



St. MARY'S

Episcopal
Cathedral

EST. 1858 • MEMPHIS

*HOUSE of PRAYER
for All People*

Guidelines for Weddings

Effective July 2016

**700 Poplar Avenue + Memphis, TN 38105
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Guidelines for Weddings at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Memphis, TN

Thank you for considering St. Mary's as a sacred place to host your wedding! St. Mary's is committed to accommodating all couples who wish to be married here, **members and non-members**. We are here to assist you as you enter into married life reverently, deliberately, and joyfully. We understand the wedding ceremony to be only the first of many holy steps toward life-long communion and commitment with one another and with God through the Church.

GETTING STARTED

The following is the order for scheduling a wedding at St. Mary's Cathedral:

1. Contact the Cathedral Administrator to coordinate clergy availability for your chosen date.
2. Receive and read wedding information/guidelines packet.
3. Complete the Wedding Information Form and Wedding Guideline Agreement and return them with a non-refundable deposit of \$300.
4. Once a clergy person has been designated, meet to begin pre-marital counseling sessions and finalize the rehearsal and wedding dates.

The Canon Laws of the Church require a minimum of thirty days' notice for a wedding. However, to insure against scheduling difficulties, advance notice of at least nine months is our hope.

Weddings are not to be scheduled during the season of Lent. In addition, St. Mary's does not schedule weddings on Christmas Eve and Day, New Year's Eve and Day, Easter Eve and Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Sundays, and any other holiday the Cathedral elects to recognize by closing its offices.

5. Schedule appointment with the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator. (see contact information sheet)
6. Schedule an appointment with the Cathedral organist for music selections.
7. The wedding rehearsal is suggested for 4 PM the day prior to the wedding.
8. The time of weddings range from 10:30 AM to 6 PM. Saturday is the preferred day.
9. Episcopal clergy from other churches may officiate at a wedding at the Cathedral if arrangements are made with the Cathedral priest. Clergy of other denominations or faiths may be invited to assist with a wedding ceremony, but the St. Mary's clergy is responsible for officiating for the portion of the service in which partners exchange vows and rings, and the final blessings.

IN THE CASE OF REMARRIAGE

Divorced persons can be married in the Episcopal Church. It requires our Bishop's permission. Nine months is best allowed between the initial application and the date of the wedding. You and your clergy person will talk about the previous relationship, make sure the reasons for its demise have been understood and dealt with, and then request the Bishop's consent. Your final decree of divorce must be at least a year old.

MUSIC FOR THE WEDDING

Music for weddings at St. Mary's is provided by our staff organists and a vocalist. Both our Organist and our Assistant Organist have the first right of refusal for all wedding liturgies. If you have a relative or friend who is a *professional* organist/pianist and is familiar with the format of the Episcopal wedding liturgy, you may invite that person to serve as the performing Organist/Pianist at your wedding. This person must be auditioned and approved in advance by the Cathedral Organist and/or Dean.

The wedding liturgy is an act of worship of God and a church service of festival proportions. The music must remain within the liturgical guidelines of the Prayer Book and is of the same spirit and nature as for Sunday services. Our Organist is responsible for overseeing the selection of music regardless of whether or not he will be your organist. He will ensure that all of your wedding music will be appropriate for this sacred service and all final decisions must be approved by him.

You are welcome to invite additional instrumentalists (e.g. violin, string quartet, flute, etc.) or vocalists (e.g. soloist to full choir) to take part in your wedding liturgy. Our Organist can supply you with names and contact information of local musicians who have experience playing/singing at St. Mary's.

MUSIC SELECTION GUIDELINES

- **Only music of a sacred or classical nature is appropriate.** This includes the opening and closing voluntaries and all music for the ceremony itself. Pop music and recorded music are not allowed.
- **Instruments:** St. Mary's has a pipe organ and a grand piano. Either or both may be used for your wedding.
- **Music consultation:** The organist for your wedding will help you select all of the music for your ceremony. Both of our musicians have a large repertoire of appropriate music, and they will be happy to demonstrate for you in our cathedral space.

DECORATIONS IN THE CATHEDRAL

Floral arrangements, candles, and other decorations for all weddings must meet the floral guidelines provided. St. Mary's has a long working relationship with Rachel's Flowers and recommends their work.

The Episcopal Church values simplicity in the presentation of flowers at a wedding. As the central symbol of our faith, the cross is the focal point for all services. Accordingly, flower arrangements should enhance, not overwhelm, the cross.

All decorations for the Cathedral and flowers for the wedding party must be placed at the Cathedral two hours before the ceremony.

Altar Flowers: The wedding flowers used in the chancel or in the chapel will remain for Sunday liturgies. The flowers will be designated in the Sunday Service bulletin "In thanksgiving for the marriage of _____."

Guidelines:

- A. In the sanctuary and the Chancel —

1. Flowers on the altar are to be arranged in the church containers. Only two arrangements may be placed on the table (one step above the placement of the fair linen). Artificial flowers are not permitted. No flowers, vines, etc. should trail below the base of the container or be attached to the cross, the reredos, or the altar.
 2. Candles, as used for Sunday services and provided by the Cathedral, are permitted on the altar.
 3. A “unity candle” is not used in the Episcopal Church.
- B. In the Nave or Chapel —
1. Pew markers, either of flowers, greenery, and/or ribbon, may be used; however, no decorations may be higher than six inches above the pew or attached to the pews or other furniture by pinning, gluing, nailing, or taping.
 2. Simple decorations of greenery and/or flowers may be used on the stair rails leading to the Chancel.
 3. Wedding runners are not allowed.
 4. Niche candles and aisle candles are available for an additional cost.
- C. In other areas—
- Greenery and/or ribbons may be used on the wrought iron rails outside the cathedral.

THE SERVICE BULLETIN

St. Mary’s requires the printing of a wedding service bulletin containing the complete order of service. A standard bulletin form can be obtained from the Associate for Liturgy, who oversees details of the printing; the couple is responsible for the additional cost over the first 150 copies. The Wedding Service Bulletin information sheet will be e-mailed to the couple. It is to be completed and returned at least two (2) weeks prior to the wedding. A draft will be sent in PDF format for proofing and for making any other changes.

Seating capacity in the Nave is 500; Chapel is 40.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

The couple may choose any photographer they wish; however, they must provide the Cathedral Administrator with the name and contact information and guidelines will be sent to the photographer. A form requiring the photographer/videographer’s signature, acknowledging understanding of the guidelines, must be returned to the Cathedral.

St. Mary’s recommends that photos be taken before the marriage service. The photographer must finish shooting inside the Cathedral at least 30 minutes before the service begins. Out of consideration for guests waiting at the reception, if photos are to be taken after the service, the photographer must conclude within 20 minutes. It is suggested that the first picture include the priest, if desired.

Because of the dignity of a wedding as a service of worship, no flash or bright artificial lights are permitted. Minimal photography may be taken during the wedding, but the **photographer must remain in the rear of the church and use a camera with an unpronounced shutter sound. One flash picture may be taken from the rear of the church as the couple leaves the Cathedral.**

An audio-video recording of the wedding may be made from the back of the center aisle. TV monitors and/or cabling of any kind may not be used.

It is the responsibility of the couple to inform family and friends as to the rules of St. Mary's Cathedral concerning photography during the service.

THE MARRIAGE LICENSE

The marriage license must be brought to the officiating priest at the rehearsal. The Cathedral Administrator will mail the signed license to the Clerk's Office after the wedding.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

In the Episcopal Church, Holy Communion is open to all persons who desire to receive the sacrament. Holy Eucharist is suggested as a part of the wedding service.

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

The suggested time for wedding rehearsals is 4:00 p.m. on the evening before the wedding. All members of the wedding party, including readers, ring bearers, and all others involved with the service are expected to attend and to be on time. Except in unusual circumstances, a rehearsal lasts no longer than 45 minutes.

The officiating priest conducts the rehearsal with help from the Wedding Coordinator(s). The organist does not attend the wedding rehearsal.

Please Note:

Consuming alcoholic beverages prior to or during the rehearsal and/or the wedding service is unacceptable. Persons doing so may be told they cannot participate in the service at the discretion of the clergy person.

THE WEDDING DAY

The Cathedral will be open two hours before the ceremony and all members of the wedding party should arrive at that time.

Women in the wedding party will use the Undercroft. Men will be in the Choir vesting area.

Drinking of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in these areas or on any of the Cathedral premises. Smoking is permitted only in the courtyards.

Following the liturgy, all possessions of the wedding party must be removed from the building, and all areas are to be left as they were found. The Cathedral assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.

Two security guards are on duty two hours prior to the service and one hour following the conclusion of the liturgy. Cars may not be left in St. Mary's parking lot after the ceremony. The parking lot gates are locked when the security guards leave.

PARKING

The Cathedral property provides adequate parking for approximately 150 vehicles and security is provided.

WEDDING FEES

- \$2500 - For **pledging members** who attend regularly, and their immediate family.
Immediate family includes, children, parents, grandparents
- \$3500 - For Episcopalians inside the Diocese of West Tennessee
For St. Mary's Episcopal School alumnae
- \$4500 – For **non-members**

The above fees cover the costs for four premarital counseling sessions, organist, one vocalist, wedding coordinator, 150 service bulletins, acolytes to assist the priest, sexton duties, and security.

Additional costs:

- Aisle candles - \$250
- Niche candles - \$210
- Music rehearsal fees – If one or more instrumentalists is hired by the couple, a fee of \$50 per extra rehearsal with our organist is added. Please speak with the Organist for questions.
- Additional Cathedral choir voices may be hired @ \$100 per voice
- Damages - At cost for any damages incurred

All fees must be paid in full at least two weeks prior to the rehearsal.

Marriage Preparation Checklist

Getting Started:

___ Wedding Manual received on: _____

___ \$300 non-refundable deposit, Wedding Guideline Agreement, and Wedding Information Form given to Parish Administrator

___ Make appointment with Cathedral Wedding Coordinator

___ Make appointment with Cathedral organist

Meetings:

___ Four Premarital Sessions with clergy member (more if asked for or needed)

___ Meet with Cathedral Wedding Coordinator

___ Meet with Cathedral Organist

Paperwork:

___ Marriage License – Given to priest at the REHEARSAL

___ Readings for service due by: _____

___ Music selections chosen with Organist by: _____

___ All participant information for service bulletin due by: _____

Fees:

___ Paid in full at least two weeks prior to rehearsal

RECEPTIONS AT THE CATHEDRAL (Members Only)

The Parish Hall, Undercroft, and courtyards are available for wedding receptions for a fee.

- Martyrs Hall **or** Undercroft - \$1000
- Martyrs Hall **and** Undercroft - \$2000

These facilities must be reserved by contacting the Cathedral Administrator. In order to prepare for the following day's ministries, the reception may extend no longer than three hours from start time. For example: A wedding starting at 4:00 would have a reception beginning at 5:30 and ending at 8:30 (3 hours for reception).

Reception Guidelines will be sent to the caterer or to the person in charge of the reception. The caterer along with the couple must contact the Cathedral Administrator to approve the reception plans and to acquaint the parties with the facilities.

The couple furnishes the flowers and decorations, cakes and any other food, beverages, napkins and serving pieces. Under no conditions shall decorations be attached to walls or woodwork by pinning, gluing, nailing or taping.

Alcoholic beverages are permitted within the following guidelines:

1. Alcoholic beverage may not be offered or consumed on Cathedral property until the reception. It is the responsibility of the couple and/or their families to see that all members of the wedding party observe this guideline.
2. Alcoholic beverages may be served directly from the bottles, if the bottles are wrapped in a white napkin and served by a bartender, or served by a bartender from behind properly dressed tables. If the reception is to include more than 50 guests, two professional bartenders should be engaged to serve. Unopened bottles should be stored in the kitchen or under skirted tables and out of sight unless they are needed. The setting up of any type of "fountain" is against Cathedral policy.
3. A non-alcoholic alternative beverage **MUST** be offered. It, too, should be attractively displayed and in an obvious, visible place in the Parish Hall and/or the courtyards.
4. Live or recorded music may be used at the reception.

It is the responsibility of the caterer and the couple to leave the kitchen, Parish Hall, and courtyards clean and straight. All trash must be sealed in plastic trash bags. All rented equipment (tables, chairs, musical instruments) must be removed at the end of the event.