

Marriage
at
Saint Mary's
Episcopal Church

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2609 N. Glebe Road
Arlington, Virginia 22207

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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. Therefore marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God.

remain on Saint Mary's premises after the event is completed. Saint Mary's does have some equipment available. Please contact the Staff Wedding Coordinator for further details concerning the use of the Paca Parish Hall.

Conclusion

We hope that this is helpful as you prepare for your wedding. May God richly bless you from the riches of his mercy, wisdom and unconditional love.

Contact Information

Ministry of the Ordained

The Rev. Andrew T.P. Merrow 703-527-6800
Rector

The Rev. Amy Slater 703-527-6800
Senior Associate to the Rector

The Rev. Chris Cole 703-527-6800
Associate to the Rector

Minister of Music

Gregory Hooker 703-527-6800

Ministry of the Flower Guild

Nancy Murphy 703-532-4266

Wedding Coordinator

Janet Tasker 703-356-0605
(janet.ann.tasker@gmail.com) 703-527-6800

Ministry of Administration

Pam Frick, Staff Wedding Coordinator 703-527-6800
(Pam.Frick@stmarysarlington.org)

Photography

Marriage is a solemn sacrament of the church in a sacred space. To maintain the dignity of that sacrament, absolutely **no** photographs are allowed during the liturgy. All photographs taken in the sanctuary must be taken prior to or immediately following the service. Posed photographs taken following the service should take **no more than fifteen minutes**. Photographs with clergy should be taken promptly. There are no restrictions on photography outside the church or in the Paca Parish Hall. Video Recordings are only allowed from a stationary point as directed by the wedding coordinator.

Rehearsals

A rehearsal for all members of the wedding party is scheduled for the day before the Marriage at 6:00 p.m. It lasts approximately forty-five minutes and is under the direction of the Officiant assisted by the Parish Wedding Consultant and the Minister of Music.

Receptions

Parish Guidelines permit the use of wine, champagne and beer **only**. Nonalcoholic beverages must be offered as attractively as the alcoholic items. Alcoholic beverages must never be sold. All applicable laws and ordinances must be observed.

The Paca Parish Hall can be reserved at the same time wedding dates are finalized. For both members and non-members, if more than punch and wedding cake are to be served, there is an additional refundable deposit of \$200 required. The deposit will be billed at the same time as the other fees due to Saint Mary's. The deposit will be refunded if the kitchen and hall are returned to the appropriate state after the event. Due to the heavy use of the hall, all clean-up must be completed immediately following the event. Under no circumstances can rented equipment or furniture

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A Message from the Rector

This short wedding brochure is intended to be an introduction to the sacrament of Christian marriage as celebrated in the life of Saint Mary's and to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about holding weddings here. Along about February of every year, the office staff receives a flurry of phone calls about the availability of the church building to "hold a wedding." While that is an important and not unsurprising question, it rightly comes only after some others have been voiced in a meeting with one of the clergy. These questions include but are not limited to: why Christian marriage; why this particular community of faith; why get married at this juncture in my life; what is my commitment to God and the church?

Read this brochure through; give us a call. We would love the chance to share the love of God made known in this place and to support you as you make this pivotal step in your life's journey.

May the Peace of the Lord always be with you.

Wedding Coordinator

The Wedding Coordinator will see you through the process from speaking with the Flower Guild to the day of the wedding where you might need an extra hand with a torn hem. The fee for her services is \$250.

Organist

The fee for weddings is \$350. Fees for other musicians are to be arranged separately in coordination with the Saint Mary's organist. No musician may be contracted without permission of the Minister of Music.

Clergy

Traditionally, the groom is responsible for paying the Officiant. We suggest an honorarium of \$350. This honorarium is paid directly to the member of the clergy.

Facilities Available For the Wedding

The sanctuary seats 275 comfortably. The chapel seats 40. The Vestry, a large conference room on the ground level, is available as a "Bride's Dressing Room". All flowers and candles used in liturgical spaces are provided by the Saint Mary's Flower Guild. Commercial florists may only be used for flowers to be worn or carried by the wedding party and for those used in the Paca Parish Hall. White bows can be used to mark family pews. A runner is not used because the aisle is carpeted. Rice, birdseed, confetti, bubbles or rose petals **are not** permitted inside or outside the church.

Wedding Bulletins are optional. Couples may provide their own or Saint Mary's will provide a basic bulletin upon request. If you are interested in having Saint Mary's produce the bulletins, speak with the Staff Wedding Coordinator as soon as the wedding date is confirmed.

The Saint Mary's Staff Wedding Coordinator will forward a Wedding Information Sheet. The wedding date will be considered confirmed when the information sheet is completed and on file. The form will be used to complete the bulletin for the service, if desired, and all canonical records. Weddings are normally scheduled on Saturdays between 10:00 am and 4:00 p.m. Weddings are not held during the seasons of Advent, Lent or on holiday weekends. As the wedding date is being scheduled, the Minister of Music should be contacted to ensure his availability and to schedule a consultation.

Fees & Honoraria

Facilities & Supplies

There is a \$100 sexton's fee and a \$250 consumables fee for flowers, bows, and candles. A separate fee is charged for the use of the Paca Parish Hall and is based on the type of event in question. There is no fee to cover the expenses for the use of the Sanctuary or Chapel for those persons who support the parish financially and consistently participate in both its worship life and ministries; for all others, the normative fee is \$1,000. All fees will be billed six weeks prior to the wedding and payment must be received four weeks prior to the wedding.

Gifts to Saint Mary's or to the Discretionary Fund of the Officiant beyond the basic fees indicated in this brochure are always appropriate as an act of thanksgiving in celebration of the Marriage.

Feel free to contact the Officiant if you have any questions concerning these fees, or if they pose a potential financial hardship.

Christian Marriage

Christian Marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in which they enter into a life-long union, make vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill those vows. The sacrament of Marriage is entered into, and lived out, within the community of faith.

Marriage in the Episcopal Church

The Episcopal Church requires that at least one of the parties be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested by at least two witnesses; and that the Marriage conform to the laws of the State and the Canons of the Church. The clergy of this parish normally officiate at all weddings, though clergy of other traditions may be invited to participate. It is within the discretion of the Church to decline to solemnize any Marriage. The liturgy is always in accordance with The Book of Common Prayer.

If a prior marriage has ended in divorce or annulment, the Bishop of Virginia must grant permission for the current marriage to take place in the church. It is normative in this parish to ask permission of the Bishop only when persons have been active, committed members for at least one year.

Marriage at Saint Mary's

The parish of Saint Mary's has established policies and traditions to assist couples at the beginning of their life-long covenant with God and one another. It is understood that persons who wish to be married at Saint Mary's are active, committed parishioners either here or in the community of faith in which they live. The beginning of this life-long covenant is supported by the entire parish in general and, in particular, by the following specific areas of ministry.

Ministry of the Ordained

It is the responsibility and privilege of the Officiant (the priest who is to perform the service) to ensure that the parties have been instructed about the nature, meaning and purpose of Holy Matrimony. The Clergy have the final authority in all matters concerning weddings at Saint Mary's.

Premarital counseling is required and is conducted in small groups, complemented by individual sessions. Classes are in the early fall, early winter, and spring with the exact dates varying from year to year. There are usually four to six sessions covering topics such as the meaning of Christian marriage as contrasted to secular/civil marriage, family, communication, sexuality, children, the use of time, money, etc. It is within this context that wedding dates may be discussed and confirmed.

Ministry of Music

Our Minister of Music, a talented and well-known organist, normally provides music for all parish weddings. We strongly encourage the use of classical music and hymns from The Hymnal 1982. All music must be approved by the Minister of Music and Officiant.

Anyone providing music in lieu of or in addition to, the parish organist may only be authorized by the Minister of Music and the Officiant. Our Minister of Music works closely with a talented soprano soloist and other musicians. Please contact him if you would be interested in contracting their services.

Ministry of the Altar Guild

The Saint Mary's Altar Guild provides one of its members, who will be assigned when the wedding is scheduled, as the Parish Wedding Consultant. They provide liturgical advice, and supervise and direct the logistical aspects of the rehearsal and the wedding itself. This group of devoted volunteers is extremely knowledgeable about wedding

protocol in general and Saint Mary's protocol in particular. Contact information will be provided at scheduling.

Ministry of the Flower Guild

Flowers used in the church are provided and arranged by the Saint Mary's Flower Guild, in consultation with and in consideration of the preferences of the couple. These volunteers are trained and experienced in providing floral offerings for our liturgical spaces. Commercial florists may not provide flowers to be used in any liturgical spaces.

Ministry of Administration

A member of the parish staff acts as the Staff Wedding Coordinator to handle all administrative and facilities aspects of weddings at Saint Mary's.

Marriage in the Commonwealth of Virginia

The clergy at Saint Mary's are licensed by the Commonwealth to officiate at weddings. It is the responsibility of the couple to procure a license in the county courthouse of either the bride or the groom's residence. It may be used anywhere in the state for up to sixty days.

Scheduling a Wedding

Weddings are scheduled in the context of premarital counseling. If at least one member of the couple is not currently a committed, active member of this parish, then the initial step is for the couple to attend worship services at Saint Mary's and to determine if this is the community of faith within which they wish to live out their marriage vows. If it is, and once a commitment of both time and treasure have been made, the couple should contact the office to arrange a meeting with one of the parish clergy. At this meeting a program for premarital counseling will be arranged and tentative wedding dates discussed. No invitations should be ordered or reception sites booked until permission for the wedding is granted.