

ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

432 Van Buren St.

Herndon, Va. 20170-5199

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CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE INFORMATION AND POLICIES

We believe marriage is intended by God to be a life-long union of two people who love each other. The marriage covenant is for their mutual joy, for their spiritual growth and fellowship, for the procreation of children (when it is God's will), and for the child/children's physical and spiritual nurture. We are, therefore, happy to assist adults who want to enter into a marriage covenant. All marriages must be approved by one of our priests; dates for marriages must be approved by the Parish Administrator. Ceremonies are conducted in the Church or outdoor Chapel. Fees do apply for weddings at other locations.

Accordingly, at least one of the couple must be a member in good standing of St. Timothy's (a Baptized, Confirmed communicant, regularly attending and pledging) for a minimum of six months prior to the wedding date. We believe that the marriage ceremony is Sacramental; it is an event in which the Spirit of God is truly present. Even so, approximately half of all marriages end in divorce, and many others fail. For this reason we urge both couples to become committed members of the Church, to draw upon the grace of God and the support of the Christian community.

The Canons of the Episcopal Church require:

- (1). that at least one of the couple be a Baptized member. But we urge both to worship regularly in, and pledge to the Church.
- (2). that all couples participate in four marriage preparation meetings with one of our clergy or a professional counselor. Arrangements can be made directly with one of the Priests at least three months before the marriage ceremony.
- (3). that if either of the couple have been married before, the divorce must have been final at least one year. The Priest must see a copy of the divorce decree(s) at the first meeting with the couple.

Other conditions of St. Timothy's include:

- (1). Donations to our mission and ministry are always welcome, but there are no fees for being married in St. Timothy's. However, time (\$50.00/hour of travel) and travel fees (\$0.75/mile) do apply if the rehearsal and ceremony are at another location. Parish staff and volunteers give approximately 50 hours total for each wedding in the Church. Each

ceremony, whether grand or simple, requires a lot of additional time from the Priest, the Music Director, the Parish Administrator, the Altar and Flower Guild, and the Sexton. Donations vary a great deal, but a usual amount is \$500.00 for the priest's discretionary fund and \$500.00 for the Church. All donations are accepted in confidence and contribute to the greater ministry of the Church.

(2). All music is coordinated with and conducted by our Music Director. The fee for our Music Director/Organist is \$250.00 (whether he plays or not), to be paid no later than one week prior to the wedding. A non-refundable \$50.00 deposit is required in advance. If the Organist must attend the rehearsal, that is an additional \$50.00 per hour. Preparation with an instrumentalist or soloist is an additional \$50.00. If the wedding starts up to 30 minutes late there is an additional \$25.00. The couple must contact Peter Waggoner at 703-437-3790 (peterw@saint-timothys.org) immediately after arranging the first meeting with the Priest. The Organist has final authority on all music selections. Only sacred music will be used in the ceremony.

(3). The marriage license is obtained from the Clerk of the Court by the couple. It may be given to the Priest at anytime, but no later than the rehearsal. For more information, log onto http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/courts/circuit/marriage_license_info.htm.

(4). The couple must coordinate all decorations with a member of the Altar Guild, and all other aspects of the ceremony with the Priest. Flower arrangements may be similar to what is normally used in the Church on a Sunday; one or two arrangements are customary. Bows and/or flowers may be placed along the center aisle on the pew ends. No other decorations are allowed in the Chancel or on the Communion rail. A Marriage Coordinator will be assigned to help you with the ceremony. For reasons of safety and liability we do not permit the use of a "runner" for the center aisle, nor do we allow the use of rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals, bubble blowers, or any such material. Bells are a nice alternative. We ask those who attend any service in the Church to understand and respect our belief that the Sanctuary is a sacred space; nothing is to be moved or treated in a casual fashion. The service must be in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer. One of our Marriage Coordinators will be present during the rehearsal and service to assist the bride and her attendants. You do not need to hire a professional wedding/bridal consultant to coordinate the service.

(5). A Rehearsal is required (usually the evening before the wedding). All who are participating directly in the service must attend the rehearsal. The rehearsal will last approximately one hour. The couple must arrange the time of the rehearsal with the Priest.

(6). We do not allow photographs during the service (except by the designated photographer). The photographer is permitted to take flash photographs during the procession, available-light photographs and videos during the ceremony from specifically designated places in the Sanctuary. Photographers must meet with the Priest before the ceremony for briefing on our rules. Posed flash photographs are permitted before and after the service.

(7). Couples wanting to use our parish hall for a reception must make arrangements with the Parish Administrator in the Church office as soon as possible after the initial contact with the Priest. The Church office number is 703-437-3790 (email is office@saint-timothys.org). There is a fee for the use of this facility. Moderate amounts of alcoholic beverages may be served only to adults (beer, wine, or champagne only). However, an equal variety of non-alcoholic beverages must also be offered. Alcoholic punches must be clearly labeled. Intoxication on Church property is strictly forbidden. All cleaning is the responsibility of the couple or those they designate. A fee of \$200.00 is due before the rehearsal to cover the cost of cleaning the room. Any damages or leftover mess are the responsibility of the couple. The building will be inspected after the reception.

(8). We do not have Weddings on Sundays, during the season of Lent (the fifty days between Ash Wednesday and Easter), in Advent (four weeks before Christmas), or Christmastide (two weeks after Christmas).

(9). Valuables (i.e., purses) should be locked in our office before the ceremony, or carried by the owner.

We want your wedding to be the start of a wonderful and joyful marriage. We do our best to preserve the spiritual dignity of all covenant celebrations. We hope these guidelines will assist you in your preparations. If you have any questions, please contact the Rector or Associate Rector.

God bless you!