announce the place and date of your wedding and finalize other arrangements.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR MARRIAGE

Christians have had a variety of marriage and wedding customs, representing different cultural and historical influences. In the Episcopal Church, marriage is both a civil and ecclesiastical rite. As such, both church and civil requirements must be met.

The Episcopal Church requires that at least one of the parties to be married is a baptized Christian and that the ceremony be attested by at least two witnesses.

Clergy of other parishes or traditions are welcome to assist in the service. Episcopal priests from other parishes may officiate in some instances. In either case, the invitation comes from, and after consultation with, the officiating priest of St. Luke's.

The Episcopal Church requires that the couple attend premarital counseling. This counseling is usually done with the officiating priest, and presents the opportunity to get to know each other, discuss attending issues, raise awareness about challenges and strengths in the relationship, and plan the ceremony. In certain instances this counseling may be done by another member of the clergy or a licensed counselor.

If either of the parties is divorced, the member of the clergy responsible for the wedding must see that all of the following conditions are met:

- That there is evidence that the prior marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a final judgment or decree of a civil court of competent jurisdiction. Documentation must be presented at the initial clergy meeting.
- That continuing concern and/or financial support is being shown for the well-being of the former spouse and any children;
- That the Bishop of California gives consent to the proposed solemnization of the new marriage. This consent comes in the form of a *Marriage Judgment* which the officiating priest applies once he or she is satisfied with the fulfilled obligation of the first two requirements.
- Application must be made at least **90 days before the date of the wedding.**

## THE CEREMONY

If you are married at St. Luke's, the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Episcopal Church will be used for the marriage ceremony. We encourage the participation of friends and family in the reading of lessons and the offering of prayers.

Some parts of the service are more flexible for personal adaptation than others, and this can be discussed at the clergy meetings. We will work with you to strike a balance which reflects both your relationship and our tradition.

## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT OF US

- That you will receive a real welcome here! This is one of the most significant moments in your lives. We share with you a belief in its importance. We want to help bring depth, meaning, joy, and calm to this occasion. We hope that the process of planning your wedding and preparing for marriage will be informative, prayerful, and nurturing to your relationship now and in the years to come.
- That the officiating priest can help you plan for all aspects of the wedding ceremony. While other professionals may be more qualified to help plan the reception and

surrounding events, you are invited to draw on our vast experience with marriage liturgy worship planning and music.

- That our wedding coordinator will help you and your wedding party and families with logistics during the rehearsal and ceremony while in the church. The coordinator is here to help you when the Rector is unavailable.
- That as preparations proceed, as anxiety and tensions inevitably mount, we pledge the ongoing prayer and support of this church community.

#### **OUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOU**

- That you will “come and see” what we are about at St. Luke’s, through our worship, outreach to the surrounding community and beyond, our teaching, music and special events and programs. We believe that marriage is not just a ceremony in the church building but is a vital part of the community’s life together at St. Luke’s.
- That you *both* will meet with the officiating clergy to complete the counseling and ceremony planning. In consultation with the officiating priest, it may be suggested that you meet with a trained marriage counselor. If so, we will make recommendations and help you with referrals.
- That you enter into this relationship in good faith and honor our procedures, customs, and values.

**MORE DETAILS THAN YOU MAY WANT TO KNOW,  
WHICH WILL HOPEFULLY PREVENT INCOMPATIBLE EXPECTATIONS**

**PLANNING THE DATE AND TIME OF THE SERVICE**

The date will be chosen and confirmed only after your initial meeting with one of the clergy. The longer the lead time, the more flexibility we will all have.

Weddings are celebrated on Saturdays. We can discuss other days of the week; however such weddings may incur additional maintenance charges, because our space is used by many groups. Weddings are generally not performed in the season of Lent because of the penitential nature of the church season, but exceptions have been made. Priority is always given to scheduled worship services.

Wedding rehearsals usually take place on the day before the wedding. Both the rehearsal and wedding times and dates are scheduled by the officiating priest in consultation with you.

As you plan, please consider that you may arrive up to two hours before the service and stay for up to 30 minutes after the wedding. We must ask that you take responsibility for seeing that both the rehearsal and wedding start times are adhered to. We often have other services and activities scheduled within a reasonable time after your wedding.

**SEATING CAPACITY**

The church comfortably holds 380 guests, 19 rows with 10 guests per pew.

**MUSIC**

A wedding in the church is primarily a service of worship. Because of the sacred nature of the Marriage Rite, music within the sacred repertoire (hymns, choral, instrumental, or vocal settings) will prove most appropriate. Creativity with your wedding music is welcomed, but the Rector must approve a non-traditional repertoire. The music of the service is ultimately at the discretion of the officiating priest.

You may work with the officiating priest to contact and arrange a meeting with our Organist and Director of Music, who will be consulted and give consent if outside musicians are to be invited and if they require our Music Director's time for set-up and rehearsal.

**THE SERVICE BULLETIN**

St. Luke's has a standard format for our service bulletins. However, you may wish to have the bulletin specially designed and printed. Content and format needs to be discussed with the officiating priest, and we can help with design and printing. Costs vary depending on our cost.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO**

In general, we work to maintain a joyful and worshipful atmosphere in the wedding service. Good professional photographers understand this, and they will agree to minimize distractions and respect the sacred nature of the building and the liturgy.

The best way to photograph wedding participants is before and after the service. We can schedule time for this to be done. We can “re-enact” particular moments. And the photographer may consult with the officiating clergy before the service on placement and movement during the service.

Flash may be used for the procession, but the photographer must do this from a predetermined, fixed location. No flash photographs may be taken once the service begins; by the photographer or by guests.

During the service, available light photography with a quiet shutter is permitted from a predetermined, fixed location.

Videotaping is permitted, with available light only, with the videographer adhering to the same guidelines outlined above.

Since cell phones and videos are now commonly used, you may wish to ask wedding guests not to use them or permit use (if/with any restrictions).

## **FLOWERS AND OTHER DECORATIONS**

Any decorations which are placed in our church for your wedding should complement and enrich the beauty of our sacred spaces. Please keep in mind that the church is foremost a worship space. It is arranged with particular sight lines in mind. The sight lines must remain visually clear for communication during the service.

As you plan with your florist, please keep these guidelines in mind:

- The altar and cross must remain as the central and primary visual focus.
- Generally two arrangements are set on the reredos (the shelf on the wall behind the altar). For proper scale and freedom of movement behind the altar, these arrangements need to be within the dimensions of 8” in depth, 36” in width and 48” in height.
- These altar flowers will remain for the Sunday services in thanksgiving for your wedding and should be coordinated with the officiating priest for size and color.
- All flowers and decorations must be removed after the wedding (except altar arrangements).
- Final decisions about decorations and their placement are at the discretion of the officiating priest. To avoid last minute floral crises, we will work with you to create a setting that is beautiful, balanced and functional.

- Flowers and greens must be live. Nothing may be glued onto things in the church.
- Bows and small flower arrangements may be appropriately attached to the sides of the pews.
- You may choose to have no flowers in the church at all, and that is perfectly appropriate.

It is vitally important that your florist be in touch with our Parish Administrator or Wedding Coordinator, to arrange a definite time to arrive and put the flowers and other decorations in place.

If you cannot afford or do not wish to use a florist you are welcome to work with our Flower Guild Chair, who can design a beautiful arrangement for you at a reasonable cost.

### **CANDLES**

The altar candles are lit for the service. You may also choose to light the candles on the candelabra. Additionally, you may have the side candles lit for your wedding. We will light them approximately 40 minutes before the service, and will extinguish them following the ceremony. (Side candles incur an additional charge; see below.) Please, no “Unity Candles.”

### **AISLE RUNNERS**

The church is cleaned and the carpet is vacuumed before each wedding. We prohibit the use of aisle runners for safety reasons.

### **THROWING OF RICE, BIRDSEED, CONFETTI, ETC.**

Observing San Francisco law, we prohibit the throwing of rice, birdseed, flower petals confetti, etc. inside or outside the church property. Bubbles are still okay!

### **BRIDE’S ROOM**

A small bride’s room located to the right of the narthex (lobby) is available for preparation immediately before, during, and after the service. You are also welcome to use our conference room and upstairs chapel as a waiting room.

### **PARKING FOR GUESTS**

Parking in the immediate neighborhood is limited. Public garages are located around the block on Washington and on Sacramento between Polk and Van Ness. You may wish to announce on the invitation to the rehearsal and the wedding that guests should allow extra time for parking. You may wish to arrange for valet parking for large weddings.

## SECURITY

St. Luke's is an urban parish, and while we take security precautions, we cannot guarantee the safe-keeping of all your items. To make extra security provisions, you may wish to hire our sexton for additional security.

## WEDDING COORDINATORS

Outside wedding coordinators are invited to help at all stages of planning and are encouraged to be in conversation with the clergy. Nonetheless, it must be understood that all matters concerned with the wedding ceremony fall under the authority of the officiating priest.

## AT THE REHEARSAL

Please remember that rehearsals usually take place on the day before the wedding. It is imperative that members of the wedding party arrive promptly.

Because we want the rehearsal to be relaxing and reduce anxiety, please come prepared to walk through the service and to honor the solemn, yet joyful, mood of the occasion.

**If an event precedes the rehearsal, please do not serve alcohol.**

## ON THE DAY OF THE WEDDING

- The wedding party should plan to arrive at least one hour before the wedding.
- Have ushers in place 20 minutes before the service. Some of these ushers should be persons other than those in the wedding procession, to help seat latecomers. A good rule of thumb is to have at least one usher per 50 people in attendance.
- The St. Luke's wedding coordinator will be on hand to help with miscellaneous small crises and to cue the organist for the processional.
- Relax and enjoy the fruit of your careful and thoughtful planning.

## THE BOTTOM LINE - COSTS

Many people and hours go into making weddings happen in a church. Your wedding weekend is a weekend of work for the people of a church. Because we wish to maintain professional standards, and to arrange the appropriate resources to make your wedding go smoothly, we request the following fees:

### **FOR USE OF THE CHURCH FOR NON-MEMBERS: \$2200**

A non-refundable deposit of \$1000 is required at the time the date is set, to hold your date and time and this amount will be applied to the overall fee for use of the church. The remaining balance of \$1200 is due one month prior to the wedding.

### **OFFICIATING CLERGY: \$800**

This suggested honorarium is paid directly to the officiating priest one week before the wedding rehearsal. The fee includes the 3 sessions of pre-marital counseling mandated by the Episcopal Church canons, consultation on the wedding booklet, writing a wedding homily, the Rehearsal, officiating at the Wedding Ceremony and then mailing the signed wedding license to the appropriate city or state authorities.

### **ORGANIST FEE: \$275**

This is the fee for the church organist to play at your wedding. At the time of the music consultation with the bride and groom, appropriate music fees are assessed for the hiring of and rehearsal with any additional musicians or organ repertoire. All fees must be discussed and agreed upon with the organist before the wedding rehearsal. Payment must be made to the organist one week before the wedding rehearsal.

### **WEDDING COORDINATOR FEE: \$250**

This in-house coordinator answers all the questions the Rector won't have time to answer the day of the wedding! This base fee covers typical opening and closing of the church, wedding-party coordination during rehearsal and ceremony, creation of wedding booklet and printing, set-up and clean-up of the church. Payment is made one week before the rehearsal. Additional arrangements may be made with the church office, officiating priest, and the sexton and will be billed at \$50 per hour.

### **THE "WEDDING PACKAGE" FOR NON-MEMBERS IS \$3500.**

### **THE "WEDDING PACKAGE" FOR MEMBERS OF ST. LUKE'S IS \$2300.**

If you and your partner would like to join our parish and become part of our Christian community you are welcome to discuss this with the rector and take appropriate action toward membership.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO USE OUR PARISH HALL FOR YOUR RECEPTION**

Please expect to pay an additional fee to our Sexton for set-up and clean-up and use of the space. There is no additional charge for the use of the room for members of the church.

**ADDITIONAL SIDE CANDLES (COMPLETELY OPTIONAL): \$100**

The altar candles and candelabra are lit free of charge. If you wish to have the candles along the side of the church lit, please make payment to "St. Luke's Altar Guild."

**PRINTED BULLETIN**

This is charged at cost to us. You may wish to produce the bulletin independently after consulting with the officiating priest on content.

**ALL FEES ARE REQUIRED TO BE PAID AT LEAST ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE REHEARSAL.**

These terms are as straightforward as we know how to make them. They represent our own belief in the value and importance of both your wedding and of our ministry.

**Please contact us with any further questions . . . .  
We look forward to continuing a relationship with you!**

**St Luke's Episcopal Church  
415-673-7327  
office@stlukessf.org**

**AGREEMENT FOR MARRIAGE CEREMONY**

I have received a copy of *Weddings at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in San Francisco*. I agree to abide by all the policies and procedures of the Church as stated in the Handbook. I agree under all circumstances to follow the instructions of the clergy and verger assigned to my service, especially in regard to safety issues.

I understand that my deposit can be applied to another date and time if I need to reschedule, but the deposit is not refundable if I cancel. I understand that no ceremony can take place without certified proof of a valid California Marriage License.

Signature of one of the couple: \_\_\_\_\_

For St. Luke's Episcopal Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Full Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(First Name) (Middle Name) (Last Name) ('Goes by' Name)

Bride's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: home, cell, office)

Home Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Address) (City) (State) (Zip)

Groom's Full Name:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(First Name) (Middle Name) (Last Name) ('Goes by' Name)

Groom's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: home, cell, office)

Home Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Address) (City) (State) (Zip)