



The Wedding Policy of St. James by-the-Sea

Episcopal Church

The purpose of this wedding policy is to promote the ministry of St. James by-the-Sea to couples seeking a Christian marriage and ceremony. The policy seeks to be gracious and welcoming to those couples who are at the very beginning of what we hope will become an enduring involvement in the life of this church. Finally, this policy maintains the church's emphasis on the ceremony of Holy Matrimony as a service of worship to God according to the rites and authority of the Episcopal Church.

1. Scheduling weddings at St. James by-the-Sea depends on many factors. The staff and couple will need to consider the following:

- a) A wedding should be scheduled at least sixty days in advance; exceptions can be made in consideration of a serious, mitigating circumstance.
- b) A wedding should be scheduled with at least a three-hour cushion between the wedding and another event. This cushion of time may overlap with another event providing no major changes in the setup or arrangements in the facility are required.
- c) A wedding rehearsal requires a one-hour cushion between it and other events.
- d) A couple needing exclusive use of the church's facilities for Friday and Saturday may request such a schedule. Additional fees will be charged.
- e) Amplified music may be played on the campus until 10 PM. All event participants and guests must leave the campus by 11 PM.
- f) The wedding date and time is only guaranteed when the initial deposit of \$1,000 is received.

2. Fees for weddings at St. James by-the-Sea cover the wedding and preparation unless the couple has extraordinary requirements for decorations or music. The wedding fee of \$2,500.00 covers:

- a) the meetings of the couple with the clergy of the parish and with the premarital counselor,
 - b) the services of the Pastor for Music Ministry,
 - c) the use of the pipe organ or piano,
 - d) altar flowers
 - e) printed programs,
 - f) the services of the parish Wedding Team,
 - g) the services of the Sextons and other custodial staff of the church,
 - h) the altar candles.
- a) A deposit of \$1,000 is due at the initial meeting with the clergy of St. James. The balance will be due 30 days prior to the wedding date.
 - b) Should a wedding be cancelled, St. James will refund any fees collected, less any costs incurred up to the date of cancellation and a cancellation fee of 20% of the remainder.

3. St. James by-the-Sea will host weddings for couples where neither party is a member of St. James when the following conditions are met:

- a) One of the parties must have been baptized in a Trinitarian Christian Church. (Baptism in advance of the wedding can be arranged.)
- b) The couple agrees to participate in premarital counseling, consisting of a preliminary meeting with the clergy of St. James, five sessions with a PREPARE AND ENRICH Counselor chosen in consultation with the clergy, and a follow-up session with the clergy of St. James.
- c) The couple agrees to the Episcopal Church's understanding of marriage defined in its *Declaration of Intention* and plans their wedding according to the "Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage" from *The Book of Common Prayer, 1979*.
- d) The couple agrees that one of the clergy of St. James shall preside at their wedding.

4. Remarriage after divorce is a pastoral concern of the Episcopal Church and requires extra considerations. A marriage after a divorce is likely to be permitted when:

- a) The couple has completed their premarital preparation at least 45 days prior to the ceremony,
- b) The clergy is convinced that both parties of the couple accept and intend to comply with the requirements of divorce decrees and its determination of support and financial obligations,
- c) The party who has been divorced has examined and considered the causes of the divorce and the part he / she played in the failure of the marriage, and
- d) The Bishop, notified by a letter from the clergy at least 30 days prior to the ceremony, grants permission for the wedding to proceed.

5. St. James by-the-Sea keeps the Season of Lent as a period without festive celebration, and, thus, Lent is a season in which weddings are not appropriate.

In serious mitigating circumstances the Rector may make an exception to this suspension of weddings during Lent.

6. Flowers and Décor

- a) All decorations must be approved by the Church. Specific instructions regarding these decorations will be provided.
- b) There are two florists approved by St. James for the Altar flowers. The Altar flowers are placed on the altar to "*The Glory of God*" and in thanksgiving for your marriage. They are not removed after the wedding, remaining for the Sunday morning services. The couple and their gift of altar flowers will be acknowledged in the St. James Sunday bulletin.
- c) For any other flower arrangements, couples may work with any other florist of their choice, including St. James' approved florists.
- d) Couples should remove all additional flowers, bouquets, and décor from the campus immediately after the wedding and photography are completed.
- e) Significant floral arrangements prepared by St. James' Flower Guild to celebrate Easter, Christmas, and other Church festivals, may not be changed or removed for the sake of a wedding. Couples planning weddings near the time of those festivals may find it helpful to coordinate their flowers with the floral theme in the Church.

- f) Because movement in the aisles and pews of St. James is part of the liturgy (ceremony) of the wedding itself, bouquets or arrangements may not impede entering or exiting either end of any aisle or pew.
- g) For the safety of all, runners are not permitted and flower petals may not be scattered in the aisles.
- h) Rice, confetti, birdseed, helium balloons, etc., may not be scattered inside or outside the Church. Safety and environmental concerns require these restrictions.

7. Professional Photography & Videography

- a) Photographers and Videographers are welcome as part of the wedding day, but they may not interfere with the religious service.
- b) Photography in the church is permitted from two and-a-half hours until forty minutes prior to the ceremony and immediately after the ceremony.
- c) During the course of the ceremony, beginning with the seating of the honored family (e.g. the mothers) until the dismissal of the bride and groom, **no flash or motorized photography is permitted. Photographers may stand at the back of the Nave, or under the arches along the side aisles, but must otherwise be invisible to the guests in the pews.**
- d) Videographers may set up a stationary tripod at the back of the Nave, or along the side aisles under the Arches. The St. James wedding coordinator must approve the placement of the tripod. **Tripods are to remain stationary and not be moved during the ceremony.**
- e) The Photographer and Videographer must check in with the St. James wedding coordinator **no later than one half-hour before the ceremony.**
- f) It is the responsibility of the Bride and Groom to inform their Photographer and Videographer of the rules of St. James by-the-Sea **at least one week before the wedding.**
- g) Guests will not be permitted to take photographs or videos for the duration of the ceremony.

8. Exceptions

- a) The Rector may, for good cause and in consultation with affected members of the church staff, waive conditions of these policies in the interest of the well-being of the church or pastoral care of the couple.