

## HOLY MATRIMONY

---

*Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in the presence of God. In the Episcopal Church it is required that one, at least, of the parties must be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested by at least two witnesses; and that the marriage conform to the laws of the State and the canons of this Church.*

*Book of Common Prayer*

Holy Matrimony is a Sacrament, a means of grace by which God blesses those who come before Him in love to join in a sacred covenant. Weddings are first and foremost worship within the Christian community. The Church building at St. Mary's is one of simple dignity, something which we strive to maintain in every liturgy.

The guidelines that follow are designed to enhance your wedding. Please read the booklet before the first meeting with your priest. During that meeting there will be an opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

## WEDDINGS IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

---

Before making other arrangements please contact the Rector. He is responsible for approving all weddings and setting the date. According to Church canons, a minimum of thirty days notice must be given to the Rector prior to the wedding. Premarital preparation by the clergy is necessary.

At least one of the marriage partners must be baptized and an active member of St. Mary's or have appropriate ties to the parish.

Both partners must understand the sacrament of marriage as taught by the Episcopal Church. In witness thereof, they will sign the "Declaration of Intention" agreeing to enter into the covenant of marriage by making a life-long commitment to each other.

If either of the couple has been divorced, permission to marry must then be obtained from the Bishop of Olympia. A minimum of six months must pass after the divorce decree is granted before the Bishop will act upon the request. Our clergy will help you make this application to the Bishop.

A marriage license from the Clerk of Pierce County must be secured, no more than sixty days before the wedding, and, must be delivered to the presiding clergy member no less than one week prior to the wedding rehearsal. The Parish Administrator will type the marriage certificate that accompanies the license.

## WEDDINGS AT ST. MARY'S

---

### *The Clergy*

The Rector approves the scheduling of every wedding in this Parish. After a date is arranged, he will then assign the priest to officiate at the liturgy. Because of the significant amount of time necessary for preparing a couple for marriage, i.e., arrangements, premarital preparation, rehearsal, etc. Weddings are divided equally among our clergy.

### *Setting the Date and Time*

It is important for you to schedule your wedding with the church before you check on places for your reception. Scheduling is done with the Rector. Weddings may be scheduled throughout the year with these few exceptions:

#### **Holy Days and Seasons:**

Any Sunday  
Christmas Eve  
Twelve Days of Christmas  
Feast of the Epiphany  
Ash Wednesday  
Holy Week  
Easter Day  
Easter Week  
Feast of Pentecost

#### **National Holidays:**

New Year's Day  
President's Day  
Memorial Day  
Fourth of July  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Friday after Thanksgiving

We realize that choosing the date and time for your wedding is very important, but it is the clergy's hope that you will choose a Saturday between 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., with the rehearsal taking place the day or evening before. Since Sunday is always our primary day of worship, it is important our clergy be physically and spiritually refreshed and prepared for our Sunday Eucharist. They can best do this when they are not engaged in late Saturday evening occasions. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

### ***The Sacrament of Marriage***

Since matrimony is a Sacrament of the Church, all St. Mary's weddings take place in the church.

### ***The Prayer Book***

The wedding service for all marriages at Holy Comforter comes from the Book of Common Prayer. All aspects of the wedding conform to the Prayer Book and its rubrics, and the customary of the parish. A short homily will always be given.

The bride and groom may choose whether they wish to have the liturgy for the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage or whether they wish to include the Holy Eucharist as well. This decision can be discussed with the presiding clergy member.

### ***Preparation***

Pre-marital preparation is necessary and usually comprises three or four sessions. The theology, nature, meaning and purpose of Holy Matrimony are discussed and specific plans for your individual wedding are made.

### ***The Church***

Three hundred people can be seated comfortably in the nave of St. Mary's. If necessary, additional people can be seated on folding chairs at the back of the church, accommodating up to 350. The church does not have an aisle runner, but your florist should be able to provide one if desired. The runner extends from the front of the nave to the rear of the church. It is not placed in the sanctuary.

The church building will be open and available to members of the wedding party 1 ½ hours prior to the liturgy for gatherings, dressing, photography, etc.

### ***Service Bulletins or Programs***

The Parish does not prepare or provide wedding service bulletins or programs. If you wish to provide them, you may discuss arrangements with your priest. The bulletin will need to be reviewed by the priest for accuracy before being printed.

### ***The Wedding Party***

St. Mary's is a beautiful, dignified, small church. Because we do not have a chancel, please limit attendants to about five each for the bride and groom. A large wedding party will overwhelm the church and detract from the beauty of the worship service and from the bride and groom. Please limit attendants to close friends and/or family members. If you have additional friends and family members whom you would like to include in the service, we suggest that you invite them to be Scripture readers. Since a wedding is principally worship, we suggest that very young ring bearers or flower girls can detract from the solemnity.

### ***Music***

The Assistant Director of Music will coordinate and assist you with the selection of appropriate music for the Sacrament, will be the organist for all weddings at St. Mary's, and will be happy to make suggestions about additional musicians if you so desire. All additional musicians are secured by the Assistant Director of Music. Please make an appointment with the Assistant Director to discuss all musical arrangements.

### ***Flowers and Decorations***

Since flowers in the church are always meant to enhance worship and celebrate the glory of God we ask you to please limit flower arrangements within the church to one large arrangement on the shelf of the reredos behind the altar, a small one in front of the Statue of St. Mary and one in the narthex. Flowers are not placed on the altar itself, nor are stands of flowers used. Please use only St. Mary's vases for all of these arrangements so that the

proportions will enhance the beauty of the church and the ceremony. You may select a commercial florist to provide the church flowers. The commercial florist may also provide your bouquets, corsages, and boutonnieres. Arrangements are made directly with the commercial florist. You may alternately select our parish florist to provide the altar, narthex, and St. Mary's flowers. The parish florist does not provide bouquets, corsages, and boutonnieres. (If a runner is to be used on the aisle, it is provided through a commercial florist.)

The arrangements of flowers used at the altar, narthex, and Statue of St. Mary are given to the glory of God and therefore are not removed from the church following the wedding.

For Saturday weddings the flowers should be brought to the church between 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Please note that your florist is not to arrange flowers on site.

Simple bows may be attached to the pews (no tape or wire may be used to attach the bows), but no bows are to be attached to the floral arrangements themselves.

### ***Photography***

Photographs and videos are lovely mementos of a wedding, and you are welcome to take as many pictures as you wish before and after the liturgy. However, **no photographs, professional or amateur, may be taken during the wedding service itself.** This is to preserve the solemn nature of liturgy. When the liturgy is finished and the guests have left the church, you may return to take whatever pictures you wish.

Video taken from the back of the church is permitted; please talk with the rector prior to the rehearsal.

Photography equipment is to be stored in the room provided for that purpose and not in the Church proper.

Please do not let photography delay the appointed start of the wedding. The entire bridal party should be ready thirty minutes before the ceremony is to begin.

### ***The Rehearsal***

The rehearsal is to take place in the church, usually the day or evening before the wedding, and will last about one hour. All members of the wedding party should be present and prompt. Please arrange the exact time for the rehearsal with your priest.

### ***Receptions and Receiving Lines***

Preferably formal receptions are held elsewhere, and we encourage you to have your receiving line there. Beer and wine are only permitted at the reception if the reception is held on church property, otherwise, no alcohol is ever permitted on church property. The parish hall is available for use as a reception site but usage must be approved by the Vestry of the parish. Please secure a Facilities Use Application from the parish administrator or online at [www.holymotheroflakewood.org](http://www.holymotheroflakewood.org). For wedding receptions there is a \$1,000 facility use fee and a \$500 cleaning fee that are due one week prior to the wedding date. All monies are refundable up to 48 hours prior to the wedding. The fees are assessed regardless of parochial status. No Exceptions.

### ***Fees***

There is a fee of \$200 for the organist, which is to be paid directly to her. (*This does not include costs for additional musicians*). The fee increases to \$275 if the organist attends the rehearsal. There is also a \$100 cleaning fee and a \$150 fee for the Altar Guild made payable to St. Mary's. For non-pledging members there is an additional \$200 fee for use of the church. All fees are to be paid no less than one week prior to the wedding rehearsal.

### ***Parking***

St. Mary's offers parking in front of the church and also in the extra parking lot in the back. You are prohibited from parking in

the bank parking lot across the street but can park on the curb on both sides.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

---

One or more of the following passages may be selected:

Genesis 1:26-28 (*Male and female he created them*)

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24 (*A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh*)

Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7 (*Many waters cannot quench love*)

Tobit 8:5b-8 [*New English Bible*] (*That she and I may grow old together*)

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (*Love is patient and kind*)

Ephesians 3:14-19 (*The Father from whom every family is named*)

Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33 (*Walk in love, as Christ loved us*)

Colossians 3:12-17 (*Love which binds everything together in harmony*)

1 John 4:7-16 (*Let us love one another for love is of God*)

Between the Readings, a Psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said. Appropriate Psalms are 67, 127, and 128.

One Gospel reading is selected:

Matthew 5:1-10 (*The Beatitudes*)

Matthew 5:13-16 (*You are the light... Let your light so shine*)

Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (*Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock*)

Mark 10:6-9, 13-16 (*They are no longer two but one*)

John 15:9-12 (*Love one another as I have loved you*)