

1 – WEDDING INQUIRY & APPROVAL

Overview

Christians hold marriage in very high regard. The Book of Alternative Services summarizes it like this: “Marriage is a gift of God and a means of God’s grace. It is a way of life that all should reverence, and none should lightly undertake.” At St. John's, marriage preparation is open to people at all stages of their spiritual journey – all really are welcome! If you are already married and are seeking a Christian blessing for your marriage, we would be pleased to support you in this endeavour.

Who gets married at St. John’s?

At St. John's we are committed to ensuring the highest quality of care for the couples married here. We invest time and energy in every wedding we conduct. Of course, our resources are not unlimited. For this reason, we perform weddings primarily for members of the parish and couples who indicate a desire to become members of the parish. If you are not a member currently, but are interested, we would love to help you.

If you are interested in exploring being married at St. John's, please contact Fr. Simon Li at simonli.toronto@gmail.com or Fr. Jordan Wellington at revjordanwellington@gmail.com

2 – WEDDING PREPARATION

Like any journey of great significance, the road to your Wedding day takes time. Practically speaking, you will want to plan ahead to allow 9-12 months for the following steps to unfold:

Start the Conversation: A great first step is to book an appointment to meet with, Fr. Simon Li or Fr. Jordan Wellington to have a conversation about your Wedding. We look forward to speaking with you!

Find a Rhythm of Worship: Joining our wider community for weekly worship will give you a clearer sense of whether you would like to be a part of our church family, be strengthened and encouraged in your faith, and be better equipped to live out your everyday life as someone learning how to follow Jesus. Our experience and expectation is that worshipping with us regularly for 3 months helps form a solid basis for the promises you will make on your Wedding day. St. John's church offers services in English and Cantonese. Check out our website for times to see which service fits your needs.

Strengthen your Relationship: “Your wedding is one day – your marriage is a lifetime.” We want all couples married at St. John's to have the strongest possible marriage. To help you achieve this goal, we require you to participate in our Marriage Course. It is a six-evening course, which includes dessert, wine, coffee, and tea, and helps you not only to grow into what a Christian marriage entails, but also to flourish as a couple. During this time, you will have the opportunity as a couple to discuss everything from communication to sex to spiritual concerns.

3 – LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND BOOKING

Legal Requirements

You are required to obtain a Marriage License through City Hall using the identification which they require. It is valid for 90 days. If you are to be married at St. John's, this license must be in the St. John's Church Office, at

least 4 weeks before the wedding service along with other applicable fees. If you are to be married in a location other than St. John's, special arrangements and fees will be discussed accordingly.

Divorce and Remarriage

If either of you has been divorced, attention will be given to your special pastoral needs. Permission for remarriage in the Anglican Church must be obtained from the Incumbent (Senior Priest) of the parish. An Application for Divorce and Remarriage form is available for you to complete, which will enable you to discuss the circumstances of your divorce with our Incumbent who will decide about your application. This procedure takes a minimum of 3 months and also requires completion of Marriage Preparation.

Booking the Date and Time of Your Wedding

Choosing the right day and time for your wedding is an important detail. To allow for photographs, clean-up and set-up, at least three hours must be allowed between weddings and there will be a maximum of two weddings on any given day. The space chosen for your wedding will be reserved for three hours – 1-hour prior for setup, 1 hour for the ceremony and 1-hour post ceremony to allow for cleanup. Weddings are not performed during the week before Easter, the month of December, and Sunday's. Six months' notice is required to schedule a wedding. Date and time slots are filled only upon confirmation of commitment and on a first-come, first-served basis by arrangement with our Administrative Assistant, Esther Luk at sjac.willowdale@gmail.com

Wedding Receptions

We are not equipped to handle wedding receptions, and you must find an alternate venue for your wedding reception. The exception to this is if you wish to have a coffee & tea reception for less than 80 people. If you wish to discuss that option, please contact Fr. Simon Li. You are required to provide a licensed caterer, with staff to run your reception. No friends and family hosted events are permitted.

Invitations

Please do not have your invitations printed until the date and time of your wedding have been finally confirmed by St. John's, and, in the case of those who have been divorced, permission to be married has been granted by the Incumbent.

4 – YOUR WEDDING

Wedding Service Details

Participation by Other Clergy or Musicians: Ordinarily St. John's clergy perform all weddings here. We cannot guarantee that a specific clergy person will officiate at your wedding, but we can guarantee a minister will be assigned to support you, based on availability and the information you provide in your initial application. Participation by clergy or musicians from outside St. John's within the service is limited to a number of specific roles, subject to direction by the officiating minister. St. John's reserves the right to choose what participation is appropriate.

Wedding Music: Arrangements for the music are in the hands of the clergy of St. John's. As planning for your wedding evolves our clergy will put you in contact with our Director of 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 the church. Please note that the organist should be consulted at least four weeks before your wedding and prior to your making arrangements for soloists or other instrumentalists.

Wedding Programs: St. John's will help you prepare a wedding program based on The Book of Common Prayer and The Book of Alternative Services. Some couples want to provide a wedding program for those who attend their wedding. We are happy to help with planning and producing a simple bulletin for you. We are able to provide 250 black and white bulletins. Should you like to have colour bulletins or require more than 250, these are available at an additional cost by arrangement with Esther Luk.

Church Decoration: As part of our service to you, the flowers for the High Altar for the coming Sunday are coordinated with you as much as possible. You are welcome to bring in additional flower arrangements and pew decorations at your expense. These belong to you and must be taken with you for your Reception.

No Confetti, Please: In consideration of the church property, please ensure no confetti, rice, flower petals or birdseed is thrown either in or around the church facilities.

Photographs and Videos: Photographs and video are a welcome way to preserve special memories of your wedding. We must ask you, however, to remind your photographer and guests to respect this sacred space and the dignity of the service by not taking flash pictures during the actual ceremony. Guests may take photos during the Processional, Recessional, and the Signing of the Registers.

Wedding Rehearsal

It is very important for all wedding participants to feel as confident and well-prepared as possible during the service. For all formal weddings (with processional, recessional, etc.), a rehearsal is required. Please arrange this with the presiding minister. The rehearsal is usually about 60 minutes in length, and all members of the wedding party are asked to be present if possible.

Your Wedding Day

The ushers should arrive at the church 45 minutes before the service; the groom and best man, 30 minutes before. As a consideration for other weddings that may be scheduled after yours, the Bridal Party is to arrive 30 minutes early so the service can begin on time. Services starting more than a few minutes late may be postponed if the priest feels they will delay other weddings or events. Because of their many commitments, the clergy do not expect to be invited to your reception.

Official Marriage Certificate

As a memento of your wedding, a record of solemnization of Marriage is given to you by the officiating minister. Please note, however, that this is not an official legal certificate. Application for the official certificate should be obtained from the Province of Ontario after you have been married. This process is not done by St. John's and you are responsible to file all appropriate paper work should you so choose.

Questions and/or Comments?

As you plan your wedding, we are here to help in any way we can. After you have read these guidelines, we welcome your questions or comments. Once again - congratulations on your upcoming marriage!