

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Rector: The Very Reverend Craig A. Phillips, Ph.D.

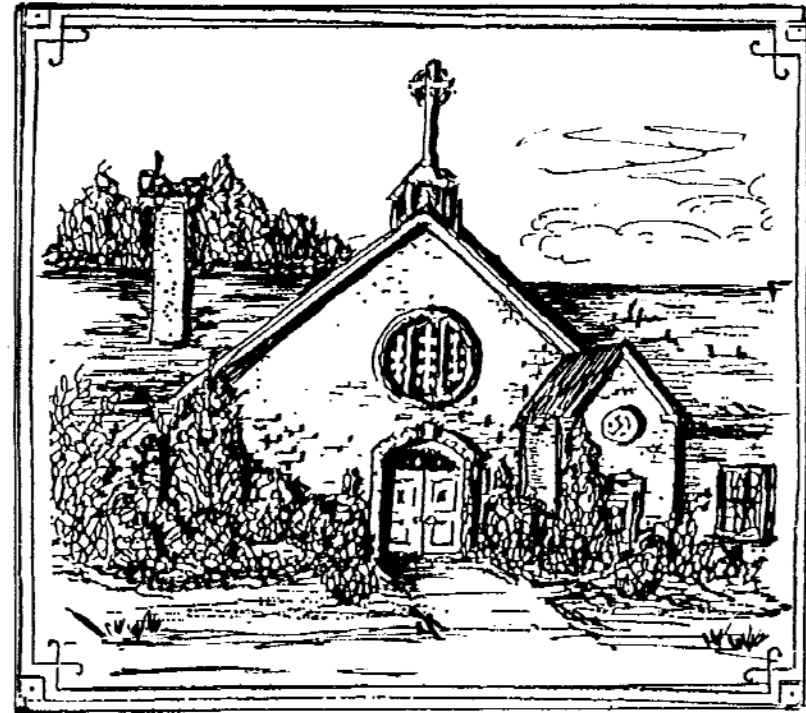
Asst. Rector: The Rev. Ann Martens

Organist: Emily Koons

Wedding Coordinator: Bess Johnson

4250 North Glebe Road
Arlington VA 22207-4500

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ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Parish Guidelines for
The Celebration and Blessing
of a Marriage

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4250 North Glebe Road
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FOR PHOTOGRAPHER

No flash photography is allowed during the ceremony, including the procession, by either a professional photographer or members of the congregation.

Photographers may only be in the rear of the sanctuary during the processional and recessional. During the ceremony they may only be up in the balcony and must remain discreet as clicking cameras are distracting to the wedding party and especially to the bride and groom. No photographer is allowed to wander about the church throughout the wedding ceremony.

If a video camera is to be used by either the professional photographer or a member of the congregation, the camera must be placed in a fixed position in the balcony of the church. This position must be approved by the officiating priest *prior* to the wedding.

You may have 30 minutes following the service for posed pictures inside the church building. Photographers are not allowed to enter the sanctuary (the area between the communion rail and the altar) at any time. Chairs and prayer desks within this area are not to be moved. If you wish to include the priest in your photographs, please have those taken early in the session.

If you do not adhere by these regulations, you will not be permitted to photograph future events at St. Peter's.

Acknowledged by:

Fees

There is no fee for the use of the Church by our members.

A donation of \$300-\$500 to the church is customary, or you may consider donating a percentage of your total wedding expenses to assist with the many works of St. Peter's.

Services of the Clergy: \$150-300

Members: Please make out your check to the St. Peter's Rector's Discretionary Fund.

Non-Members: Please make out your check directly to the officiating clergy.

Services of the Organist: \$375, includes consultation, rehearsal, and ceremony

Flowers: This fee will vary depending on the flowers used and will be determined by consultation with a member of the Altar Guild.

Sexton's Services: \$ 100

All fees must be brought to the rehearsal and given to our wedding coordinator for distribution.

Financial contributions to St. Peter's and the Rector's Discretionary Fund are used to fund various ministries of Church.

Unless otherwise specified, checks should be made out to the name of the individual rendering the service.

The Nuptial Blessing

O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and His Church. Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience; in wisdom and true godliness; that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Introduction

The congregation and clergy of St. Peter's Episcopal Church wish you God's blessing as you plan for your wedding. In order to assist you in planning a wedding of beauty and dignity with an understanding of the regulations and traditions of the church, we offer you the following guidelines as you consider where to hold this special event in your lives.

General Guidelines

- ◆ Under the canons of the Episcopal Church, application for marriage must be made to a priest at least 30 days prior to the date of the wedding. In order to have the necessary time for the premarital counseling required by the church and the many other details that arise, we ask for a six to twelve month notice, three months being the absolute minimum.
- ◆ The officiating clergy will be a priest on our staff. Any other clergy person may be invited to assist with the prior approval of the Rector and officiating priest.
- ◆ The couple to be married is required, according to the canons of the Episcopal Church, to sign the “Declaration of Intention.” This is usually done after the couple has begun premarital counseling.
 - ◇ *In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen*
 - ◇ **We, N.N and N.N., 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 Book of Common Prayer.**
 - ◇ **We believe that the union of husband and wife, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God’s will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.**
 - ◇ **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.**
- ◆ Weddings should be arranged at times that do not conflict with regularly scheduled services. Usually weddings are not scheduled for Christmas Week, Holy Week, or during the season of Lent.
- ◆ If either party has been married and divorced, the Bishop of the Diocese of Virginia has to be consulted. At least four months need to be allowed for this process between the initial application and the date of the wedding. The diocesan norm is that a minimum of one year has lapsed between the final decree of divorce and the date of petition.
- ◆ Because knowledge of the couple by the priest is an essential part of this process, it is expected that at least one person must be an active member of the parish. An active member is one who is baptized and entered in the Church Registry, has received communion at least three times during the previous year and is known to the Treasurer.

Should you choose to print your programs yourself or use another vendor, the officiating clergy must approve the final draft of your program before printing.

Transportation

If you plan to use a limousine or other special transportation, please note that the area in front of the church doors is reserved for handicapped access. Should you choose to park your limousine in front of the church, your driver must remain with the vehicle at all times.

Other Things to know about St. Peter’s

- ◆ Our seating capacity is approximately 200.
- ◆ For security reasons, personal items and valuables should be entrusted to a designated person before the service begins. A friend or family member should be designated to take care of any gifts brought to the church. St. Peter’s can not be responsible for the loss of any gifts, personal items or clothing.
- ◆ St. Peter’s is supplied with an amplification system, and the pulpit is equipped with a microphone.
- ◆ Rice or birdseed may not be used for weddings as it creates a hazardous condition on the steps and walkways. Confetti and flower petals are also discouraged over any hard surfaces.
- ◆ St. Peter’s is an air-conditioned and non-smoking building.
- ◆ Normally, neither rehearsal dinners or receptions are held at the church due to our space constraints.

Photographs and Videotaping

- ◆ No flash photography is allowed during the ceremony, including the procession, by either a professional photographer or members of the congregation.
- ◆ Photographers may only be in the rear of the sanctuary during the processional and recessional. During the ceremony they may only be up in the balcony and must remain discreet as clicking cameras are distracting to the wedding party and especially to the bride and groom. No photographer is allowed to wander about the church throughout the wedding ceremony.
- ◆ If a video camera is to be used by either the professional photographer or a member of the congregation, the camera must be placed in a fixed position in the balcony of the church. This position must be approved by the officiating priest *prior* to the wedding.
- ◆ You may have 30 minutes following the service for posed pictures inside the church building. Photographers are not allowed to enter the sanctuary (the area between the communion rail and the altar) at any time. Chairs and prayer desks within this area are not to be moved. If you wish to include the priest in your photographs, please have those taken early in the session.
- ◆ We will provide you with a copy of these policies so that you may give it to your photographer in advance of the ceremony for their acknowledgment and return.
- ◆ Please be aware that photographers who do not adhere by these regulations will not be allowed to photograph future St. Peter's events.

Wedding Bulletins

Some couples desire a printed program for the service. In this case, the officiating clergy will assist you in the planning of this leaflet. If it is to be printed by the church, it will be made to look similar to a Sunday morning bulletin, with limited choice as to size and paper style. All information regarding content (names, musical selections, readings, etc.) must be submitted to the Parish Administrator at least three weeks before the wedding. If you are using a program, the copies must be left at the church in time for the rehearsal. It will be helpful for the officiating clergy and organist to have copies earlier than the rehearsal. Plan to print several more copies of programs in addition the number needed for the wedding guests.

- ◆ Announcements of a wedding at St. Peter's should *not* be made until the couple has met with a priest, and the priest has agreed to perform the ceremony. In the event a judgment is required because of a divorce, no announcement can be made until permission has been obtained from the Bishop.
- ◆ If any priest of the Episcopal Church has declined, for any reason, to officiate at a particular marriage, no priest may agree to do so without consulting with the priest involved and obtaining their consent. It is the responsibility of the couple to make such circumstances known to the parish priest.
- ◆ Two witnesses need to be present at the ceremony.
- ◆ A valid marriage license has to be presented to the parish priest at the wedding rehearsal. This must be obtained from the Clerk of Court in the jurisdiction in which the bride and groom reside.

Flowers and Accessories

- ◆ All flowers used in the sanctuary are to be arranged by members of our Altar Guild. Once you have met with the priest and scheduled your wedding, please contact the Parish Administrator to make the necessary arrangements. This should be done at least *one month* prior to the wedding.
- ◆ Flowers used in the sanctuary for a wedding are deemed to be an offering to God and remain in the church for the regular services. They may be placed on the corner shelves behind the altar, in windows and one arrangement in the narthex. If the church has been decorated for a particular season or special event, these decorations and flowers may not be altered.
- ◆ Only the candles normally used for church services may be used and will be provided by the Altar Guild.
- ◆ Reserved rows may be marked only with ribbons or appropriate arrangements tied to the chairs. Nails, tacks or tape may not be used.
- ◆ Aisle runners are not permitted for safety reasons, nor may fresh flower petals be dropped.
- ◆ St. Peter's has a needlepoint celebration kneeler available for the ceremony.
- ◆ A stand is available for a wedding guest book to be placed in the Narthex at the entrance to the church.

Altar Guild

A member of St. Peter's Altar Guild will be present for the rehearsal and ceremony for the handling of the sacred elements and St. Peter's vestments. One of our wedding coordinators will also be available to assist the wedding party in any way possible.

Music for the Wedding

A consultation with our organist should be arranged as early as possible in the planning process to discuss and obtain advice regarding music possibilities. A minimum of six week's notice is required. Please note:

- ◆ The final decision on the appropriateness of music and soloists resides with the officiating clergy in consultation with the organist. (The Mendelssohn and Wagner processional/ recessional music is not used in the Episcopal Church for weddings.)
- ◆ The organist will be present at the rehearsal.
- ◆ There is an organist's fee for playing at the rehearsal and wedding ceremony. If you wish to hire a different organist, you will need to pay our parish organist her regular fee in addition to the fee of the organist you wish to employ. Your organist must be approved by the parish organist well in advance of the ceremony as our organist is responsible for all weddings held in the church building.
- ◆ Soloists are expected to contact the organist at least one month prior to the wedding and make necessary arrangements for rehearsals. There will be an additional fee for this time. The use of recorded accompaniment is not permitted.
- ◆ If our organist is not available, her fee is waived and she will find a replacement organist. All fees then will be paid to this replacement.

Rehearsal

The purpose of the rehearsal is to acquaint members of the wedding party with their respective roles in the service so that the service itself may be conducted in a relaxed but worshipful manner. A rehearsal is usually scheduled on the evening prior to the wedding and lasts about 45 minutes.

- ◆ Of course, all members of the wedding party are expected to be present and on time. This would also include any special family members or friends who may be seated separately prior to the ceremony.
- ◆ We recommend that children in the wedding party be of school age and should be at the rehearsal. Please designate an adult to supervise the children during both the rehearsal and the wedding.
- ◆ Wedding programs should be brought to the church at this time. Please remember that the rehearsal takes place in a house of worship and proper respect for this space will be observed.
- ◆ Cell phones are not to be used in the church and should be turned off so they do not ring during rehearsal.
- ◆ If any persons other than the wedding party are present, they should take seats in the rear of the church so that the celebrant can easily identify the wedding party.
- ◆ If you use a wedding planner, he or she will not be involved in any part of the service itself.

On the Wedding Day

- ◆ Wedding attire should be in good taste and appropriate for a house of God.
- ◆ Dressing room facilities are limited; however, a room is available to allow the bride to dress at the church. This space is large enough for the bridesmaids to be present and assist the bride. However, we ask that the bridesmaids arrive to the church dressed for the ceremony.
- ◆ There is an additional room in which the groom and groomsmen may wait prior to the ceremony.
- ◆ Please arrange the use of these spaces in advance with the Parish Administrator.
- ◆ Parents and other important members of the family should plan to arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to the ceremony.
- ◆ Snacks and non-alcoholic beverages are permitted for the wedding party.
- ◆ Kindly observe our *No Smoking* policy.
- ◆ The ushers need to be dressed and in the narthex no later than thirty minutes prior to the start of the ceremony.