Wedding Policy at St. Michael's Church



You are now embarking on the most magnificent journey of your earthly life. The Sacrament of marriage is a most powerful and life changing event. Not only is it an event, it is a brand new way of life! In the marriage service, we are reminded that the union of husband and wife in heart, body and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Therefore, marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God.

What is Marriage?

Holy Matrimony is that sacrament in which the woman and man enter into a life-long union, make their vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows.

Notice in the vows it does not say, *I take you to be my wife, to have and to hold…* It says, ***In the Name of God**, I take you to be my wife to have and to hold!*

Therefore, marriage is about making a vow to God, before you make a vow to your fiancée, which makes our pre-marital ministry so important in your walk to marriage.

So, what is required of you?

Marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, and deliberately. You will say these vows when you exchange rings, *I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.* The stakes in marriage are high. The Canons of the Anglican Church require pre-marital instruction for couples to be married.

We at St. Michael's rejoice with you at this special time and look forward to assisting you in planning a Christ-centered marriage and wedding service. Because the service is conducted in a church, it should reflect the glory and honor due Him. It is a sacred service. It is never bride or groom centered, but always Christ-centered.

Your first step toward a St. Michael's wedding is for both the bride and groom to make an appointment with the Rector or one of the clergy team of St. Michael's Church where we will discuss the pre-marital ministry. To do that, simply call Susan Waring, the St. Michael's wedding coordinator at 843-724-7568. She will direct you.

Planning a wedding is a complex process. For this reason, the church will only discuss and take direction for wedding plans from the <u>bride or groom.</u>

Before making any wedding plans for a service in St. Michael's Church, the couple must have a preliminary interview with either the Rector or one of the other members of the clergy team.

When can I set the date?

The couple is expected to contact the office at least six months prior to their proposed wedding day, before any other steps are finalized. The initial meeting must take place before the wedding date is set. As a matter of policy, weddings are not scheduled on Sundays, weekends of Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Pentecost Sunday, Thanksgiving Eve

& Day, Christmas Eve & Day, New Year's Eve & Day. Friday weddings must be cleared with the officiating priest. In some cases, after initial consultation with St. Michael's clergy, arrangements may be made for a couple residing out of state to receive counseling from clergy in the community where they live.

Saturday weddings are planned to start no later than 8:00 pm. The ceremony is approximately half an hour in length without communion. The buildings are only available two hours prior to the start of the wedding. A member of our property staff will be in the buildings during this time for your assistance.

Can I write my own vows?

The marriage rite of Holy Matrimony is not only a witness to a covenant of life-long union of fidelity and love, but also God's benediction upon that covenant; therefore, the rite should be conducted in the church. Neither the priest nor the couple is free to alter the service beyond the permissible options as found within the Book of Common Prayer, which do not allow for writing one's own vows.

What about music?

Once pre-marital instruction has begun and a date set, contact Matthew Wilkinson, the St. Michael's Organist & Choirmaster 843.724.7574, matthew@stmichaelschurch.net, three-four months prior to your wedding date to plan music for the service. Since the wedding is a worship service, only Christ-centered music is to be used. The clergy have the final say on all music sung or played. The Organist can answer most of your questions when you have your initial meeting. A sample CD is available, containing organ selections that can enhance your wedding service. It is entirely the Organist's prerogative to play for all weddings at St. Michael's.

The Organist should be consulted prior to any contact involving soloists or musicians who might be asked to participate. The Organist must approve any instrumentalists and/or soloists prior to confirming the date of performance. Vocal soloists and other musicians may participate under the direction of St. Michael's Organist, who will provide appropriate organ and congregational music and will advise the Rector or one of the clergy team as to the suitability of music suggested by the couple. The use of recorded music is not allowed.

Can we have the Tower Bells ring?

Yes, every wedding at St. Michael's culminates with the ringing of the tower bells as the couple exits the church following the wedding ceremony.

Do you have any assistance on the day of the wedding?

Angela Stanley, a St. Michael's staff member, is assigned to your wedding who knows St. Michael's facilities, where to find things, where the men and women can dress, what to do in an emergency, and the policies which the church has asked her to enforce. It is her job to explain and execute church wedding policies to the couple, to solve any last minute glitches on the day of the wedding. She is experienced in handling many weddings and is a valuable resource in regard to policies and traditional procedures. She will help your wedding run smoothly and worry-free.

Do you have a Wedding Consultant?

No, St. Michael's does not provide a wedding consultant. A wedding consultant is a trained professional hired by the couple to assist in making plans. They need to be aware of all policies of St. Michael's Church and cooperate with St. Michael's Wedding & Flower Guild. It is important to understand that the responsibilities of the Wedding Guild and Wedding Consultant are different.

What are the Marriage License requirements in South Carolina?

Marriage license requirements in the State of South Carolina, go to...

http://www.sciway.net/facts/marriagelicense.html

The South Carolina marriage license should be obtained from any state marriage license office well in advance of the proposed wedding. Couples must apply together. There is a 24-hour waiting period before the license may be picked up. Licenses must be obtained with adequate time for it to be brought to the wedding rehearsal. All three copies must be brought to the rehearsal.

FLOWERS & DECORATIONS

Hangings

The church provides white silk damask hangings on the altar, reading desk, and pulpit for weddings. No other hangings may be used.

Flowers

Floral arrangements add beauty and a festive atmosphere for this day. The St. Michael's Flower Guild will order, arrange, and place the flowers on the altar and in the center narthex. Only the two brass church vases may be used on the altar. No other arrangements may be added in the church. One ribbon-type bouquet arrangement may be placed on pews to mark family seating areas. These bouquets must be tied on the pews with no external material used to hold them in place. The Flower Guild does not provide these ribbon bouquet arrangements.

The Flower Guild requires the bride to return **its** flower request form no later than **six weeks** prior to the wedding. Additional charges of $500 may be added to the Church Use Fee if Pedestal arrangements are requested.

Flowers used on the altar for weddings will be left in the church for the regular Sunday services. Proper recognition will be given in the Sunday service bulletins if requested (Contact Susan Waring at susan@stmichaelschurch.net) Wedding flowers may not be used to decorate a reception hall or home.

Candles

The two regular branched candelabra used behind the altar are the only ones used for weddings, unless there is to be a celebration of Holy Communion at the wedding. In the instance of Holy Communion, the Eucharistic altar candles are also used. No other candles, mechanical or flame, may be used anywhere in the church.

Cushions

A needlepoint kneeling cushion will be provided for the bride and groom to kneel at the altar rail.

Aisle Cloth

If an aisle cloth is desired, make arrangements with your florist. Cloth should be at least 75 feet long, taped at the altar rail step, and arranged fold-on-fold or on a small roller. Note: Aisle cloths occasionally cause members of the wedding party to trip and are thus not recommended.

Decorations that are not allowed

No Wreaths, sashes, drapery, candle lanterns, floral arches. Nails, tape, or any type of damaging adhesive is prohibited. The clergy and flower guild chair have the authority to refuse any excessive decorations.

What's required to prepare for the actual service?

The officiating priest, organist, and a member of the St. Michael's staff meet with the bride and groom and members of the wedding party for a rehearsal the evening prior to the wedding. Rehearsals are scheduled for 5:00 pm. It will take approximately one hour. The rehearsal is an important part of preparation for your wedding. It helps participants better understand the events to take place during their wedding and also remove some of the nervousness of the day so you can enjoy your wedding. Please be prompt. The officiating priest will conduct the rehearsal and arrange placement of all participants. Please bring the Marriage License, Clergy Honorarium and Bulletins (if printed outside St. Michael's) to the rehearsal!

Before the rehearsal, determine where you would like family members and close friends to be seated. In addition, decide which family members (traditionally, mothers and grandmothers) will be escorted to their pews after the general seating ends and just before the procession begins. Assign a groomsman to escort each of the mothers and grandmothers in before the wedding and out at the conclusion of the service.

The use of very young children as flower girls or ring bearers often seems like a good idea, but frequently proves to be a problem, with children refusing to perform as required. Be sure the children you invite to participate are able to do their part. Please have them sit with an adult once they have processed.

What about photographs and photographers?

Photos can be taken before the ceremony. Within the church, photos must be completed 30 minutes before the ceremony is to begin. No still photography (with or without flash) is allowed inside the church once the wedding procession has begun. Photographers are not to go up and down the aisle during the Processional or Recessional. A photographer may stand in the vestibule and take pictures as the bride and groom process out of the church. Videotaping from the gallery is permitted, provided the camera operator does not attempt to move about during the service. It is the responsibility of the couple to inform professional photographers of these policies, and advise family members not to take photos during the service. The wedding party may be posed in the church after the service. No still photographs or video access will be available for the bride and groom in the church steeple at any time.

MISCELLANEOUS

Dressing Room

Normally, members of the wedding party will find it more convenient to dress at home. If desired, different rooms can be provided for the female wedding party members in the Laura Hewitt Building and the male wedding party members in the Belser Building. Other rooms are not to be used.

Alcoholic Beverages

Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the property.

Holy Communion

Holy Communion may be celebrated as part of the wedding service. If Communion is desired, please discuss this with the officiating priest during premarital instruction. When Communion is celebrated, it is open to the whole congregation.

Note:

No items are to be thrown or dropped anywhere on the church property. This includes, but is not limited to, rice, birdseed, flower petals (real or artificial), bubbles, confetti, balloons, doves or the like. Sword arches are permitted during the recessional following the wedding. Please alert the staff well in advance if there will be handicap accessibility required. Pets are not permitted to participate in the wedding ceremony in any fashion. Such acts of God including but not limited to hurricane, earthquake, fire, tornado, flooding... St. Michael's reserves the right to cancel or re-schedule functions.

What if one of us has been previously married?

The Canons of the Anglican Church make provision for marriage of divorced persons after counseling with the parish clergy and with the written consent of the bishop. In every case, a divorce must have been final for one year prior to application to the bishop. The minimum time required for counseling is six (6) months. The bishop requires 30 days to consider the application. The Bishop will not consider an application for a third marriage involving two prior divorces. Holy Matrimony is understood by the Anglican Church to be a lifelong union of husband and wife. The provision for remarriage after divorce is based on God's promise of grace and forgiveness to those whose sins are confessed and repented.

Can other clergy assist?

If the assistance of a minister other than a member of St. Michael's staff is desired, please inform the officiating priest during premarital instruction. Non-Anglican ministers and Anglican/Episcopal clergy from outside the Diocese of South Carolina must receive approval from our bishop.

A deposit of $1,000 (member)/$2,000 (nonmember) is due when the date is set for the wedding. The balance is payable to St. Michael's Church no later than thirty (30) days prior to the wedding. Should the wedding be cancelled within two weeks of the wedding date, 50% will be refunded. After that time there will be no refunds paid.

Inclusive Church Use Fee

Member $2,800.00

Includes:

- Organist/Choirmaster consultation
- Organist at rehearsal and wedding
- Bell ringers for wedding
- Sexton for rehearsal and wedding
- Flowers (Altar and Narthex only)
- Service Bulletin (single sheet, double-sided and folded, 300 copies)
- Wedding Preparation Kit for pre-marital counseling

Non Member $5,000.00

Includes:

- Church Use Fee
- Organist/Choirmaster consultation
- Organist at rehearsal and wedding
- Bell ringers for wedding
- Sexton for rehearsal and wedding
- Flowers (Altar and Narthex only)
- Service Bulletin (single sheet, double-sided and folded, 300 copies)
- Wedding Preparation Kit for pre-marital counseling

Parish Hall Use Fee (optional)

Member	$750.00
Non Member	$1,500.00
Housekeeper	$200
Sexton	$200

Payable to Individuals

Clergy Honorarium	$500.00
Vocal Soloist(s)	Starting at $150.00
Instumentalist(s)	Starting at $75.00

Clergy Honorarium is traditionally the responsibility of the groom. It may be mailed with other payment for church fees prior to the wedding, or may be given to the officiating priest at the rehearsal.

If using instrumentalist or soloists, separate checks are required for their payment. Their names will be provided by the Organist, and separate checks for these individuals should be given to the Organist at the rehearsal to pay the individuals the day of the wedding.

SERVICE BULLETIN

If you choose to have your service bulletin printed by St. Michael's, you will need to meet with the Director of Communications (publications@stmichaelschurch.net) to go over the bulletin and decide what information will be included.

The deadline for bulletin information is three weeks prior to the wedding.

The bulletin is a standard template for all weddings. It is black ink, 8.5" X 14", cream 60lb paper, double-sided, and folded in half. Your fee includes having 300 bulletins printed.

If you wish to outsource your bulletin to another printer, we will be happy to e-mail a text file of what needs to be in the bulletin. Either way, the bulletin must be approved by the priest officiating the wedding before going to press.

Should you choose to produce your own bulletin, please make sure the following wording is included, "For the sake of reverence and because this is a worship service, no still photography with or without a flash is permitted."

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH
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