

# A Christian Wedding

at

St. Paul's by-the-Sea Episcopal Church

(With Fee Schedule and Photographer's Covenant)

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three, and the greatest of these is love.

A Lesson from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

(13:1-13)

## A CHRISTIAN WEDDING

A Christian wedding is the making of a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in the presence of God. In the Episcopal Church, it is required that at least one of the parties to be married be a baptized Christian, that the ceremony be attested to by at least two witnesses, and that the marriage conform to the laws of the State and the Canons of the Church as found in Section XVIII.

A marriage ceremony is a time of great rejoicing. In it the Christian family gathers to witness a covenant by which a man and a woman pledge to each other a lifelong union of fidelity and love. This union then receives the blessing of God, who alone can give the highest gifts of grace: love and honor, faithfulness and patience, wisdom and godliness. The service is not only a witness to a covenant, it is also a benediction.

Church wedding customs vary in detail from place to place. The guiding principle to remember is that a wedding is a worship service of the Church. As in all worship services of the Church, the clergy are charged by canon law with the final responsibility for determining the appropriateness of all arrangements and details.

The couple should note that some customs considered traditional elsewhere are not practiced at St. Paul's by-the-Sea. These are presented in some detail in this document, which should be read carefully and discussed with the church wedding coordinator. The couple is responsible for relaying this information to vendors, such as florists and photographers.

## THE FIRST STEP:

### MEETING WITH THE CLERGY AND SETTING DATES

The couple should arrange a meeting with the Rector of St. Paul's by-the-Sea about their wedding *before any other plans are finalized*. A wedding at St. Paul's by-the-Sea involves the participation of many different people and adequate advance notice is essential in order to guarantee there are no scheduling conflicts and to assure adequate time for premarital preparation. **Firm dates cannot be selected until after this initial clergy appointment.**

Further, no arrangements that involve the church facilities or the priest\* who will perform the ceremony are to be announced until approval has been received from the clergy of St. Paul's by-the-Sea; nor should final arrangements or announcements be made or invitations be printed until the couple has met with the church wedding coordinator.

*\*Prior permission from the Rector of St. Paul's by-the-Sea is required if outside clergy is to be invited to participate in the wedding service.*

A wedding may be held at any time in the course of the Christian year; however, by long tradition, weddings have not been scheduled during Lent. The solemn and penitential nature of this season is interrupted by the joyous nature of weddings and especially by traditional social celebrations that usually surround them.

Weddings are generally held in the afternoon or early evening, although morning weddings are equally appropriate if desired. Weddings may not be scheduled later than 7 pm. If the reception is to be held at the church, the ceremony should begin no later than 5 pm. Wedding rehearsals are normally held on the day before the wedding. Further details regarding the rehearsal are provided later.

## PREMARITAL PREPARATION

Premarital counseling is required of every couple as part of their preparation for marriage. The clergy will determine the form of this preparation.

## THE CHURCH WEDDING COORDINATOR

St. Paul's by-the-Sea requires the use of a church wedding coordinator who will be available to answer questions regarding the ceremony, rehearsal, costs, and guidelines for flowers and photography. The coordinator will assist the clergy with the proceedings during the rehearsal and ceremony, as she is familiar with the unique aspects of the church facilities and practices. No other wedding consultants, coordinators or planners may participate at the rehearsal or wedding ceremony.

A coordinator will contact you soon after your initial meeting with clergy. While it is not her job to help plan the details of a wedding, she will work to make sure the couple has a good understanding of wedding practices at St. Paul's by-the-Sea. She will cover informational items and decisions to be made as well as answering other questions. It is possible that all the information may not be available at the time of the initial meeting, so the bride and the coordinator will stay in close communication to make sure all needed information is shared. This communication and cooperation will help ensure a smooth and joyful wedding day.

## THE EUCHARIST

A nuptial celebration of the Eucharist is normally a part of the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage. It adds much to the meaning and beauty of the sacrament and fulfills the spiritual and Christian meaning of the sacrament. If a Eucharist is included, the couple may serve as oblationers or designate two persons who will take the bread and wine to the altar.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

The couple will choose two or three persons to read scripture as a part of the worship service. Clergy will provide a selection of appropriate scripture from which the couple may choose. Clergy will read the Gospel.

## COSTS

A standard fee is charged to cover the use of the building and the services of the church organist, sexton, and wedding coordinator. It is customary to give a separate thank offering to the Rector's Discretionary Fund. There are additional fees for crucifers, torchbearers, acolytes, server, thurifer and gospel bearer, if it is desired to include them. All fees must be paid two weeks prior to the wedding. Checks should be made to St. Paul's by-the-Sea and given to the church financial administrator. A schedule of fees will be provided.

## WEDDING BULLETIN

A bulletin outlining the order of service and the names of the wedding party will be produced by the church office at no additional charge. If an outside printer is preferred, the text must be provided by the church office.

## WEDDING PARTY

The coordinator will need to know the number and names of bridesmaids, honor attendants, ushers and groomsmen planned for the wedding party. It is suggested that children under the age of five years not be included in the wedding party.

## WEDDING MUSIC

The church organist, or his/her designated substitute, is the organist for all weddings. A wedding is a sacred service and all music and texts that have a secular connotation are to be avoided. Any texts that are sung must, under the Canons and Rubrics, be from the Bible, Book of Common Prayer, other

authorized services, the Hymnals of the Episcopal Church or be theologically consistent with them. The final decision on the appropriateness of music and soloists resides with the Rector.

## DECORATIONS

The inherent beauty of our church building lends itself to a wedding of stately beauty with a minimum of decoration. Decorations considered appropriate for a wedding at St. Paul's by-the-Sea are as follows:

- \*Flowers or greens in either one or two vases by the altar. A florist may arrange these. No additional plants, trees or lighting may be used.
- \*Live flowers only are to be used in the decorating.
- \*Four bouquets, only, to mark the family pews; these may be flowers, greens or ribbons.
- \*Candles normally used at the services in the church are the only ones to be used.
- \*Aisle runners are a safety hazard and may not be used.
- \*Flower petals -- real or silk -- may not be strewn.
- \*Flowers placed at the altar for a wedding are considered an offering to God and left in the sanctuary following the wedding.
- \*Wedding kneeling cushions are provided by the church.

The coordinator will need the name of the florist and estimated time flowers are to be delivered on the day of the wedding. Costs of decorations are the responsibility of the couple or their families.

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographers are to observe the sanctity of the church at all times. They are asked to arrive no later than 30 minutes before the ceremony is to begin.

- \*Videos may be recorded on fixed tripods at the back of the sanctuary or set up unobtrusively in an outside aisle.

- \*Photographs may be taken on the church grounds prior to the wedding service.
- \*The actual wedding service is a worship service, as much so as any church service; therefore, we ask that no pictures be taken during the service except from the back of the church and from the steps going down to the sacristy, *without flash*. Other pictures may be taken in the church before the arrival of any guests or as a background to the bridal party after the service.
- \*If the bride and groom know of anyone who is planning to take pictures during the service, we ask that those persons be informed of our request for no pictures to be taken at this time so that there will be no embarrassment on the part of the picture-taker or the clergy.
- \*Pictures may be taken in the church following the service. We ask that a time limit of 15 - 30 minutes be set in deference to the wedding guests who are waiting at the reception and those who are waiting on Saturday evenings to prepare the church for Sunday services.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter. Our wish is to preserve the dignity and beauty of the wedding service.

## THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

All members of the wedding party are expected to attend and to be on time. The bride will participate fully in the rehearsal. Except in unusual circumstances, a rehearsal lasts no longer than one hour. If there is a rehearsal dinner, it should be held after the rehearsal. The priest alone will be responsible for the actual conduct of the rehearsal.

## THE DAY OF THE WEDDING

The bride and her attendants may dress at the church if they wish. If this is the plan, they should be at the church no later than one hour before the ceremony is to begin. More time should be allowed if photographs are to be taken prior to the wedding. The coordinator will need to know what time to have the church

open for this purpose.

All ushers should be in the church and ready to begin seating guests 30-45 minutes before the wedding begins. The groom and the best man will gather in a designated area, separate from the bridal party, not less than thirty minutes before the ceremony.

The mother of the groom will be seated one or two minutes before the ceremony, with the mother of the bride seated last. The wedding coordinator in charge will help the bridal party to be spaced properly as they begin to proceed up the aisle. No one else will give these directions.

All those attending the service will stand when the processional bride processes down the aisle. At the conclusion of the service, first the bride's parents, and then the groom's, will follow the bridal party. The congregation is then free to leave. St. Paul's by-the-Sea permits only birdseed to be thrown outside the church after the service or reception — no rice, confetti or glitter.

## THE WEDDING RECEPTION

Wedding receptions may be held in Stormes Hall located across the street from the church. When this is the case, the wedding itself may not be scheduled later than 5 pm, and there will be a two-and-a-half hour limit for wedding and reception. All arrangements for a reception in Stormes Hall are to be made with the church facilities coordinator.

## AFTERWARD

We, at St. Paul's by-the-Sea, are pleased to be a part of your wedding day. We pray that you, as a married couple, will remain a part of our parish family.

## **ST. PAUL'S BY-THE-SEA CHURCH USE FEES**

All fees should be paid no later than two weeks prior to event.

A non-refundable deposit of \$250.00 is required when reserving a wedding date.

<b><u>Status</u></b>	<b><u>Traditional Wedding*</u></b>	<b><u>Parish Hall Reception</u></b>
Member	\$750*	\$400
Non-Member	\$1600*	\$400
Family of Member	\$850*	\$400

\*Included in this rate: Church, Organist ( *Basic fee for wedding and a consultation*), Wedding Coordinator, & Sexton.

\*Additional fees for organist:

- Wedding rehearsal - \$75
- Additional rehearsal with soloist or instrumentalist - \$75

Additional fee of \$35 each for the following:

Acolyte, Crucifer, Eucharistic Minister, Gospel Bearer, Thurifer, Torch Bearer, Verger

It is customary for a thank offering of at least \$150 be made to Rector's discretionary fund.

### **Church use fees for events other than weddings**

Members:

\$175 per room for Groups of under 100.

\$225 per room for Groups of over 100.

Non-members:

\$275 per room for Groups of under 100.

\$325 per room for Groups of over 100.

# PHOTOGRAPHER'S COVENANT

## ST. PAUL'S BY-THE-SEA

A wedding at St. Paul's by-the-Sea is a religious ceremony conducted within the Church for the purpose of God blessing the marriage. The following are the guidelines for photography at St. Paul's by-the-Sea. By signing this, you agree to follow these guidelines. Failure to do so will result in your being asked to leave the building, and you will not photograph weddings here again. Thank you in advance for following these guidelines.

You may photograph the wedding party in the Church beginning two hours before the wedding. The photographs will end thirty minutes before the service begins, and all equipment will be removed from the interior of the Church. Photographs may be taken immediately following the wedding for thirty minutes instead of before the service. You are welcome to photograph the bridal party in the lobby as they are getting ready for the procession. Once the first person begins the procession, there will be NO flash photographs taken inside the Church. You may stand in a stationary place in back of the Church; the coordinator will direct you to the place you may photograph from. During the recessional the coordinator will direct you to a place in the back of the Church where you may take photographs.

The service may be videotaped using a fixed tripod at the back of the sanctuary or set up unobtrusively in an outside aisle.

At no time during the service is any light equipment to be used or any flash photography allowed.

If you have any questions, please ask the priest conducting the service or one of our coordinators.

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Photographer

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Date

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Bride and Groom

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Date of Wedding