

We at St. John's Church are pleased to share in the joyous event of your wedding. In the Episcopal Church, the rite of marriage is a sacred event and requires the use of the Episcopal order of service for the celebration and blessing of marriage, as printed in the Book of Common Prayer, or the use of a very similar service.

- Wedding Policy -

Parishioners who have been attending St. John's for a minimum of six months are welcome to have their wedding in the church.

Pre-marital counseling sessions are required with the clergy here for all couples prior to their wedding.

Weddings are not scheduled during Lent and Advent and weddings are not scheduled on Sundays.

If either the bride or the groom has been divorced, it is necessary to receive the approval of the bishop for the officiating clergy to perform the marriage ceremony. This procedure is done in consultation with the clergy and an additional 30 days may be necessary for the bishop to consider the request.

- Wedding Coordinators -

Contact:

Wendy Cote 207-748-3430
 kennebus@comcast.net
 22 Old Cottage Ln., Eliot, Me 03903

Sandra Pagel 603-379-2377
 Sandra_pagel@msn.com
 10 West Rd., Rye, NH 03870

Our wedding coordinators will offer the hospitality of the parish to you by answering questions regarding the use of the church, flowers, candles, photograph, and wedding customs at St. John's. A wedding coordinator will be present at your rehearsal and on your wedding day to assist you and oversee the details of the ceremony, placement of flowers and photography and video graphing etiquette.

- Preparation -

1. Contact one of the coordinators. All pertinent information about time and date, bride's and groom's contact information must be obtained. At this time the schedule of fees will be discussed.

* We ask that all appropriate checks be made out separately as noted below. All checks should be mailed to your wedding coordinator one month prior to the date of the wedding.

Services Rendered	Made Payable to:	Standard fee or donation
Clergy	The Rev. Robert E. Stevens, Jr. The Rev. Jeffrey D. Thornberg The Rev. Dr. G. Richard Siener	Suggested Donation (usually between \$300-500)
Sexton	David Lajoie (<i>please write 'Sexton Fee' in memo</i>)	fee \$100.00
Altar Guild	St. John's Altar Guild Bertha Rocray 207-363-4803	Suggested Donation \$50.00
Organist	Dr. Abbey Hallberg Siegfried 603-743-1440	fee \$300.00 With Soloists add \$25.00 Additional rehearsals with Soloists or other musicians \$65.00 each
Wedding Coordinator	Either Wendy Cote or Sandra Pagel depending on who you worked with	fee \$100.00

2. The coordinator will confirm date and time with the church office and the priest.
3. After confirmation of date and time, the wedding coordinator will contact and secure the director of music ministries.
4. When confirmation of date and time has been secured with the priest, church office and music director, the coordinator will be in touch with the bride and groom.
5. The priest will be in touch with you to set up the premarital counseling sessions. The Episcopal Church requires that 30 days notice be given before the proposed date of the marriage. It is also required that the couple arrange for premarital counseling with the clergy regarding "the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony."
 This may be a time for clergy to answer questions regarding the wedding service but our intension is to spend most of this time together discussing marriage. Normally this takes three or more sessions.
6. You will want to discuss your music for your wedding with the music director Dr. Abbey Hallberg Siegfried. She can be contacted at musicdirector@stjohnsnh.org. The guiding principle for all church music, including your wedding, is Soli Deo Gloria - only to the Glory of God. The organist and priest must be satisfied that music suggested by the couple is appropriate and all instrumentalist or soloists are competent to perform.
 Taped music, recordings and most popular music are more fitting for the reception than the ceremony.

- The Essentials of a Christian Wedding -

- * The desire to seek God's blessing upon your marriage
- * Counseling with the priest
- * A civil license
- * Two witnesses to the ceremony; one must be a baptized Christian

- The Wedding Day -

The Marriage Service

The marriage service is a sacramental act of worship. Everything that takes place in the church, from clothes to music to photography and videotaping needs to enhance the sense of God's presence and our unique place as his people. (St John's maximum seating capacity is 500 people).

Flowers and Candles

Only fresh flowers are to be placed at the altar (please no carnations). Flower arrangements are to be placed on the retable (the narrow shelf behind the altar). They must never be taller than the Cross. If candelabra is to be used, the Altar Guild must be consulted about the size of the floral arrangement.

Silver seven-branch candelabra, and/or white seven-branch candelabra are available for use. Tape or tacks may not be used to secure bows or florals on the pews.

White Aisle Runner

A florist's white aisle runner may be used. This is the responsibility of the florist and he/she must install and uninstall it.

Holy Communion

Anyone baptized in the Christian faith is welcome to receive Holy Communion at St. John's Episcopal Church. If the wedding ceremony is celebrated within a Service of Holy Communion, all guests will be invited to come forward to receive communion or a blessing.

Photographs, Rice, Old Shoes, and Tin Cans

Many customs surround weddings, but are not part of a marriage service in the church. These are best saved for the reception. Nothing (rice, birdseed, paper, rose petals, balloons, bubbles, butterflies, etc.) may be thrown, scattered or released on the church premises, either inside or out. Any décor (florals, etc.) must be removed from the chapel, grounds and streets immediately following the wedding. Please be sure to appoint someone to be responsible for this task.

Photography may be taken, however **FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY IS NOT PERMITTED DURING THE CEREMONY**. Photos, without flash, may be taken from the balcony during the service. These same conventions apply to "dear old Uncle Henry" who insists on taking candid shots during the wedding ceremony. The dignity and purpose of a worship service can quickly be disrupted when there are flashes from cameras, and photographers unsuccessfully attempt to move about the church without disturbing those present. It is permissible to set up a video camera in the balcony, and have it operate throughout the service. Auxiliary lighting **MAY NOT** be used for video cameras.

After the service you will have 45 minutes for photographs with the wedding party reassembling after guests have left.

*Wedding photographers and videographers must be in contact with the coordinator prior to the service.

– The Rehearsal –

Rehearsal of the wedding is entirely under the direction of the priest and the wedding coordinator. It is understood that rehearsals start promptly at the designated hour to avoid delay and in consideration of the parish staff. The organist does not attend the rehearsal. Only members of the wedding party need be present for the rehearsal; helping the rehearsal

proceed in an orderly and uninterrupted fashion. Generally plan on one hour for the rehearsal. Please impress upon members of the wedding party the importance of being on time for the rehearsal.

Adhering to Scheduled times

*To insure that your wedding party and guests arrive on time at the rehearsal and wedding, we recommend that you provide a map or precise directions to the church. Be aware that traffic in summer months can be heavy.

*Rehearsal: the bridal party has access to the church ½ hour before and 1 hour after the scheduled rehearsal time.

*Wedding: the bridal party has access to the church for 1 hour before and 45 minutes after the scheduled wedding time.

Church Visits

The church is generally open daily to the public from 10AM to 4PM. Contact the coordinator for assistance.

If you need to change the time of the rehearsal or wedding, you must contact your church wedding coordinator for approval.

The Reception

Thaxter Hall and The Philbrick Room (next door to the church) are available for receptions if you choose. No alcoholic beverages are served on church property. The rental cost of these rooms are available from your church wedding coordinator upon request.

License

Arrangements for the marriage license should be made with the County Clerk well in advance of the ceremony. Law requires that a marriage license may not be executed within seventy-two (72) hours of its issuance. The license should be given to the priest (or clergy) at the time of the rehearsal. It is the responsibility of the clergy to complete it and return it to the county.

Dressing Areas

There is a room available in which the bride and her attendants may dress before the wedding. If you plan to have more than four attendants, please let the wedding coordinator know so that additional dressing rooms can be available. The groom and groomsmen need to arrive in their wedding attire since there are no rooms set aside for this purpose.

Since St. John's has a policy requiring any engaged couples to be members of the Parish for six months before wedding plans can be discussed, many people will inquire about other options. **St. Andrew's-by-the-Sea**: a summer chapel that does many weddings. They have no office, only a wedding contact person. Wedding Contact: Kathy Smith (603)964-6424

Additional Concerns

Portsmouth streets are very busy, particularly during tourist season, June through October. St. John's is located on a blind corner at the top of Church Hill, and it can be dangerous for pedestrians to cross Chapel Street. If your wedding falls within this time frame, we highly recommend that you contact the Portsmouth Police Department (427-1500) to hire an auxiliary officer for traffic control to insure the safety of your guests while entering and exiting the church.



Wedding Services

at



St. John's Episcopal Church

101 Chapel Street
Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603)436-8283

www.stjohnsnh.org

