

St. Paul's Episcopal Church



A Customary for Marriage

This customary for Christian marriage is a guideline for a couple desiring to be married at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Exton. It explains some of the requirements of the Episcopal Church and of this Parish regarding the marriage service.

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Fees

The following is the fee schedule for a wedding at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Exton:

	<u>Contributing Member</u>	<u>Others</u>
Pre-Marital Sessions	\$150	\$250
Use of Church	Free	\$750
Organist	\$150	\$200
Soloist or Instrumentalist	\$100	\$125
Acolytes	\$ 20 each	\$ 25
Sexton	\$ 65	\$ 75
Bulletins	\$ 75	\$150

When the bride or the groom or one of their families is a contributing member of the Parish, there is no charge for the use of the Church building.

Fees should be sent to the Parish Office at least one week prior to the wedding.

The Parish Hall is available for receptions at a fee of \$150. In addition to this fee, a security deposit of \$75 must be paid one month in advance of the wedding. Wine or champagne may be served if non-alcoholic beverages are also provided. Beer and other liquor are not permitted. All laws of the state and country will be complied with when alcoholic beverages are served.

Each wedding party is responsible for securing its own caterer, as well as decorations at the reception. The Parish Hall must be cleaned immediately after the reception. Any damage is the financial responsibility of the parties using the facilities. The deposit is forfeited if cleaning is not done, and fees for cleaning will be billed to the parties.

Photography and Videotaping

No pictures requiring artificial light (flash or movie flood lights) may be taken during the wedding service by either professional photographers or wedding guests). This includes the processions before and after the service. This policy must be strictly observed. Pictures may be taken following the service.

Video recording will be permitted if arrangements are made with the officiating Priest before the service. Video recording equipment should not be used in a way that is ostentatious or distracting from the service. The videographer is required to attend the rehearsal to set up the placement of equipment in the consultation with the Priest.

The Nuptial Eucharist

The Holy Eucharist is an appropriate setting for the celebration and blessing of a marriage and is strongly encouraged, especially when both the bride and groom and members of the Episcopal Church. The officiating Priest will be happy to discuss this option with the couple. When the Eucharist is celebrated, members of the families and wedding party are encouraged to take part in the service by reading the Lessons and leading the Intercessions. This is also encouraged at non-Eucharistic services.

In addition to members of the wedding party, it is desirable to have a Crucifer and Torch Bearers. An Acolyte team will be assigned by the Acolyte Warden.

ALL PARTICIPANTS SHOULD PLAN TO ARRIVE AT LEAST ONE HOUR BEFORE THE SERVICE.

Service Sheet

The parish will print a simple wedding service sheet as a guide to those unfamiliar with worship in the Episcopal Church. If a more elaborate service sheet is desired, listing names of participants etc., all pertinent information must be given to the parish office at least two weeks prior to the service.

Marriage in the Episcopal Church

The Episcopal Church holds that marriage is a bond and covenant established by God in creation. It signifies the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church. Thus, marriage is a life-long union of husband and wife—an unconditional commitment of a man and a woman to each other. The Episcopal Church believes that 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 for the safeguarding and benefit of Society.* Those who do not hold this view of marriage should not seek to have their marriage blessed by the Church. A couple desiring to be married in the Church is required to sign a *Declaration of Intention* stating that they subscribe to this view of marriage.

All marriages taking place in the Church must conform to the laws of the State, the guidelines of the Bishop, and the Canons of the Episcopal Church. The Canonical requirements are:

- At least one of the parties must be baptized.
- The Priest will ascertain that both parties freely and knowingly consent to marriage.
- The Priest will ascertain that both parties understand that the union is both spiritual and physical and is intended to be life-long.
- The Priest will instruct both parties as to the nature, meaning and purpose of Holy Matrimony.
- A minimum of two witnesses must be present at the marriage.
- The couple will sign a Declaration of Consent.
- A Priest of the Episcopal Church must receive the permission of the Bishop before he/she may solemnize the marriage of a person who has had a previous marriage dissolved by a civil court and whose former spouse is still living.
- The Priest may decline to officiate at a wedding.

The Church requires that only the form of the marriage service in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and the variations and options it permits may be used for weddings held here. The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage in the Episcopal Church is a service of a sacramental nature, and all things having to do with the wedding should reflect this. As a worship service it is open for attendance to the public.

Scheduling

In order to assure availability of the Church and the Priests, all weddings should be scheduled with the Priest at least three (3) months in advance of the desired date. Weddings will be scheduled on a first come basis. Only one wedding a day will be scheduled. Weddings during the season of Lent are discouraged. No weddings will be held during Holy Week or on Sundays.

Clergy

The Parish Priest will officiate at all weddings held in the Church. If the couple would like another clergy person to assist her in the service, they should make that desire known to the Parish Priest, who will extend the invitation to the clergy person. Only ordained clergy of a Christian church can be extended an invitation.

The Priest is in charge of the rehearsal, which is usually scheduled on the day prior to the wedding. Professional wedding consultants, while helpful with many necessary plans, are not needed at the rehearsal and wedding service.

Pre-Marital Counseling

The canons of the Episcopal Church require pre-marital counseling of all couples seeking to have their marriage blessed by the Church. This is done with the Priest who is to perform the ceremony, and appointments for these sessions are made with her. A minimum of two sessions of approximately one and one half hours is required before rehearsal.

Music

Music for weddings is chosen using the same criteria as for other services of the church. Some music, such as secular songs and love ballads, are not appropriate; other music is not available in organ transcription.

The Organist and Choir Director of the Church will play for all weddings, and will arrange for all supplemental instrumentalists and/or soloists. There are no exceptions to this policy. The Organist is also present at the rehearsal. The wedding couple is encouraged to meet with the Organist to plan the music; this should occur at least a month in advance of the wedding, or earlier, if additional musicians must be secured. The singing of congregational hymns at weddings is a joyous part of our tradition. The Organist can offer appropriate suggestions.

Decorations

All decorations for the ceremony are supervised by the Parish Altar Guild. Interior decorations permitted will be two floral arrangements for the Altar. Bows may be placed at the end of the pews using florist wire, no tape or any other adhesive is permitted. You may choose your own florist or you may augment the flowers that are scheduled for the Sunday service. To do this, please call Nancy Pollock at 610.696.3138. Flowers should be delivered to the Church Sacristy at least two (2) hours prior to the service. If the flowers are not to be used on Sunday, arrangements must be made for their removal.

The only candles to be used are the Paschal Candle and those on the Altar.

It is requested that bird seed be used rather than rice or confetti so that the birds may enjoy the wedding also.