



## Wedding Guidelines Saint James Episcopal Church West Dundee, Illinois

Below are the details of the “customary” or guidelines for being married at Saint James. Please remember that the Episcopal Church is bound by Canon Law and takes the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony and the service itself very seriously.

A Christian wedding is far more than a legal or social event; it is above all a service of worship. Indeed, it is a sacrament called the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage in the *Book of Common Prayer*—an event whereby the grace and love of God is given and made known through the words and actions of the people.

### How to begin planning:

All arrangements for your wedding at Saint James begin with making an appointment to see the Rector. ***The Rector will not make wedding arrangements with parents, so please call the Rector yourself.*** First the Rector will meet with you and decide if you wish to proceed. It is within the discretion of the Rector to decline to solemnize any marriage. Please consider not making any wedding plans or reservations for your reception until you have talked with the Rector about your wedding. An appointment can be made by calling the Church office at 847-426-5612.

**Important note:** If you choose to book a reception date and time before meeting with the Rector, and the date is not available at Saint James, we cannot help you. Saint James will not change any prescheduled events for weddings. If you wish to have other clergy participate in your wedding, please speak with the Rector as soon as possible.

**Viewing the church:** the nave (the worship space) at Saint James is available to view after Sunday services and by appointment with the Rector or Wedding Coordinator.

### Baptism required

At least one of the persons to be married must have received the sacrament of Holy Baptism. The Episcopal Church accepts the baptism of any Christian tradition, which baptizes in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

### Membership required

Because Christian Marriage is best lived out in the context of the community of faith, participation in the life of a Christian community is required. If the couple is not currently a member of such a church, now is the time to start. Being a member of a church entails regular participation in worship, and making a pledge to pray, give and serve. If the couple lives in the area, the Rector will discuss with them the steps to becoming members of Saint James. If the couple lives in another

community or state, the Rector will help the couple to find a local Episcopal Church where they can become members. In these latter cases, the couple will most likely do their premarital work with the Rector of that church or a professional counselor, and spend one session with the Rector planning the ceremony itself. Before the ceremony, the Rector at their home parish will write the Rector of Saint James, discussing the couple's involvement in the church, and the premarital counseling.

### Counseling Required

The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago and Saint James require that couples being married within this diocese complete a minimum of three counseling sessions of not less than one hour each with an Episcopal Rector. These should be scheduled well in advance with the Rector. If you live a distance away, you may seek counseling at an Episcopal Church or professional counselor near you. An Episcopal Rector or counselor must do the counseling, and send a written report of it to the Rector.

The purpose of these meetings is to prepare you for marriage. Each couple must complete a Prepare and Enrich Couple Assessment Survey which the Rector will arrange. Counseling entails the joys and realities of coupled life, what each of the partners brings to the union and the specifics of the service.

### Wedding Vows

Wedding vows may be found in the Book of Common Prayer on Page 427 and the Rector can provide other resources for the couple. All weddings at Saint James adhere to the service in the Book of Common Prayer or one of the other approved wedding services within the Anglican Communion.

### Scripture Reading

Readings for the service come from the Holy Bible only and suggested readings are available in the Book of Common Prayer. The couple should work with the Rector to choose the actual selections from the recommended readings. Readers should be chosen by the bride and groom. It is appropriate for members of the family, the wedding party, or guests to participate. The version of the Bible normally used at Saint James is the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). Readers of lessons should prepare their readings in that translation or use another translation with the permission of the Rector. If Communion is to be included in the service, a passage from the Gospel always concludes the Readings.

### Holy Communion

Holy Communion is the central event of Christian worship. It is a festive holy meal in which Christians celebrate Christ's love in their lives and come to the altar to receive the consecrated bread and wine. Holy Communion, or Holy Eucharist, is the ideal context for the sacrament of marriage. When the service includes Communion, the couple receives the bread and wine first and then the wedding party and guests receive communion.

### Suitable Wedding Dates

Saturday is the preferred day for weddings. Sunday, the Lord's Day, is never available for weddings except under extremely special circumstances approved by the Rector. Other dates in the

Church calendar when weddings are not performed at Saint James are during the 40 days of Lent, Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. There will be no exceptions to these dates.

### Seating

Saint James seats about 130-140 people without using overflow seating in the Library adjacent to the Nave. The couple should select ushers to be responsible for setting up and taking down any chairs set up in the Library.

### Flowers and Decorations (*Please share this information with your florist*)

It is appropriate to have flowers on the two vases behind the altar. They are a symbol of resurrection and new life. The Saint James Wedding Coordinator will provide you with specific information regarding flowers for the altar vases and wreaths for the front doors of the church.

The Chancel/Sanctuary furnishings may not be moved. In maintaining our beautiful and historic worship space, flowers or bows may be used to decorate the pews or mark family pews under the direction of the Wedding Coordinator. No tape, uncoated wire or nails may be used under any circumstances on any church furnishings inside or outside of the church building.

***No rice, bird seed or confetti may be used inside or outside the church. Throwing of flower petals or bubbles may be used outside only.***

Flowers may be left for the Sunday service after the wedding, or may be taken to the wedding reception. Please let the Wedding Coordinator know of your plans for your flowers. If the flowers are to remain for Sunday morning, the couple may request a dedication for the flowers in the weekly Sunday church bulletin (if so, the exact wording of the dedication must be given to the Parish Administrator no later than noon on the Wednesday before the Sunday of that bulletin – call 847-426-5612).

### Candles

The candles on the altar are lit during the wedding. Unity candles are not part of Episcopal tradition and are not permitted; it is recommended that if a unity candle is desired to do this at the reception. Unity is expressed by celebration of the Holy Eucharist. For late afternoon and early evening weddings, Saint James has wall sconces and candle stands that affix to the pews that can be used for additional cost.

### Music

If you want the Saint James organist at your wedding, it is your responsibility to contact us. If you want an organist other than Saint James' organist to play at your wedding, you must get Saint James organist's consent. Our organist is available for consultation and as a resource for finding other musicians and soloists. Music at a wedding should reflect the liturgical and sacramental nature of the service. The organist will discuss your music choices with you. *The contexts of the familiar Mendelssohn and Wagner marches are not in harmony with the holiness of marriage and love, these two pieces are NOT permitted to be played at Saint James.*

If you choose to use other musicians (harpists or string quartets), please make sure that you let the Rector and Organist know as soon as possible as a courtesy. We want to accommodate and place

these musicians as best as possible so as not to interfere with the ceremony. The use of DJs or recorded music are discouraged from use in weddings at Saint James.

### Wedding Program

The church office will for a fee \$50 provide the service bulletin. The bulletin is the bride and groom's responsibility; however, Saint James will assist in the layout of the program. Programs for a wedding ceremony can be helpful if a majority of guests are not familiar with Episcopal liturgy. When a printed program is to be used, email a copy of the information (names of family members, wedding party, readers, ushers, etc.) to be included to the Rector at [stjames324@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stjames324@sbcglobal.net) for final approval two weeks before being printed.

### Photography and Videography

Inform your photographer of these general guidelines:

- Video and still pictures may be taken as the wedding party enters and leaves the church.
- No flash photography is allowed during the service by photographers or guests.

**The procession in and procession out may be videotaped from the aisle. Other videotaping should be from the back of the Nave or in the Library outside the Nave behind the choir stalls. Since Saint James has a short aisle, any good zoom lens will give the videographer the shots needed. Photographers should not move about during the service. Photographers are not permitted inside the Sanctuary (Altar area) or to climb over or step on pews).**

### Guest books

We strongly suggest that the guest book not be used in the church because guests will get seated far too slowly and the service could be delayed. We recommend the guest book be saved for the reception.

### Bridal Party Dressing Arrangements

The bridal party uses the Community Room across from the Women's restroom to dress at the Church. The bride and her party should wait in the Community Room before the service begins. Depending on the weather, the bride and her party can walk between the church and Rectory to enter the church building for the procession.

We recommend that the Groom and groomsmen dress before arriving at the Church. The Grooms' party may wait in the parish hall until the ceremony begins.

For same sex couples, various parts of the parish can be used if the couple choose to not see each other before the service.

### Parking

There is plenty of street parking available around Saint James. Inform the Wedding Coordinator if you wish a space reserved for the car or limo for the couple.

Fees for Wedding and Building Usage  
 Please Check all that apply under each category

|                | _____ Parish Member | _____ Other Episcopal Parish | _____ Non-Member |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Clergy         | _____ \$250         | _____ \$250                  | _____ \$300      |
| Organist       | _____ \$200         | _____ \$200                  | _____ \$200      |
| Acolyte        | _____ \$25          | _____ \$30                   | _____ \$30       |
| Church         | _____ \$250         | _____ \$300                  | _____ \$500      |
| Bulletin       | _____ \$50          | _____ \$50                   | _____ \$50       |
| Pew Candles    | _____ \$100         | _____ \$150                  | _____ \$150      |
| Sconce Candles | _____ \$100         | _____ \$150                  | _____ \$150      |
| Boynton Hall   | _____ \$150         | _____ \$250                  | _____ \$250      |
| TOTAL          | _____               | _____                        | _____            |

A deposit check for the use of the church should be provided with the completion of the information form for the couple once the date has been agreed to with the Rector. **The deposit check should be for the use of the Church** and is refundable in full until two weeks before the wedding.

Individual checks should be made for the Clergy, Organist and then a final check at the rehearsal for the remaining portion owed to the Church.

**Marriage License and Canonical Requirements**

Those being married at Saint James are required to fill out a Declaration of Intention (page 7 of this document) at least two months prior to the service date. The Declaration of Intention is an affirmation of a couple’s intention to live in a Christian covenant as set forth in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The marriage license required by the State must be picked up at the Kane County Clerk’s office. **NOTE: There will be no service without a valid marriage license brought to the rehearsal.** You may need copies of your **marriage certificate** once you are married. This can be obtained by **contacting the Kane County Clerk’s office** that issued the license. *The certificate is a legal document.*

**Kane County Clerk  
 719 S. Batavia Ave., Bldg. B  
 Geneva, IL 60134  
 (630) 232-5950**

**Concerning Remarriage**

In cases when one or both parties requesting marriage in the Episcopal Church have had a prior marriage that ended in divorce, the couple must first meet with the Rector. A certified copy of the Divorce decree must be provided at this time and presented to the Rector.

In cases when one or both parties have had two previous marriages end in divorce, certified copies of the divorce decrees must be presented to the Rector. The Rector will then complete a Marital Judgement form requesting permission to marry the couple to the Bishop of the Diocese of Chicago. Please note that application for remarriage does not automatically ensure approval by the Bishop.

## The Service Rehearsal

A rehearsal gives all involved the opportunity to practice, which will allow the wedding service to be carried out without confusion. **The rehearsal is normally conducted early evening on the evening before the service** (or an appropriately agreed upon time by the wedding party with the Rector and Wedding Coordinator).

The rehearsal will take no more than an hour. Persons needed for the rehearsal are the wedding couple, everyone participating in the wedding party, ushers, readers, parents and family. The Rector and Wedding Coordinator are in charge of the rehearsal as they are responsible for conducting the service.

## The Wedding Day!

In scheduling the hour of the wedding, please note that a service takes about 30 minutes without Holy Communion, and about one hour with Holy Communion. This may be significant when figuring out the time of arrival at the place where the wedding reception is to be held.

**Ushers** should plan to be at the church, ready to play their important part in greeting and seating the guests, at least **30 minutes before** the scheduled start of the wedding.

**The Wedding Party** should be at the church as early as necessary to dress in preparation for the start of the service. We recommend being at the church a good **1 hour before the service**.

Starting on time is good etiquette and lets everyone know that you appreciated their presence and gift of time in celebrating your special day.

## NO consumption of alcoholic beverages:

Even though a wedding is a celebration, **Saint James does not permit the consumption of alcoholic beverages before OR after the service in the church building**. We ask that you respect this request of Saint James parish.

## Final details...

Please do not hesitate to call with any questions you may have. We will do our very best to answer your questions and to make your wedding day a joyous beginning for your marriage! Now that you have read the above wedding customary, in order to reserve your wedding date at Saint James, we require that you sign the attached Declaration of Intention form. Bring this form to your first meeting with the Rector at the church, along with the information form and attach your check as the deposit for the use of the church.

This will confirm that you meet the qualifications and intend to be married at Saint James. If you have any questions before signing and agreeing to what you have just read, please call and we will try to answer your questions. By signing this document you indicate that you understand and agree to be held accountable to the guidelines of our wedding guidelines.

*The Declaration of Intent  
for Holy Matrimony*

We, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

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, and of 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 seek God's help thereto.

Clergy \_\_\_\_\_

Parish: Saint James Episcopal Church, West Dundee, Illinois

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Wedding Information Form**  
**Saint James Episcopal Church • West Dundee, Illinois**  
*(Please print clearly and return completed form to the church office)*

Date of Ceremony \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_  
Rehearsal: Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Single or Widower \_\_\_\_\_ Number of this marriage \_\_\_\_\_  
Baptized? \_\_\_\_\_ In what denomination? \_\_\_\_\_  
Age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Single or Widower \_\_\_\_\_ Number of this marriage \_\_\_\_\_  
Baptized? \_\_\_\_\_ In what denomination? \_\_\_\_\_  
Age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Witnesses:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address after Marriage  
\_\_\_\_\_