



# Saint Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church

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## Wedding Guidelines and Fees

These guidelines are for those intending to be married at Saint Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church. They detail what you might expect when you are seeking to be married at SPBTS and what will be expected of you. If you are considering a wedding at SPBTS and have not already contacted Father Mark to discuss your plans, please make this a first priority.

The CHURCH is the most appropriate place for those intending a Christian marriage. It is not meant to be a quaint or convenient setting for those who want a merely religious backdrop for a marriage that has no intention of ongoing Christian witness or participation in the life of a worshipping Christian community. Persons seeking the blessing of a marriage here should intend to follow a Christian life. You do not need to be a member of the congregation; however, it is preferable that at least one member of the couple be affiliated with Saint Paul's by-the-Sea through attendance and financial support. One member of the couple **MUST** be baptized.

### Guidelines

- (1) Any couple wishing to be married in this church must request these services and fill out the needed forms no less than **three months** before the planned ceremony. It is advisable to consult with the church prior to making any other arrangement.
- (2) If either party has been **divorced**, application for permission to marry must be made to the Bishop of Easton. This application, which the Rector will assist you in filling out, may take up to thirty days to process. Plans should be made to accommodate this time period.
- (3) To be married in this church, the couple must agree to enter into **pre-marital counseling** with the Rector or with someone appointed by him.
- (4) The Rector has the **final say** regarding all details of the wedding ceremony, including readings, and concerning everything that happens on church grounds.
- (5) The congregation will be encouraged not to take any **photos** during the service. Professional photographers/video individuals may not use flash photography during the service, and must check in with the Rector and work within the framework of his suggestions.
- (6) **Fees** (detailed below) are due to the Rector at the time of the ceremony rehearsal.
- (7) Rice and confetti may not be thrown after the ceremony. **Birdseed** is an acceptable alternative.
- (8) The **Holy Eucharist** is considered an essential part of the service and should be celebrated whenever possible.
- (9) The church can provide a **bulletin** for the ceremony for a fee of \$25. A proof copy of the bulletin will be faxed or mailed to the couple for approval or changes. If a special cover is requested, it must be supplied by the couple.

- (10) The **church organist** has first right of refusal to provide ceremony music (Shirley Toms Hailey, 443-235-0264). Musical selections must be in accordance with church custom and discussed with the organist. If an organist other than the church organist is to play, musical selections must be approved by the Rector.
- (11) **Flowers** are a fitting adornment for the church, but in moderation. Flowers beside the altar are appropriate and sufficient.
- (12) The **parish hall** is available for wedding receptions if this does not conflict with any previously scheduled parish activity. Couples wishing to use the parish hall must complete a separate Building Use Request form (fees and rules are outlined on the St. Paul's Building Use Policies and Fees document). Contact the church office for more details.

The church is a place where the couple pledges a life-long union in marriage, bound together by Christ. The church should be a part of your marriage and your life. Whenever difficulties arise in your marriage or family, please consult with the Rector. The church is a place of love, reconciliation, and understanding. You are called upon to seriously consider your commitment to the Lord and to His church and to become an active part of the Body of Christ.

### Fees

**Minimum suggested donation for a wedding at Saint Paul's:**

- \$600.00 — active members of St. Paul's or the children of active members (as defined by Canon Law)
- \$1000.00 — all others

This includes use of the church, custodial care, as well as the services of the Rector, organist, administrative assistant, and Altar Guild.

*Financial difficulty is not meant to be a deterrent to receiving the Sacrament of Marriage.* In cases of necessity, donations may be negotiated. Please consult with the Rector.