

## WEDDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ST. PETER'S PARISH CHURCH

*"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." (from The Book of Common Prayer, page 423.)*

### **We'd like to be married in St. Peter's Church. May we?**

Weddings will be celebrated for active members in good standing in the St. Peter's community, defined as a registered member, or a child or children of a registered member, of St. Peter's Church, who has participated regularly in the life of the parish for a period of at least six months prior to the request, and who is known to the Treasurer – meaning that they support financially the mission and ministries of the parish. There is no fee for use of the church facilities for such members of St. Peter's.

For members who are unknown to the Treasurer and do not contribute financially to the parish, a donation of \$300 is required one month prior to the date of the wedding.

If a non-member desires to be married at St. Peter's Church, the Rector will review each request and make an appropriate decision regarding the use of the facilities and staff of St. Peter's. Permission will normally be granted only in unusual circumstances. If a non-member is permitted to be married at St. Peter's, a fee of \$500 is required to be paid one month prior to the date of the wedding.

### **When may I be married?**

Dates for the wedding service and rehearsal must be approved by the Rector and Parish Administrator. Weddings are not permitted during Lent and Advent except under extraordinary circumstances.

### **Is premarital counseling required?**

Three or more pre-marital counseling sessions with the Rector are normally required. Both parties must attend each of these sessions. All premarital counseling must be completed one month prior to the date of the wedding. It is the responsibility of the couple to make the necessary appointments. Details of the service will be discussed during these sessions.

### **I'd like to create my own service. May I?**

Weddings at St. Peter's Church use the liturgy for Marriage found on pages 423-434 of The Book of Common Prayer. In addition, all weddings must conform to the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Virginia. Specific questions may be addressed to the Rector. Also, please see "Concerning the Service" on page 422 of The Book of Common Prayer.

### **Do I need a mistress of ceremonies?**

In most cases, a Wedding Liaison will be assigned to work with you and answer your questions, as well as locking and unlocking the buildings. However, the Wedding Liaison does not take the place of a Mistress of Ceremonies. You will still need one unless the wedding is quite small, Ask the Rector if you have a question about that.

### **What about flowers and an/or an aisle runner?**

Flowers for the church may be ordered through Margeaux' (804.932.8878) in Quinton. Flowers would typically be what you would see on a Sunday morning at St. Peter's. Any flowers other than bouquets, corsages, and boutonnieres must be approved by the Altar Guild or the Wedding Liaison. Floral pew markers, if used, must not damage the pews in any way.

Flowers should be delivered on the day of the wedding. Arrangements must be made for flower delivery and coordinated with the Parish Wedding Liaison or Altar Guild. Flowers in the East Window must not block the view of the cross or be taller than the brass cross. The two local florists are aware of the height requirement. The Wedding Liaison or Altar Guild must be consulted for advice on flower arrangements.

A white aisle runner, also called "tracking," is available as well. There is a \$100.00 fee payable to the church for the use of this tracking.

### **Where do I get dressed?**

Usually in the Mullins Room, but any use of the Mullins Room must be discussed with the Rector and pre-approved. Antique furniture in this room is not to be moved. If permitted, use of this room is restricted to the bride and her bridesmaids. The groom and ushers should arrive dressed for the service. It is strongly suggested that they not wear their coats on the way to the Service to avoid creasing or wrinkling the back of their coats. Ushers should be ready to receive guests one hour before the service.

### **How about photography?**

Photography is not permitted during the wedding liturgy. If there is a professional photographer for the wedding, he/she must consult with the Rector prior to the day of the service for instructions. With the Rector's permission, the professional photographer may take existing light photographs from the balcony only. Flash photography is not permitted in St. Peter's Church at any time during the marriage ceremony.

Following the wedding, however, the professional photographer, friends, and relatives may take group pictures in the church. Videotaping is permitted only from the balcony of St. Peter's. The camera must remain stationary. Your photographer must be informed of these rules. Any breach of these rules by a professional photographer will result in the rescinding of that studio's permission to photograph events at St. Peter's Church. *(Please note: The reason for the strict nature of these rules is to safeguard the sacred character of the Celebration and Blessing of Marriages at St. Peter's and in the Episcopal Church.*

### **How about a rehearsal?**

Rehearsals are usually the evening prior to the wedding, and they will start on time. Please ask all participants to arrive early and to be ready to begin at the appointed time. The length of the rehearsal is normally about an hour.

### **What about tobacco or alcohol?**

The use of tobacco products on the grounds or in the buildings of St. Peter's Church is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, smokeless tobacco, chewing tobacco, or non-tobacco cigarettes, including electronic smoking devices. No alcoholic beverages of any kind may be consumed on the premises prior to the service. If the reception is to be held in the Parish House, wine or champagne may be served. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Rector. Equally attractive non-alcoholic alternatives must always be available. Proper decorum is expected at all times during receptions at St. Peter's. The wedding party is responsible for the conduct of their guests.

### **What about music?**

The couple is responsible to make arrangements for an organist or other musician to play at the wedding and rehearsal. The organist of St. Peter's is not expected to provide this service. St. Peter's has a Rogers 755.6 electronic organ. The acoustics in the church lend themselves beautifully for all stringed instruments including the harp, as well as the flute. Some couples have chosen to use stringed instruments solely or to incorporate a violin along with the organ. The Richmond chapter of the American Guild of Organists is a resource to help identify local organists: [www.richmondago.org](http://www.richmondago.org). **Recorded music is not allowed.** The organist or other musician and the music selections must be approved by the Rector at least one (1) month in advance. There are certain music selections that are not acceptable. Arrangements to practice must be made in advance with the church office.

### **How much does the Rector charge?**

There is no fee for the services of the Rector, but a contribution to the Rector's discretionary fund is customary.

### **Where, how, and when do I get a wedding license?**

The marriage license must be secured by the couple in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Typically, the license is secured from the Circuit Court of the city or county wherein the bride resides. The Virginia marriage license expires 60 days after issue. This means that you should obtain your license within that 60-day period prior to the wedding date. The license must be in the Rector's hands two weeks prior to the wedding date. Failure to observe the laws of the Commonwealth regarding the marriage license will invalidate both the wedding and the proposed wedding day.

**When can I get in, and when do I have to leave?**

The church will be opened one hour prior to the wedding service, and secured one hour after the service. Any extension of that time must be coordinated with your assigned Wedding Liaison.

**The Service is ended - what now?**

The wedding party is responsible for cleanup of the church and any part of the Parish House you used, including the restrooms. You may contract our Sexton for this service. A fee of \$100.00 must be paid one month prior to the wedding if their services are desired. If you do it yourself, a representative of the church will inspect for damages and approve the cleanup. A fee will be charged if the inspection is failed or if damages are discovered.

**Anything else?**

Yes: anything you plan to throw as the couple leaves the church must be approved in advance and must be thrown outside well clear of the tower and the doors. Rice will never be approved, but bubbles are encouraged!

We feel honored that you have chosen St. Peter’s for the celebration of your marriage. Please contact us at 804.932.4846 or if you should have any questions.

*We have received a copy of these guidelines and agree to be bound by them.*

	<i>Groom</i>	<i>Bride</i>
<i>Signature</i>		
<i>Printed name</i>		
<i>Date</i>		