

Nuptials at Saint Peter's

Entering a Holy Union or marriage is a major rite of celebration in the Christian community. St. Peter's Episcopal Church is available to the community to conduct wedding services in accordance with the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer and the traditions of the Episcopal Church.

St. Peter's will provide service to anyone if at least one partner is a baptized Christian. In the course of this celebration, a couple declares before God and the congregation that they are knowingly and without reservation entering a relationship that has consequences for them and for society as a whole. When two people present themselves for a Holy union, they are declaring that they are a part of the Christian community and are, or desire to begin to be participants in the life and witness of the faith community.

In order to uphold the integrity of both the Sacrament of Holy unions and to provide a setting in which the couple and their families and friends can celebrate its joy, the following policies and procedures are adhered to in this parish.

Clergy Consultation

The couple must consult personally with the clergy before a date and time for the service can be set. Except within extreme circumstances, this consultation must take place at least six months before the proposed union. This date and time are subject to the clergy person's satisfaction about the proposed ceremony at the completion of the required relationship counseling as well as the availability of the clergy.

Scheduling

Only one union is performed on any given day. There are no exceptions. All wedding ceremonies will be held on-site unless otherwise approved by the Rector.

Required for Holy Unions

Saint Peter's will perform a wedding for anyone, provided one of the partners is a baptized Christian.

Holy Union of One Who Has Been Divorced

Application must be made to the Bishop of Delaware for permission to enter into a Holy union in the Church and by the clergy. The divorce must be completed at least one year old before such permission is granted. Additional prep time is necessary.

Relationship Counseling and the Service

The clergy designated to celebrate the union is responsible for and in charge of the required relationship counseling and ceremony. It is his/her prerogative to invite other clergy to assist in the ceremony. In this parish, the form for the liturgy is available from the office and is according to the use of The Episcopal Diocese of Delaware. The ceremony includes the celebration of Holy Eucharist. It is the norm for the service to take place at Saint Peter's. Wedding coordinators are Not permitted.

Music

The organ is played by the parish organist for all unions in this parish, or if unavailable he will find someone to substitute in his place. The music for the ceremony and the use and selection of vocalists and other musicians must be planned and approved by the parish organist. There is a set fee for the organist. An additional fee will be applied at the organist's discretion where there are additional musicians and soloist rehearsals.

Service Leaflets

Service leaflets are designed by the church and printed by St. Peter's for distribution to those attending the service. The clergy member performing the service will work with the couple to determine what Scripture lessons and music will be listed. All information should be completed and submitted two weeks prior to the ceremony to ensure timely completion of the leaflet.

Flowers

The rector has the final say on the use and placement of flowers for the ceremony. Arrangements may be placed on a table in the Narthex, on the shelf behind the Altar, on two pedestals and on the floor in front of the Altar. Flowers should be tasteful and should not be higher than the cross behind the Altar. If decorations are used on the ends of the pews you must provide your own clips and they must be removed following the service. If you would like to leave flowers in the church for the Sunday services in honor of your ceremony, arrangements must be made with the church office in advance. For safety reasons we do not use a white runner in the church.

Rehearsal

The rehearsal is an important part of the wedding process and is under the direction of the clergy. It will be held at a time and date approved by the clergy. Those persons who are to be present and participate are: the couple, the maid/matron/gentleman of honor and/or the best man/woman, the attendants for the bride and groom, and other persons involved in the ceremony. Please do not bring an outside consultant to the rehearsal or to the church to assist with the ceremony. The design of the ceremony is reserved for the clergy and the couple only and must be in compliance with the Canons of the Church. The Marriage License must be brought to the Church Office one week before the rehearsal.

Photography

Professional photographers are required to meet with the clergy in advance of the service for instruction. Guests are asked not to take flash pictures or videos during the ceremony. This should be made clear to all who are invited to the ceremony. Pictures of the couple and their attendants may be taken in the church for one hour following the ceremony.

Videotaping

A video of the ceremony may be made with the following restrictions:

- a) The video camera must be set on a tripod and capable of being turned on and left running during the ceremony.
- b) Placement of the video camera is either in the back of the church or in the pulpit.
- c) Additional lighting to that already provided in the church is prohibited.
- d) A mobile video cameraperson is expressly prohibited. There are no exceptions.

Receiving Lines

Receiving guests is more properly the function of the reception. The size of the narthex is small and should be taken into consideration. If the couple choose to have a receiving line at the church please do not use confetti, rice, flower petals or birdseed either inside the church or outside the church. The use of small bells or the blowing of bubbles is an alternative.

Personal Property

It is your responsibility to appoint one or two persons who will be responsible for all personal property, including, but not limited to, clothing, purses, cameras, and makeup cases. This person shall be introduced to the clergy before the ceremony begins.

Use of Alcoholic Beverages

Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on Saint Peter's Church property.

Diocesan Guidelines state that no alcoholic beverages are permitted at events which take place in parish facilities that are not sponsored by a parish group. Wedding rehearsals and ceremonies are included in this category.

Fees

There are certain established fees as well as fees for optional services. The expectation is that these fees will be paid when the date of the proposed ceremony is reserved. There is a suggested fee given to the rector and not required except in the following circumstances.

- a) The rector is performing the ceremony for another clergy person.
- b) The clergy performing the ceremony is doing so in the place of the rector. All offerings received by the rector will go into the "Rector's Discretionary Fund" and be used at his/her discretion for the ministry of Saint Peter's Church.
[See Fee schedule below.]

Clergy

The clergy person consulting with a couple will normally officiate at the union ceremony. However, he/she may request another clergy person to officiate if circumstances dictate.

Relationship Counseling

A couple who wishes to enter into a Holy union at Saint Peter's may be required to meet a counseling professional. The cost of this service is about \$100.00/hr. The purpose of this meeting is to further assist the couple as they make a life-long commitment to one another. Topics such as communication, finances, conflict resolution, in the context of a relationship and other important subjects are discussed. An appointment will be arranged through the Rector.

Fee Schedule

PLEASE NOTE: Payment of fees is required to reserve a date for the ceremony. We will not hold the date until financial obligations have been met. Thank you.

St. Peter's Episcopal Church is available to the community to conduct wedding services in accordance with the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer and the traditions of the Episcopal Church. Since such services supplement the regular schedule of worship services by the church, they impose additional duties on the church staff and affect church resources.

The Vestry has approved the following appropriate fees for weddings. [Fees may be waived at the discretion of the Rector.]

St. Peter's Episcopal Church offers to its pledging members a no-charge policy for the use of the Sanctuary for weddings. However, a \$300.00 honorarium for the Rector is suggested. In addition, the Organist Honorarium: \$250.00, Sexton service: \$50.00 [both of which are required]. Use of the parish hall for receptions is \$200 for pledging members and \$400 for all others.

Fees for Non-members are listed below:

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| Organist: Service including one rehearsal | \$250.00 |
| Additional rehearsals for other musicians | \$100.00 |
| Sexton Services: Extra cleaning &/or moving furniture, etc. | \$65.00 |
| Out of normal working hours | \$150.00 |
| Marriage Preparation Counseling (up to 3 visits): | \$300.00 |
| Use of Sanctuary: | \$1,000.00 |
| Clergy Fee: Including rehearsal and liturgy service . | \$300.00 |