



*Preparing for Your Marriage
to begin
at
St. Mary's Episcopal Church
Stone Harbor, New Jersey*

Q. What is Holy Matrimony?

A. Holy Matrimony is Christian marriage, in which the couple enter into a life-long union, make their vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows.

*- Catechism
Book of Common Prayer*

Marriage as a sacrament of the Church is taken seriously at St. Mary's Episcopal Church. At the same time, it is undertaken with a sense of joy and anticipation. In order to be helpful to couples considering St. Mary's Church as a place to begin their married life together, the following information is provided.

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING is required by the Canons of the Episcopal Church for either a first marriage, or remarriage after divorce or annulment. The parish clergy will provide time for counseling (normally, three-four sessions are planned). They will accept evidence of competent counseling provided elsewhere if travel to the rectory office before the ceremony is not convenient. Canons require 30 days' notice of a first marriage. Remarriage requires a minimum of 90 days in order for the clergy to obtain Episcopal permission to perform the ceremony. The Blessing of a Civil Union does not require the same canonical notice, but parish policies require the same 30-day notice.

PUBLISHING THE BANNES OF MARRIAGE will occur for all celebrations of Marriage, or blessing of Civil Unions. This announcement consists of the clergy notifying the parish on Sunday mornings of an impending celebration a minimum of one, a maximum of three times.

SCHEDULING A WEDDING: Please be certain to allow ample time to clear the dates for rehearsal and the ceremony with the clergy and church office before finalizing your reception plans. More than one wedding can be scheduled on the same day, but be aware that the parish office will schedule for adequate time between these liturgies. The rehearsal time is usually scheduled on the evening before the ceremony. Please plan on allowing one hour for the rehearsal.

MUSIC for the ceremony is under the direction of the Organist and Choir Director who generally serves at all weddings. Exceptions to this norm must be cleared with the rector and the organist.

It is entirely appropriate for wedding parties to leave the selections of music to the discretion of the organist, who has an intimate knowledge of the capabilities and limitations of the organ at St. Mary's Church and can best plan music, which will effectively enhance the service. If members of the wedding party know the literature of music for the organ and would enjoy specific selections, the organist will seek to accommodate those requests.

The church will notify the organist of the date for the ceremony. The bride and groom are encouraged to contact the organist to arrange to preview the music mutually selected for the ceremony. Arrangements for a vocalist, if desired, are also to be made in consultation with the organist.

PICTURES AND VIDEO: Pictures may be taken before the ceremony, provided the time is scheduled with the parish office. Video and photos may be taken as the wedding party enters, and as they depart the sanctuary. There will be no use of flash or spotlights during the ceremony, and photographers and videographers are required to remain as unobtrusive as possible. No Drones are permitted in the sanctuary and photographers/videographers are Not permitted on the Altar during the ceremony due to the size of our sacred altar space. Any people hired to record the ceremony in any way are asked to contact the parish clergy before the ceremony.

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNION LICENSES: In New Jersey, your marriage license must be obtained from your town/boro of residence. You may apply for it at the Office of the Town Clerk. You must bring the completed Marriage or Civil Union license to the church on the evening of the rehearsal.

FEES: The church is available at no cost to all families of confirmed communicants in good standing, although a thank-offering of a non-specified amount is suggested. For other persons seeking the blessing of a union here, the fee for use of the church is \$1,000.00.

It is appropriate to offer an honorarium to officiating clergy. The honorarium for persons who are not of the church is \$500. This includes counseling, planning of the liturgy, the rehearsal and the liturgy itself.

Fixed fees for all seeking union in the church are a \$50.00 donation to the Altar Guild, \$50 for the services of the sexton and \$250 (per AGO standards) for the organist. If a soloist is desired, there may be an additional fee for those persons. **Fees are required to be paid in full a minimum of 14 days before the date of the ceremony unless other arrangements are made with the parish office.** The parish office will guide you with appropriate names for each fee payment.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

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Rector: The Rev. Allison Burns-LaGreca
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St. Mary's Episcopal Church

Wedding Information Form
(Please print all information)

Date of Application _____

Date of Ceremony: _____ Time: _____

Date of Rehearsal: _____ Time: _____

Place of Ceremony: _____

Groom's Full Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Baptized Confirmed Communicant

Previous Marriage Date, if any: _____

Father's Name: _____

Mother's Maiden Name: _____

Bride's Full Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Baptized Confirmed Communicant

Previous Marriage Date, if any: _____

Father's Name: _____

Mother's Maiden Name: _____

Permanent Address after Marriage: _____

Name and Address of Witnesses:

1. _____

2. _____

Information for Ceremony

Officiate: _____

Rings Communion Homily

Number of Attendants: _____ Wedding Program printed by church? Yes No

Number of Guests Expected _____

Organist: _____

Soloist(s): _____

Other music (type of instrument): _____

Still Photographer: _____ Video Photographer: _____

Readers: _____

Scripture Selections (circle choices)

One or more may be selected from
the following:

Genesis 1:26-28

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24

Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7

Tobit 8:5b-8

I Corinthians 13:1-13

Ephesians 3:14-19

Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33

Colossians 3:12-17

I John 4:7-16

Choose one **Gospel** reading

from the following to be read by the **priest**:

Matthew 5:1-10

Matthew 5:13-16

Matthew 7:21, 24-29

Mark 10:6-9, 13-16

John 15:9-12

A Psalm may be read between readings: Psalm 67, 127 or 128 are appropriate.

Legal Information

Bishop's Letter

License

Church Register

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

Church Decorations and Flowers

No decorations may be fastened to the walls or the furniture. Pew-end sprays and decorations may be used, but not stapled, tacked or taped to the pews. Two vases of flowers behind the altar are always appropriate. The arrangements can be any color (white is traditional). It is a good idea to ask your florist to visit the church, or to show your florist a photograph if a visit is not possible. It is the responsibility of the couple to arrange for the delivery of flowers at a convenient time. Flower arrangements can be brought in vases or baskets provided by your florist. The Church vases may also be used with a liner provided by the florist. The amount of flowers or number of arrangements is your personal choice.

The Altar Guild will be helpful with appropriate suggestions, if requested. With the exception of altar flowers, all decorations should be removed from the Church immediately following the Service. The altar flowers, however are utilized for Sunday Worship Services and for the sick and shut-in of the parish. They are noted in the parish bulletin as a thank-offering for your marriage.

A runner is not recommended. The aisle is short with steps, and heels tend to catch in the plastic normally used these days. However, if you wish a runner, it should be ordered from your florist and must be made of fabric.

You are not limited to the church florist, although they know the building and has access to it at all times, thus simplifying your task. Our administrator will gladly provide you with the name of our florist and contact information.

Flower/Decorations Form

Bride/Groom: _____

Wedding Date & Time: _____

Florist's Name: _____

Florist's Phone: _____ Contact Person: _____

Flowers to be: left on the altar taken after ceremony