



ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

WEDDING POLICIES

TO THOSE SEEKING TO BE MARRIED AT ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

We are grateful that you are seeking the sacrament of marriage in this sacred space of St. James Episcopal Church in Wilmington, NC. Below, you will find the policies and protocols for weddings at our downtown campus.

REQUIREMENTS

Who can be married at St. James' downtown campus?

For all weddings at the downtown campus of St. James Parish, the following conditions must be met:

- A. One member of the couple must be a baptized Christian, and two witnesses must be present.
- B. One or both members of the couple must:
 - a) Be an active, pledging member of St. James Parish for at least one full year, *or*
 - b) Have been raised attending St. James Parish and is a child or grandchild of a currently active member who attends and pledges to St. James Parish for at least one full year.
- C. If either person has been divorced, the desired officiant must notify the bishop in the jurisdiction in which the wedding will take place and seek their blessing before the marriage can be scheduled. Sufficient time must be allowed to accommodate this step.

NOTE: Active, pledging members of St. James Parish will be given first priority for any requested date until a wedding has been officially booked. Active, pledging member status is determined by the St. James Finance office.

What kinds of weddings are allowed at St. James Parish?

All weddings at St. James Parish must be in accordance with the approved liturgies and canons of the Episcopal Church. The primary form used for weddings at St. James Parish is the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage found in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Any other liturgy must be from an approved resource of the Episcopal Church as well as approved by the clergy of St. James Parish.

Who can officiate weddings at St. James Parish?

All weddings at St. James Parish must be in accordance with the canons of the Episcopal Church. It is the prerogative of St. James priests to officiate any Episcopal wedding at St. James Parish. An Episcopal priest not on staff of St. James may only assist at weddings by special invitation of the Rector.

What about non-Episcopal weddings & ministers?

Only Episcopal weddings are permitted at St. James Parish. Non-Episcopal ministers may occasionally be approved to serve at a wedding alongside one of the priests at St. James—solely to preach and/or offer prayers—so long as they are approved by the Rector of St. James.

When will my wedding be considered “booked?”

No wedding is considered *officially* scheduled until:

- A. The couple has spoken to a priest of St. James Parish.
- B. The date of the wedding is approved by a priest of St. James Parish.
- C. This signed agreement has been remitted in full to the St. James Parish Office - a copy will be returned to you for your records.
- D. The full facility fee has been paid. This fee cannot be paid until conditions A, B, & C. have been met (see fees on page 4).

NOTE:

- Ultimately, no wedding date is firm until the conclusion of premarital counseling.
- The Rector of St. James Parish reserves the right to cancel or reschedule for any reason.
- If no St. James priests are available on the requested date and time, another date will need to be considered.

Parameters of Facilities Use

Due to the size and layout of the buildings, the following guidelines apply:

- A church facilities use fee is added for a wedding.
- ***No alcohol is allowed on the premises*** except for the purposes of Holy Communion.
 - For receptions or similar events, specific arrangements for the serving of alcohol must be made with the Director of Operations and Administration. Additional paperwork, fees, and restrictions will apply.
- The parish employs grounds and facilities team members who are not paid by the church for special services, like weddings. A facilities team member will open the facility two hours before the event, remain on the premises, and will clean following the wedding. Therefore, an additional fee has been set for the facilities team member’s services.
- Due to safety and environmental concerns, any “send-off” plans must be approved by the Director of Operations and Administration.
- Guest registries should be used at the wedding reception as the vestibule is too small to accommodate guests waiting to sign.
- The Choir Vesting Room (equipped with a private bathroom, full-length mirrors, seating, and outlets) and the Lippitt Room are available for the wedding party to prepare before the wedding.
- Animals are ***not*** permitted on the grounds as part of any wedding event.

North Carolina Requirements for Marriage

North Carolina state law requires that each couple obtain a marriage license from any County Courthouse. Bring your marriage license to the rehearsal. The clergy may not officiate at any wedding unless the license has been given to him or her ahead of time. Also, make certain that you have two legal witnesses available to sign the wedding license immediately following the ceremony.

For the most up-to-date information regarding NC requirements, please visit: nccourts.gov/help-topics/divorce-and-marriage/marriage
For the most up-to-date information regarding New Hanover County requirements, please visit the New Hanover County Register of Deeds Website: nhcgov.com/439/Marriage-Application

FEES

Booking

- To reserve your wedding date on the St. James calendar, the full facility fee must first be paid. This is to be paid only after speaking with and confirming the date with the Rector or an Associate Rector of St. James Parish. Any payment made before speaking with the Rector or an Associate Rector will not be accepted. Availability of the desired date is not guaranteed, and the date will not be confirmed until the prior conditions have been met.

NOTE: 20% of the facility fee will be non-refundable. Should the event be canceled by the wedding party prior to the day of the wedding, the remainder of the facility fee will be refunded, and 20% retained.

Facility Use

- **\$500** - Active, pledging member of St. James Parish for at least one full year.
- **\$1500** - Raised at St. James Parish (as determined by clergy of St. James) and the child or grandchild of a current active, pledging member of St. James Parish for at least one full year.

NOTE: Member fee only applies to parishioners who are currently active, pledging members of St. James Parish for a full calendar year, as determined by the clergy and office of finance. Those who were previously active pledging members of St. James, or those who are members of another Episcopal parish, are not eligible for the member fee.

Clergy

Because weddings are a sacrament of the church, honorariums for officiating clergy are optional. For the primary officiant, a suggested honorarium is \$400. In addition to or in lieu of an honorarium, gifts may also be made to the clergy's discretionary fund.

Facilities Team Member

\$250 supplemental fee to clean and open church and grounds before the wedding, make sure parking signs are placed outside, and to close church and grounds after the service and subsequent photography is completed.

Director of Music (if desired)

\$300 to coordinate with the couple in advance; to prepare and practice; and to play music before, during, and/or after the service.

Livestreaming/Recording (if desired)

\$150 to coordinate with the couple in advance; to work the camera and record/livestream the service.

Flowers

Market price, to be arranged directly with the florist and/or independent wedding coordinator.

Timeline of Payments

All payments for staff members involved in the service are to be made by check and received by the Director of Operations and Administration no less than **two weeks prior** to the wedding day. Details to be arranged with the Director of Operations and Administration.

REQUIRED PREPARATION AND TIMELINE

Premarital Counseling

One of the important and beneficial requirements for marriage in the Episcopal Church, including St. James Parish, is premarital counseling. The couple being married will have several sessions with a priest on staff at St. James. The purpose of this instruction is, above all, to help the couple—to discuss practical topics integral to marriage and to educate the couple on the purposes of Christian marriage. And, if there are any significant challenges between the couple, the instruction is meant to help raise and discuss them openly.

Music

Because the Celebration and Blessing of the Marriage is a liturgy of the church, the music for your wedding should be appropriate for the occasion. Wedding music should express both gratitude and praise to God for the most wonderful gift of marriage. Therefore, most secular/popular songs that might hold sentimental meaning to the couple should be reserved for the reception, as they are not appropriate in a liturgical setting. Additionally, many selections from the theater (example: Wagner's Bridal Chorus and Mendelssohn's Wedding March), while popular in secular weddings, are also not appropriate.

Music for the liturgy is chosen under the supervision of St. James Parish's Director of Music, who is available to play for all weddings. The base fee is listed above and cover all music from the prelude to the postlude.

Instrumental soloists can also add great beauty to the wedding liturgy. The Director of Music acts as the coordinator for hiring all additional musicians.

Please contact the Director of Music no less than 30 days prior to the wedding so that arrangements may be made to provide music for your special day.

Scheduling

- Wedding requests will not be accommodated more than 18 months from the desired date. Active, pledging members of St. James Parish will be given first priority.
- Wedding requests must be made at least 90 days in advance of desired date. Availability of clergy/staff support is not guaranteed on short notice.
- Please be reminded that no weddings may occur during the season of Lent (Ash Wednesday - Easter Sunday).

Timeline

- *Step 1.* Schedule wedding date
 - **At least 90 days and no more than 18 months from desired wedding date.**
 - Scheduling includes approval by a priest of St. James Parish and submission of facility fee.
- *Step 2.* Meet with priest for pre-marital counseling/instruction
 - **Sessions to begin at least 90 days before wedding date.**
 - Sooner is preferred and better for all parties involved.
- *Step 3.* Meet with Director of Music (if to be used)
 - **No less than 30 days in advance of wedding.**
- *Step 4.* Approval of Flowers & Decorations
 - **No less than 30 days in advance of wedding.**
 - Must be arranged directly with the florist and/or independent wedding coordinator, and approved by the Director of Operations and Administration.
- *Step 5.* Staff Payments
 - **14 days in advance of the wedding.**
 - Must be made by check and delivered to the Director of Operations and Administration fourteen days prior to the wedding day.
- *Step 6.* Rehearsal
 - **The day before the wedding.**
 - It is the officiant's prerogative to lead the rehearsal.
 - **Note:** The rehearsal will *not* be conducted if anyone in the wedding party is intoxicated or otherwise impaired.
- *Step 7.* Wedding Day
 - **Get married!**

Day of Wedding

- **During the Day:** Church, parlor, bathrooms, and any other designated spaces will be opened by a facilities team member before the service. Time of arrival to be determined in advance in conversation with clergy and/or Director of Facilities (*see facilities usage**)
- **One Hour Before:** Couple to be married, wedding party, and other participants should be on site. Please arrange specific arrival time in advance with clergy and the Facilities Representative.
- **Twenty Minutes Before:** Musical Prelude may begin
- **Fifteen Minutes Before:** Officiant in place
- **Five Minutes Before:** Final ushering completed
- **Service Time:** Procession begins

NOTE

- ***The service may be canceled or postponed*** if any members of the wedding party are intoxicated or otherwise impaired. Again, no alcohol is allowed on the premises, unless specific arrangements have been made with the Director of Operations and Administration and the appropriate paperwork has been completed.
- Photos may be taken with respect to the church and the grounds after the service for up to one hour following the conclusion of the service.

LOGISTICS PLANNING

Seating Capacity- The church comfortably seats 500 people.

Wedding Service Bulletin

If the couple would like a service bulletin, they are responsible for designing and printing their own. Samples of past wedding bulletins may be obtained at the church office. To ensure accuracy, the officiant needs to review and approve the bulletin before it is printed.

Photography and Videography

Photographers and videographers must remain either in the narthex (front entryway), back balcony, or behind the pews of the transept (by side entrance). Flash photography/lighted videography are not permitted. If the couple chooses to have Holy Communion, we ask that no photos be taken during this portion of the service (i.e. when the priest is at the altar invoking blessing upon the bread and wine). Live streaming/recording through the church's equipment may be arranged for use in advance, provided a trained operator is available. An additional fee will apply. Only a trained staff member may operate the livestreaming equipment.

Flowers & Decorations

- Any decorations inside or outside the church must be approved by the officiant and Director of Operations and Administration **at least 30 days** in advance of the wedding.
- Fresh flowers and greenery are permitted, but artificial flowers and greenery are not. The wedding party traditionally donates flowers and greenery to the use of the church with approval from the clergy. All other flowers and decorations must be removed from St. James Parish before leaving the premises.
- Use of tape, glue, or other adhesive is **not** permitted anywhere in the church or grounds.
- Glitter, confetti, and rice are **not** permitted. Send-off materials must be approved by the Director of Operations and Administration.
- Unity candles are **not** permitted.

Wedding Guild

While outsourced coordinators can be helpful, especially for bigger weddings, please know that the church has its own team of wedding coordinators (Wedding Guild) that help the coordinate all the logistics of your service from start to finish. One of these in-house coordinators will be present for the rehearsal to help you and your wedding party prepare for the service. They will also be present on the day of your wedding to assist you before, during, and after the service. Once your wedding date and time has been confirmed by a priest at St. James, the Wedding Guild will be notified, and a member of their team will be in touch with you when your date approaches.

Outsourced Wedding Coordinator

Please note that outsourced wedding coordinators are **not** permitted to give any direction or input in the planning or order of the service, **including** at the rehearsal. The officiant and in-house wedding coordinator will take care of all these arrangements. However, outsourced wedding coordinators **are** permitted to be present at the rehearsal and the service to assist the officiant, in-house wedding coordinator, and the wedding party as needed.

NOTE: Wedding coordinators who will be present for the wedding service must make prior contact with a priest of St. James Parish, or other approved officiant.

Rehearsal

Rehearsals are best held the day before the ceremony, pending the availability of the officiant and the couple. The rehearsal must be scheduled well in advance with the church office to assure that the church will be available at the couple's desired time. The rehearsal should take place before any wedding festivities, as anyone who is participating in the rehearsal will be expected to be on time and sober. During the rehearsal, the officiant will guide the couple and others participating through the service (wedding party, ushers, family, etc.), ensuring that the service will be as well-orchestrated as possible, that the couple and other friends and family feel confident and prepared, and that any anxiety is lessened for all involved.

Wedding Information Form

Wedding Info Form
p. 1 of 2

ST. JAMES PARISH WEDDINGS

Phone: 910.763.1658

Complete and return to St. James Parish, 25 S. Third Street, Wilmington, NC 28401 or admin@stjamesp.org.

SPOUSE-TO-BE 1 Please complete this section:

LEGAL NAME: (First) _____ (Middle) _____ (Last) _____

PREFERRED NAME (for the wedding): _____ PERSONAL PRONOUNS: _____

CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ COUNTY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ PREFERRED METHOD OF CONTACT: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ DATE OF BIRTH (mm/dd/yy): _____

STATUS: Never Before Married Widowed Divorced Number of times Married: _____

PARENT 1 FULL NAME: _____ Living Deceased

PARENT 2 FULL NAME: _____ Living Deceased

CHURCH AFFILIATION- Please select one of the below options:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Active pledging member of St. James Parish | <input type="checkbox"/> A pledging member of another Episcopal Church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child or grandchild of an active pledging member of St. James Parish | <input type="checkbox"/> No St. James Parish or Episcopal affiliation |

OCCUPATION:(optional) _____

SPOUSE-TO-BE 2 Please complete this section:

LEGAL NAME: (First) _____ (Middle) _____ (Last) _____

PREFERRED NAME (for the wedding): _____ PERSONAL PRONOUNS: _____

CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ COUNTY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ PREFERRED METHOD OF CONTACT: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ DATE OF BIRTH (mm/dd/yy): _____

STATUS: Never Before Married Widowed Divorced Number of times Married: _____

PARENT 1 FULL NAME: _____ Living Deceased

PARENT 2 FULL NAME: _____ Living Deceased

CHURCH AFFILIATION- Please select one of the below options:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Active pledging member of St. James Parish | <input type="checkbox"/> A pledging member of another Episcopal Church |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child or grandchild of an active pledging member of St. James Parish | <input type="checkbox"/> No St. James Parish or Episcopal affiliation |

OCCUPATION:(optional) _____

INTENDED MAILING ADDRESS AFTER MARRIAGE: _____

PARTICIPATING CLERGY: Please list any desired participating clergy: _____

DESIRED DATE OF WEDDING (mm/dd/yy): _____ DESIRED TIME OF WEDDING: _____

DESIRED DATE OF REHEARSAL(mm/dd/yy): _____ DESIRED TIME OF REHEARSAL: _____

DESIRED MUSIC: St. James Director of Music Third Party Both No Music

DESIRED LIVESTREAM: Livestream Only Recording Only Both No Recording or Livestream by St. James Parish

Are you interested in learning about the requirements for hosting a rehearsal dinner or reception at St. James Parish? Yes No

PLEASE LIST ANY KNOWN THIRD-PARTY VENDORS HERE:

FLORIST: _____

PHOTOGRAPHER: _____

VIDEOGRAPHER: _____

WEDDING COORDINATOR: _____

THIRD PARTY MUSICIANS: _____

OTHER: _____

NOTES: Are there any special accommodations that we may need to be aware of? _____

Once completed, please return this form to St. James Parish either email addressed to *admin@stjamesp.org* or by mail to:

ATTN: Wedding Forms

St. James Parish

25 S. Third Street,

Wilmington, NC 28401

* Please do not send the Facility Fee payment until your wedding date has been approved by a priest of St. James Parish.

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Clergy Approval: _____ Date: _____ PMT Deposited Date: _____