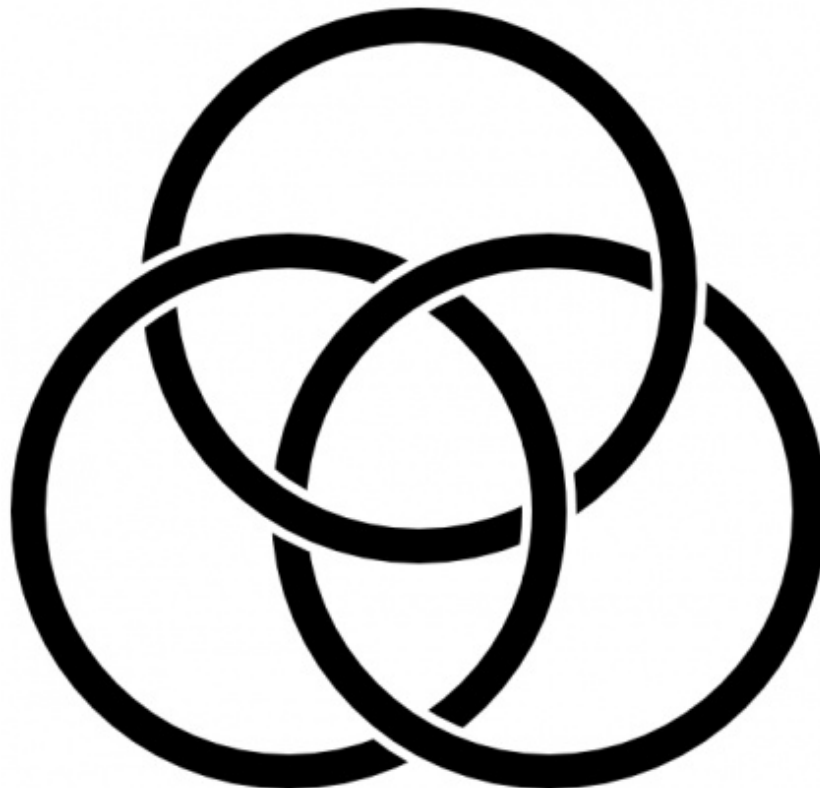


The Celebration and  
Blessing of a Marriage

Saint Anne's Episcopal Church



## PLANNING TO GET MARRIED

The sacrament of marriage is a joyful event that signifies the deepest love that is expressed between two human beings. Marriage is a sign of Christ's love for the world.

Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of two people, which is entered into within the community of faith by mutual consent of heart, mind and will, and with the intent that it be lifelong. The *Book of Common Prayer* says, "Marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately and in accordance with the purposes for which it was intended by God." The vows in marriage are binding promises that two people make, through which they promise to love one another for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health until death.

Marriage, as this church understands it, is not just a private contract between two individuals, but is a corporate covenant in which at least one of the partners is a member of this Church and is committed to the faith of this Church. Both parties are asked to assent to this understanding of marriage prior to the ceremony.

At least one of the parties desiring a marriage to be solemnized must be baptized. We urge all who are contemplating marriage to arrange to have the service solemnized within their own "community of faith" – whatever that community may be.

Weddings at St. Anne's are generally for members of the parish and their families. Exceptions may be made under the consideration of the Rector.

### Notice of the marriage

The canons require that a minimum (30) day notice be given to the parish before any marriage can be solemnized. The clergy of St. Anne's prefer to have at least three months' notice in order to schedule a wedding since the Church calendar fills up quickly. You may check availability of a particular date with the church staff, but only the officiating clergy may schedule your wedding date once he/she has agreed to your request.

### Pre-marital counseling

The Episcopal Church requires that everyone married in the church receive formal pre-marital preparation. The officiating member of the clergy will schedule three sessions to meet with the couple. The sessions focus on the spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects of marriage. If one or both of the parties live out of town and cannot be present for these counseling sessions, arrangements may be made with a counselor or a clergy person in the area where the couple lives. A marriage cannot take place without these sessions, please make every effort to keep your appointments once they are scheduled.

## Remarriage of divorced church persons

If one or both of those contemplating marriage has been divorced, a copy of each of the divorce decrees should be brought to the initial interview. The officiating priest must include this in a letter to the Bishop at least 90 days prior to the wedding, requesting permission to solemnize the marriage. At least one year must have elapsed between the final decree(s) and a remarriage petition being granted by the Bishop.

## Marriage license

A Marriage License is required by the State of Georgia to officiate a wedding. A license may be obtained from the county of the bride or groom's residence, or in the county where the marriage takes place if the couple is not a resident of Georgia. Please bring the marriage license to the wedding rehearsal.

## Officiating Clergy

A member of the parish clergy is the regular officiant for the service. Anyone desiring another member of the clergy to assist may request this, and with the approval of the Rector, that person may be invited. If a clergy person from out of town is invited to assist the wedding, it is expected that the couple will offer to pay for his/her travel expenses.

Any priest of the Episcopal Church may decline to solemnize any marriage at any time.

## Wedding Rehearsal

Rehearsals are *usually* scheduled at 5:00pm the day before the wedding and are no more than an hour long. Please urge all participants to allow extra time so the rehearsal can start on time.

If there is a bridal consultant, he or she should understand that the rehearsal is directed by the clergy and may be assisted by a member of the Wedding Committee. They go through the service step by step with the wedding party. A member of the Wedding Committee will be present during the ceremony. A consultant's service is not required at either the rehearsal or the wedding ceremony.

**WEDDING COORDINATOR:** – St. Anne's assigns the coordinator for each wedding. A St. Anne's wedding coordinator is necessary even if the bride has a wedding consultant.

# The Service

Please plan all rehearsal dinners and/or parties after the rehearsal.

- **RESPONSIBILITY** – Weddings at St. Anne’s are the responsibility of the parish clergy. A wedding is a service of the church and must, therefore, conform to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the church, as with any other service.
- **FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS** – Altar flowers are the only appropriate decorations. (If the St. Anne’s Flower Guild is not preparing the altar flowers for the wedding, please ask your florist to pick up for the flower vase liners during regular office hours.)
- **PHOTOGRAPHS** – All still photographs will be done before and/or after the service. Photographers may not take pictures once the service has begun. (It should be made clear to the photographer prior to the wedding that photographs may be taken only from the rear of the Church and without a flash, as the bride enters and as the bride and groom leave.) Please communicate this to the photographer so as to avoid embarrassment. The majority of pictures will be taken before the wedding and not more than 30 minutes after the service. Couples find that when pictures are taken prior to the service, guests are not kept waiting to be greeted at the reception.
- **ALCOHOL** If you are serving alcohol at the reception, please ask for a copy of the parish Alcohol Policy. No alcohol before the wedding is permitted. Saint Anne’s has a zero-tolerance policy and if this policy is broken it will result in assessment of a 500.00 dollar fine.
- **VIDEOGRAPHY** – If videotaping of the wedding is desired, a video camera mounted to a stationary tripod is permitted. The location of the tripod is limited. This must be discussed with an agreement reached before the rehearsal.
  - There are no exceptions to any of the rules and regulations concerning the service. It is recommended that the photographer have someone to assist, especially if there are a lot of people in the wedding party. If there are any questions, please call the church.
- **MUSIC** – Music, if desired, will be provided by the organist of St. Anne’s. It is not customary for another organist to play at the service. The organist consults with the bride and groom well in advance of the service to recommend and approve appropriate music. Other musicians and soloists may be included as a part of the service if it is agreeable with the Officiant and the Music Director. The organist does not play at rehearsals. No taped music is allowed.

## Fees

**The fees for a wedding at St. Anne's are for personnel costs and property use.**

**CHURCH:** (\$100) Covers the cleaning of the church before and after the service, and any related needs. This fee also includes heating or cooling the building, and other costs such as candles, care of linens, etc.

**SEXTON:** (\$200) A Sexton is required to be in attendance for each wedding. A Sexton takes care of the church property, handles logistics for church events, stocks needed supplies, and takes care of minor church repairs as needed.

**THE PARISH HALL AND PARISH HALL KITCHEN:** (\$400) If you are hosting your reception at St. Anne's, this fee covers the use of the parish hall as well as the cleaning of the Parish Hall before and after the reception as well as setting up tables, chairs, etc. and rearranging the Parish Hall for church use following the reception. Use of the parish hall is limited to **four hours**. Additional use of the space may be granted at a charge of \$100 per hour. A member of the Kitchen Committee or Sexton is present anytime the kitchen is unlocked and will consult with the caterer regarding the use of kitchen equipment.

**ACOLYTE:** (\$25) Each (Acolytes are chosen by the church). An acolyte carries a cross or torches for processions and assists clergy throughout the service.

**ORGANIST:** (\$275) – There is an additional \$50 rehearsal fee for each rehearsal if a soloist or other musician is to participate in the service.

**CLERGY:** There is no specific fee for clergy. It is customary for an honorarium to be made directly to the clergy as an expression of appreciation for their time in premarital counseling, the rehearsal, and the wedding (generally the honorarium is in the range of \$275 or more).

All fees, except the clergy honorarium, are payable in advance. Please make your check payable to St. Anne's Episcopal Church, which must be received two weeks prior to the wedding. All fees are subject to periodic review and change.

## Facilities

- **THE CHAPEL** seats 30 people.
- **THE CHURCH** seats 350-400 people.
- **THE PARISH HALL** will seat 250 and will accommodate 400 for a non-seated reception. The tables and chairs can be arranged to accommodate whatever the need. The bulletin boards or posters on the walls can be removed, but the cross above the fireplace cannot.
- **THE COMMONS ROOM** accommodates 100 for a non-seated reception or may be used as a dressing room for the bride and all her attendants.
- **CONFERENCE ROOM** May be used as a dressing room for the groom and groomsmen.

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