



St. John's (Shaughnessy) Anglican Church

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07/07

Wedding Guidelines

Welcome! We are delighted that you intend to make St. John's a part of your wedding celebration! We want to help make your wedding a memorable and Christian occasion. As you begin your new life together, we want to do what we can to help you build the strongest possible marriage. Most importantly, we hope this will be a time in which you come to know Jesus Christ in a deeper way. With all this in mind, we have developed the following wedding guidelines to help in your thinking and planning. Please read carefully what we have to say, then feel free to ask any questions you may have.

1. Marriage

The Bible teaches us to hold marriage in very high regard. First, marriage is God's good and gracious gift to us. It is not only for our own private benefit but also for the benefit of all. The goal of marriage is fundamentally the glory and service of God. It is not primarily self-fulfillment, intimacy or the meeting of each other's needs, as important as those may be. In marriage, God intends that husband and wife together represent him through filling the earth and being stewards of God's creation. Filling the earth will, in most cases, include the bearing of children and the raising of a family. Being stewards of God's creation will involve the Christian proclamation of the Gospel, establishing and extending the kingdom of God on earth and the care of God's creation and work. Second, God intends marriage to be a reflection of the magnificent and beautiful union between Christ and his church. Biblical marriage is a lifelong union between a man and a woman. The love between husband and wife is to be a visual expression of the love between Christ and his church. With this in mind, we are convinced that the most important and effective thing we can do to support your marriage is to point you to Jesus Christ and to His word written in the Bible. This is the way to help you grow in your relationship with Christ and with each other. (Genesis 1:26-31, Genesis 2:18-25, Ephesians 5:21-6:4).

2. Who gets married at St. John's?

At St. John's we are committed to ensuring quality care for the couples married here. We do not have unlimited resources, therefore we can only perform weddings for members of the parish, the immediate family of members, or couples who indicate a desire to become members of the parish. Those who desire to become members will participate at St. John's for at least 6 months prior to your wedding. A member of St. John's is someone who seeks to follow Christ as Lord, regularly attends services here and supports the parish with their time, talents and resources. If you are not currently a member, but are interested, we would expect you to take part in our Discovering Christ course. Marriage is an exciting time, and it can become a great deal more exciting and meaningful through understanding more about Christ. We warmly invite you to find out more through one of our groups (see #6 and #7 following). Please note that St. John's clergy reserve the right not to perform any wedding.

3. Initial Contact

If you are interested in being married at St. John's, complete the application form and submit it to the church office, to the attention of the weddings co-ordinator. If possible we will tentatively reserve space in the church, pending review of your application. When we can, we will contact you to discuss your wedding, to answer any questions you may have, and to confirm reservation of church facilities. Completing a wedding application form does not guarantee that the wedding will be performed at St. John's.

4. Officiating Ministers

Ordinarily St. John's clergy perform all weddings in the church or chapel. If you want a specific clergy person to officiate at your wedding, be sure to indicate this on your application. We cannot, however, guarantee availability of the particular clergy person. Unless you specify an officiating minister, one will be assigned to you, based on availability and the information you provide in your initial application. The officiating minister will contact you to arrange a meeting. Only Anglican clergy are permitted to officiate at weddings in Anglican Churches. Anglican Clergy from outside St. John's are expected to follow St. John's policy for weddings.

5. Date and Time of Your Wedding

Choosing the right day and time for your wedding is an important detail. Weddings at St. John's are usually performed on Saturdays (no later than 4:30 pm), but other days are sometimes available. We allow only one wedding on a given day. Weddings are not performed on any Sundays, the week before Easter or the week before or after Christmas or over Thanksgiving weekend. We need at least twelve weeks notice to schedule a wedding. Date and time slots are filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

6. Marriage Preparation

"Your wedding is one day—your marriage is a lifetime". At St. John's, we desire all the couples married here to have the strongest possible marriage. To help you achieve this goal, we ask that you participate in a program of marriage preparation in which as a couple you will have the opportunity to discuss everything from communication to spiritual concerns. We suggest one of the following programs: St. John's Mentoring Prep at a cost of \$50 per couple; Barnabas Marriage Conferences, Family Life Ministries and The Marriage Project. The officiating minister may also decide to do preparation personally.

7. Christian Instruction

Many couples have found the months before their wedding to be a time of spiritual learning and growth. With this in mind, everyone married at St. John's is expected to complete a basic course in the Christian faith called Discovering Christ. We will announce your wedding in the bulletin on the Sunday before the wedding date and ask the congregation to pray for you. If you reside out of town, please locate an Alpha program in your neighbourhood to attend. Refer to the website at www.alphacanada.ca. We also need confirmation of your completion of this course.

8. Legal Requirements

Prior to marriage you must obtain a license to marry from the District Registrar's Office, British Columbia Building, 250 - 605 Robson Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 5J3, or call 660-2937 for an office listed closer to you. If you are to be married at St. John's, this license must be in the St. John's Church office, marked "wedding license," at least two weeks before the wedding service. B. C. marriage licenses are valid for three months. Currently the fee for a wedding license is \$100. The license fee includes the payment for the official legal certificate (see item 10).

9. Divorce/Remarriage

Permission for remarriage in the Anglican Church must be obtained from the Bishop. A form is available from the weddings co-ordinator for you to complete, reflecting on the issues of the divorce. Attention will be given to your special pastoral needs. The officiating minister applies to the Diocesan Matrimonial Commission for permission to be granted. This procedure takes about six weeks.

10. Official Marriage Certificate

A Certificate of Marriage will be given to you by the officiating minister as a memento of your wedding. Please note, however, that this is not an official legal certificate. The Official Certificate will be mailed to you from the District Registrar's office (660-2937) following your wedding.

11. The Order of Service St. John's is an Anglican church and the marriage service is taken from either The Book of Common Prayer or The Book of Alternative Services. The marriage service contains strong central elements articulating God's purpose for marriage and the vows which are based on a scriptural understanding of marriage. It is a set service with limited flexibility of readings, hymns and some prayers. The service does not permit reading from sources other than the Bible and the marriage service is not a holy communion service. Participation by non-parish clergy is limited to a number of specific roles.

12. Wedding Music

Arrangements for the music are in the hands of the parish music director. Please make an appointment to meet with the music director to discuss appropriate hymns and music. He is also available to make suggestions, and if you have no requests for particular music, will be happy to make appropriate selections for you. All music must be suitable for a service of worship in a church and the hymns must be chosen in consultation with the music director. We do not allow pre-recorded music, praise songs or secular music of any kind in the wedding service. Please note, the music director must approve all music selections even if you choose to have someone else play at your wedding. You should consult with the music director at least one month before your wedding and prior to your making arrangements for soloists or other instrumentalists.

13. Rehearsal

It is very important for all wedding participants to feel as confident and well-prepared as possible during the service so, for all formal weddings (with processional, recessional, etc.), a rehearsal is required. Please arrange this with the weddings co-ordinator. St. John's does not have rehearsals on Fridays. The rehearsal will normally be scheduled at 5 pm and take no more than one hour. All members of the wedding party are expected to be present and on time.

14. Wedding Planners

Wedding planners will not be involved in the conducting of rehearsals or weddings.

15. Facilities & Service Details

Please note: It is the bridal couple's responsibility to make the rest of the family and bridal party aware of the decisions that have been made with St. John's staff regarding wedding arrangements.

Church Facilities -- The main church seats up to 500 people, and the chapel (the south transept) seats up to 30. The main church aisle is 75 feet long, with 22 pews on each side. The organ and piano are used for chapel weddings as well as church weddings. The church hall may be rented for your stand up reception for a maximum of 200 people. Ordinarily the church and chapel are not available to rent for non-parish weddings.

No food or drink are allowed at anytime in the church building.

Parking -- Parking for weddings is available in the church lot behind the church, along the south side of Nanton Avenue and along Cartier Street. People attending weddings are asked not to obstruct driveways and lanes in the area. Residents have the right to tow. Please note, due to the traffic on Granville Street, the curved driveway off Nanton Avenue is the most suitable for the wedding party's cars.

Keys -- Keys to the buildings are not ordinarily given out. If you give us advance notice, we will see that the church is unlocked for florists and other authorized persons. Just speak to the weddings co-ordinator to make arrangements.

Church Decorations -- Please discuss church decorations with the weddings co-ordinator at least six weeks before your wedding. No decorations on the signing table, thank you. Plans for unusual or elaborate flower arrangements or other decorations must be reviewed and approved in advance by the weddings co-ordinator. Decorations we can provide include pew candles and special candelabra. We do not allow Unity candles, memorial candles, or the lighting of candles by anyone but our Verger. We do not have the facility to provide flowers. Please note that our seasonal decorations take precedence over wedding decorations. Also note that the communion rail may not be decorated. We normally do not allow decorating during the day on Friday. Any decorating done on a Friday evening must be completed by 9 pm. Wedding decorations must be removed within one hour of the completion of the ceremony. No Confetti, Please -- In consideration of the church property, the wedding couple is responsible to ensure that guests are aware that no confetti, rice, flower petals, bubbles or birdseed are to be used either in or about the church facilities. The wedding couple will be charged a clean up fee if this requirement is disregarded.

Photographs and Video -- Photographs and video are a welcome way to preserve special memories of your wedding. As the wedding service is a church service, it is required that no flash lighting be used during the wedding ceremony by guests, or by professional photographers, videographers or others. Pictures may be taken at the signing of the Register, and as the bride and groom walk down the main aisle before and after the service. All photographers and videographers are asked to be discreet and not to obstruct the view of the congregation. They must speak to the Verger before the service to receive instruction. Refusal to follow directions of the Verger may result in the prohibition of further photographing. All cell phones should be left at home or turned off.

Service Bulletins -- Some couples want to provide a service bulletin for those who attend their wedding. Speak to the weddings co-ordinator to see some examples. Please note that St. John's does not provide service bulletins. We need to have a copy of the service bulletin one week prior to the wedding so please be sure that they are printed by that time.

16. Invitations

Please do not have your invitations printed until the date and time of your wedding have been finally confirmed by the St. John's weddings co-ordinator, and in case of those who have been divorced, permission to be married has been granted by the Bishop. The suggested form for the address of the church is:

St. John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church,
4310 Granville Street.
Vancouver, British Columbia

17. Costs

In addition to use of the church facilities, St. John's provides the services of a number of people to ensure the highest standard of wedding ministry -- a minister, organist, verger, marriage preparation instructors and other support staff. To offset these costs, the fee schedule for weddings is --

Parish wedding \$600 all-inclusive.

If, due to extraordinary circumstances, the church is used for non-parish Anglican weddings, the fee is \$750. You will need to take care of musicians' fees, clergy honoraria and other arrangements on your own.

A non-refundable \$100 deposit is requested for all weddings at the time we confirm your reservation. Please arrange payment of the balance with the church office fourteen days prior to the rehearsal. All cheques should be made out to "St. John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church". If these fees represent a serious hardship for you, please discuss your situation with the minister doing your wedding. No church member will be turned away on account of an inability to pay.

Late arrivals of the wedding party on the wedding day of up to 30 minutes may incur additional costs for the verger, the organist, and the minister. If the wedding is delayed more than 40 minutes, without good reason, the wedding may be cancelled.

18. Questions? Comments?

After reading these guidelines, please speak to the weddings co-ordinator or the officiating minister if you have any questions or comments.