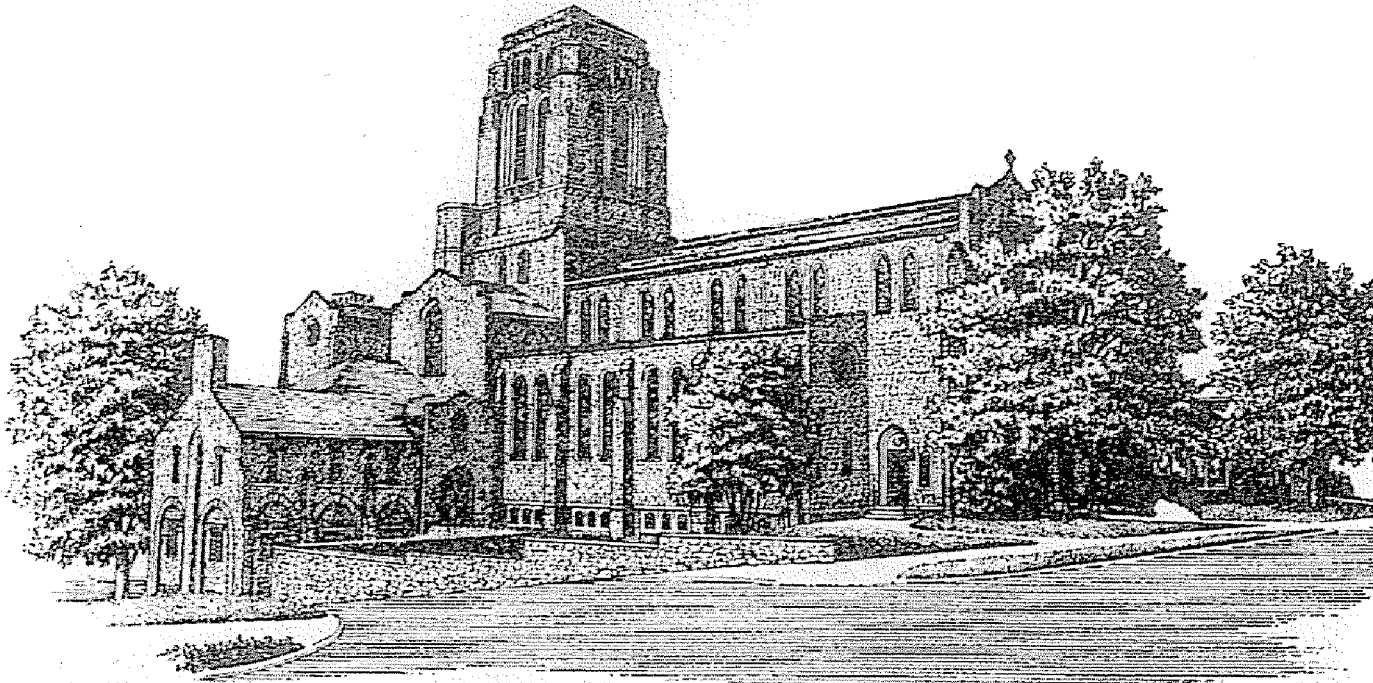


**Planning a Wedding at St. Paul's:**  
**Guidelines for *The Celebration & Blessing of a Marriage***



**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**  
**520 Summit Street**  
**Winston-Salem, NC 27101-1195**  
**336-723-4391 | [www.stpauls-ws.org](http://www.stpauls-ws.org)**

*“The joining of two people in a life of mutual fidelity signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, and so it is worthy of being honored among all people.”*

*(The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2)*

## **Congratulations on your decision to get married!**

We are honored that you are considering St. Paul’s for your wedding. These guidelines are used to help couples understand the procedures and policies for the Christian wedding liturgy at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. We hope that reading this booklet will help to answer your questions and provide you with a clear picture of our hopes and expectations, both for the day of your wedding and for your marriage.

The Episcopal Church canons on marriage are fully inclusive of both same and different gender couples. We understand that all committed, lifelong relationships are outward and visible signs of an inward, spiritual, and God-given love. The occasion when couples approach the Church with the intention of being married, or seeking the blessing of their civil marriage, is an opportunity to invite them deeper into the life of Christ. In this context, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church seeks to support couples in their commitment to one another and to help make the love of God more visible for the whole community.

To be married at St. Paul’s it is expected that one or both members of the couple (or at least one of their parents) be an active member of St. Paul’s. Those who come to the church seeking God’s blessing on their relationship should do so with a clear intention of maintaining an active participation in the life of our community of faith. Normally the wedding takes place at St. Paul’s in the Nave or the Chapel. Any special requests for marriage need to be approved by the rector.

The Episcopal Church requires that both parties have the right to marry according to the laws of the State and consent to do so freely; that at least one of the parties is a baptized Christian; that the marriage conforms to the laws of the state of North Carolina and the canons of the Church; that both parties have been instructed in the nature, purpose, rights, duties and responsibilities of marriage; and that at least two witnesses be present at the solemnization.

Couples will be required to sign this Declaration of Intention:

We understand the teaching of the church that God’s purpose for our marriage is for our mutual joy, for the help and comfort we will give to each other in prosperity and adversity, and when it is God’s will, for the gift and heritage of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of God. We also understand that our marriage is to be unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong; and we engage to make the utmost effort to accept these gifts and fulfill these duties, with the help of God and the support of our community.

When one or both persons have been divorced, the clergy must consult with and obtain consent of the Bishop of North Carolina in order to officiate at the liturgy. The clergy will advise the couple of the extra time needed for this process, generally at least 90 days.

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### **Telephone Numbers**

Wedding Information:	Betsy Reiners	336-723-4391, ext. 1219
Clergy: 336-723-4391	The Rev. Dr. D. Dixon Kinser The Rev. Lucy B. Strandlund The Rev. Erika L. Takacs The Rev. Nick M. VanHorn	
Parish Wedding Directors:	Anne Dunn Shannon Faircloth	336-725-9037 336-722-2580
Director of Music & Organist:	Dr. John Cummins	336-723-4394
Flower Guild Chairpersons:	Susan Gordon Melissa Rogan	336-414-9070 336-391-9381

## General Logistical Information

- 1) All wedding requests will be referred to the Rev. Erika Takacs, Associate Rector for Liturgy, who coordinates weddings.
- 2) Wedding dates are not put on the church calendar until the officiating clergy has been in contact with the couple and ascertained that they understand the required expectations. The officiating clergy will confirm the date on the church calendar with the couple after the first meeting.
- 3) No public announcement of your marriage should be made until arrangements with the church and officiating clergy have been finalized.
- 4) Weddings are conducted by St. Paul's clergy using approved liturgies of the Episcopal Church. Other clergy who have a special relationship with the couple may be invited by one of our clergy to assist in the liturgy.
- 5) Weddings are not scheduled during the Season of Lent (which begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts until Easter Day), nor during the period between December 15 and 25. Weddings are also not typically scheduled on Sundays. Any special requests need to be approved by the Rector. Weddings scheduled between December 26 and January 6 (or other special seasons of the year), will be held in the church with the seasonal decorations intact if still available. If other flowers are needed, they will be arranged in consultation with the wedding director and the flower guild.
- 6) No more than two weddings per day will be scheduled in the church, with a minimum of three hours between weddings. Weddings will not be scheduled after 6:00 p.m.
- 7) The clergy of St. Paul's will conduct all wedding rehearsals, assisted only by one of the parish wedding directors. Our wedding directors receive a fee, and outside wedding directors are not used.
- 8) No alcoholic drinks or illegal substances are allowed at any time in any part of the church or on the grounds during the rehearsal or the wedding. Violation of this policy may result in cancellation of the wedding ceremony and/or expulsion from the campus.
- 9) The marriage license should be taken to the church office a minimum of one week before the wedding so the staff assistant for weddings can enter the information in the parish register/certificates. After the wedding the staff assistant will mail the signed license back to the state.
- 10) Children of all ages are welcome to attend all weddings at St. Paul's; however, because of careful policies put in place to safeguard and protect all children who attend events at St. Paul's, we are unable to provide staff or space for childcare outside of the Nave.

## Pre-Marital Counseling

The Canons of the Episcopal Church provide that the parties of the marriage shall be “*instructed as to the nature, purpose, meaning, as well as the rights, duties and responsibilities of marriage.*” This is usually done within the context of pre-marital counseling.

There are typically four to six pre-marital counseling sessions. At least two are to be done by the officiating clergy; two to four may be done with a licensed counselor, approved by the officiating clergy. In the case of couples who live outside Winston Salem, the officiating clergy will help arrange counseling in the city where the couple resides. The couple should ask the licensed counselor to provide a letter to the officiating clergy when the counseling is finished. The couple is responsible for the cost of any outside counseling.

## Liturgy & Music

- A member of the St. Paul’s clergy will officiate the wedding using one of the approved liturgies of the Episcopal Church. It is appropriate, but not required, to include a celebration of the Holy Eucharist as part of the liturgy.
  - [The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2](#) is intended for use by all couples and is a gender-neutral adaptation of the marriage rite in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.
  - [The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage](#) is an approved liturgy intended for use by all couples.
  - The 1979 [Book of Common Prayer](#) “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage,” along with “the Blessing of a Civil Marriage” and “An Order for Marriage” remain liturgies for use with different gender couples.
- The officiating clergy will meet with the couple to plan the liturgy and music and has final authority over all decisions.
- The St. Paul’s organist will play or arrange for a substitute. The couple is responsible for contacting the organist as soon as possible after the liturgy has been planned with the officiating clergy for a meeting to discuss music. All music for the wedding should be coordinated with the organist, who will also contract any additional musicians. The couple may request one of the parish choirs, subject to availability; outside choirs are not permitted. These arrangements should be made no less than three months before the wedding.
- St. Paul’s will provide a template (either with communion or without) for the wedding liturgy. The church can print these leaflets – costs are noted in Fees section.
- All leaflets must meet final approval from the officiating clergy prior to printing.
- There are generally no receiving lines in the Narthex or outside the church doors.
- All processions will begin in the back of the church and will be led by a St. Paul’s acolyte carrying the processional cross, followed by the clergy, and the wedding party.

## **Decorations (Candles & Flowers)**

- Any decorations (candles and flowers) are to be planned in consultation with the parish wedding director and the Flower Guild.
- Wedding flowers for the High Altar, Side Altar, or in the Chapel (if the wedding is in the Chapel and not the Nave) are purchased and arranged by the Flower Guild, using fresh flowers and greenery. The couple may request colors and types of flowers, which the Flower Guild will try to honor when practical. When two weddings are scheduled in the Nave on the same day the flowers will be white. All flowers at the altar remain in place for the Sunday liturgies and may be used for distribution to the sick and homebound. Altar flowers may be given by the couple in memory of family, and memorials can be noted in the Sunday leaflet. The parish wedding director will coordinate with the couple on wording for these memorials, if desired. The high altar and the side altar are the only places in the Nave where flowers can be placed.
- Third-party vendors may be used for bouquets and boutonnieres. The use of rice, birdseed, rose petals, etc., on church premises is not permitted.
- All candles will be white and are provided by the church. Pew standards (torches) are available and may be used if desired. These will be set up by the St. Paul's staff. No ribbons or greenery may be attached to the torches.
- Decorations outside the church are not permitted.
- No furniture in the church is to be moved.

## **Photographs & Videos**

St. Paul's reserves the right to approve the choice of photographer. The parish wedding director will be responsible for working with the photographer before, during, and after the liturgy.

It is permissible to take non-flash photographs and videotape the service unobtrusively from the balcony. Photographs after the liturgy are limited to a time frame of thirty minutes.

Photographs may be taken as follows:

- Outside
- In the Emma Gribbin Room – with wedding party getting ready, family, etc.
- In the Narthex (entrance to the church) as the wedding party is lined up for Procession.
- Processing down the center aisle after the liturgy is over.
- In front of the Altar following the liturgy (for 30 minutes).
- Posed photographs in the church Nave will be taken only after the liturgy.

## Wedding Rehearsal

- Wedding rehearsals are entirely under the direction of the officiating clergy, assisted by the parish wedding director. The organist will also be present at the rehearsal.
- All members of the wedding party are encouraged to arrive on time and to be present at the rehearsal. All other persons who might be present are subject to the direction of the officiating clergy in order that the rehearsal may proceed in an orderly fashion.
- The parish register and state license will normally be signed by the couple to be married and two witnesses either before or after the rehearsal, then by the officiating clergy following the wedding liturgy.
- No alcoholic drinks are allowed at any time in any part of the church or on the grounds during the wedding rehearsal.

## Receptions

Due to staffing requirements, St. Paul's is currently unable to host rehearsal dinners or wedding receptions on our campus.

## Fees

An invoice will be mailed to the person responsible for the bill up to six weeks prior to the wedding. If adjustments need to be made, a subsequent bill will be sent. All fees, except those for musicians from outside the church, must be paid at least one week before the wedding.

### Breakdown of Individual Fees

<input type="checkbox"/> Facility/Set-up/Clean-up/Security	500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Parish Wedding Director	200.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Altar Flowers	500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Organist (paid directly to the organist)	300.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Leaflet set-up fee	150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of the Chapel (instead of the Nave)	300.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Chapel flowers	200.00

### Optional

<input type="checkbox"/> Choir (20 people)	1000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Leaflet printing in-house- \$1.00 per leaflet	
<input type="checkbox"/> Soloist and Instrumentalist(s) paid directly; amount decided between couple and musician.	

*If you would like to thank the officiating clergy, it is customary to give a donation to St. Paul's (suggested \$300-\$500) and designate it to their discretionary fund. You are also always welcome to give a separate gift directly to them.*

## Offsite Weddings

If the couple has planned a wedding at a location other than St. Paul's, they may directly approach one of the members of the clergy of St. Paul's to ask them to officiate. However, while St. Paul's is happy to provide a clergy person to officiate at a wedding on our campus, we cannot make the same guarantee for an offsite wedding. The availability of an officiant is entirely up to individual clergy members. The planning of offsite weddings is not managed by the St. Paul's wedding planners; instead, it is organized by the officiating clergy.

If one of the clergy persons of St. Paul's is able to officiate an offsite wedding, they may choose to use the above guidelines, especially regarding the liturgy, the marriage license, and pre-marital counseling. The liturgy and music/musicians will be planned by the clergy and the couple. The rehearsal at the location will be entirely under the direction of the officiating clergy; outside wedding directors will not be involved. St. Paul's can provide the template for the leaflet and can print them as well, and all leaflets must have the approval of the officiating clergy before going to print.

Compensation for an offsite wedding includes:

- Any travel expenses for the clergy person, including mileage and/or plane fare
- Any accommodation (hotels, B&B's) required for an overnight stay by the clergy person
- Clergy honorarium 500.00

These fees will be managed by the wedding office at St. Paul's.

In addition, the following fees may apply:

- Leaflet set-up fee 300.00
- Leaflet printing in-house- \$2.00 per leaflet
- Miscellaneous Communion Expenses (if applicable) 50.00

The consultation with the Bishop required under Title I, Canon 19, needs to be in writing, normally no sooner than one year after separation in the previous marriage. Applications in a shorter period should state reasons for the shorter time.

The application for consent of the Bishop shall be made by the member of the clergy who will officiate at the proposed wedding. When the officiating minister is not canonically resident holding a pastoral cure, the application must be accompanied by the endorsement of such a minister who certifies that these guidelines have been met.

Each application for consent of the Bishop shall consist of a letter from the minister, which will include the following:

1. A statement that he or she has met with both parties to the proposed marriage, or, if not, a description of the alternative to such a meeting, and that the Declaration of Intention has been signed;
2. A statement that the final divorce decree has been seen personally and the date of the final decree;
3. A statement that the minister is satisfied that adequate “continuing concern” is demonstrated for former spouse(s) and for any children. (See Title I, Canon 19);
4. The date and place of the proposed ceremony;
5. A statement that all other requirements of Title I, Canon 18 and Title I, Canon 19 not already mentioned have been met;
6. A statement that no other minister of this Church has declined to solemnize the proposed marriage; or, if a minister of this Church has so declined to solemnize, a statement that the applying minister has consulted with that minister, including reasons for application in light of that consultation.
7. In case where either party has had a second divorce, the application for the Bishop’s consent shall not be made (a) unless one year has passed since the final divorce decree, (b) unless both parties to the proposed marriage have sought and received professional marriage counseling, and (c) until the counselor has reported to the minister the belief that the two persons asking for permission to marry are in the opinion of the counselor adequately prepared for a lifelong union.

When consent has been given in another jurisdiction for a marriage in the Diocese of North Carolina, the Bishop of North Carolina will affirm the consent, provided these guidelines have been followed, or that exceptions to them have his or her approval.

The solemnization of any marriage under Title I, Canon 19 shall be reported to the Bishop within 30 days after the wedding.

## **Acknowledgement Receipt**

I acknowledge that I have read the Guidelines for *The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage* at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

I agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained within.

I understand that if I have questions regarding any of these policies, I will consult the clergy person who is officiating the wedding or the Associate Rector for Liturgy.

Signature(s):

Printed Name(s):

Date:

Role (*e.g.* wedding couple, florist, photographer, etc.):

Acknowledgment Received By:

Acknowledgment Received On: