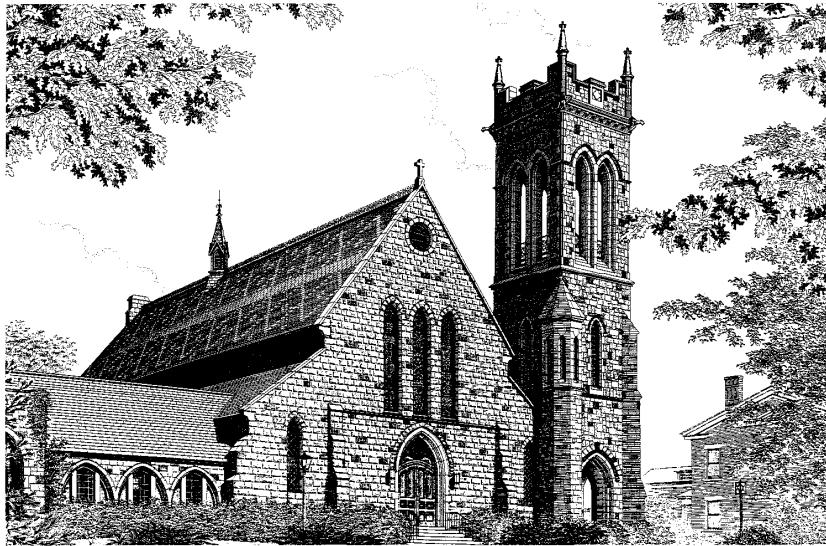


# *Preparing for Marriage*



**St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**  
**306 N. Division St.**  
**Ann Arbor, MI 48104**  
**(734) 663-0518**  
**Fax: (734) 663-1727**  
**Email: [office@standrewsaa.org](mailto:office@standrewsaa.org)**

The best secular understanding of marriage is that it is a celebration with friends and family of the coming together in love of two people. Marriage is also a legal contract sanctioned by the state (signified by the marriage license) which pertains to the rights and responsibilities of the parties involved. Legal marriage requires nothing more than that.

The Church incorporates the above understanding of marriage into a deeper spiritual meaning and context. The Church specifically emphasizes the sacramental significance of marriage; the conviction that marriage expresses God's grace by revealing the kind of intimate, loving and faithful relationship God desires with and for the human community.

The sacramental nature of marriage is realized in a lifelong, exclusive, unconditional relationship, which, as our Prayer Book states, "should not be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God."

Of the couple to be married, at least one must be a baptized Christian. It is highly desirable that, one of the couple be a member of St. Andrew's, a relative of a member, or seeking membership.

The date of the ceremony cannot be confirmed until consultation has been held with one of the clergy. The Episcopal Church requires thirty days notice before weddings. Under certain circumstances, the church permits the marriage of persons whose previous marriage has been terminated by annulment or divorce. Such marriages require the priest to consult with the Bishop of the diocese and to obtain the Bishop's consent. This consultation will require additional time beyond the usual thirty-day notification period.

Marriage preparation involves two or more sessions with the clergy person who is to officiate at the wedding. The couple normally will be expected to complete a computerized "couple inventory," designed to assist them in focusing, objectively on strength and growth areas of the relationship which will enable them to progress in a positive direction. The couple will be responsible for the cost of the test, (\$35) although the clergy may provide for part or all of the cost if need is indicated.

Generally, there are three aspects to the marriage preparation sessions: (1) an opportunity for the clergy to become acquainted with the couple and their relationship; (2) an opportunity for the couple to reflect on what each brings to the relationship in light of the Church's understanding of marriage; and (3) planning the marriage service itself. The clergy person may advise the couple to seek additional counseling with a therapist to help establish a sound relationship. On rare occasions such counseling may be made a condition of being married at St. Andrew's.

### *Music*

It is the responsibility of the parish's music director to provide for music that is appropriate to the liturgical setting of the wedding. All decisions regarding music and additional musicians or soloists must be made in consultation with the music director early in the preparation process. You may contact the parish office for a list of hymns and a list of suggested vocal [solo] music suitable for a wedding.

### *Setting Dates and Times*

The Parish Administrator schedules the date and time of a wedding and its rehearsal. Rehearsals involve all the participants, except musicians, and usually are scheduled for the evening before the wedding.

### *Flowers and Other Decorations*

The couple is responsible for arranging for flowers and other decorations after consulting with the Parish Administrator. We urge couples to consider the florist retained by the parish, *Tom Thompson Flowers* – 734-665-4222, since they are most familiar with our liturgical space. Typically, one arrangement is placed on the floor in front of the altar. Potted plants such as palms and ferns should not be used. It is customary for flowers to be left in the church for the following Sunday Eucharists.

Easily removable bows or small flowers may be tied to pew ends to designate seating. Usually only the altar candles are used, designating the Eucharist. Candles in hurricane lamps may be placed in the windows by the parish staff upon request. Due to safety considerations, aisle runners are not permitted.

Please remind your guests that rice, confetti and rose petals are extremely difficult to clean up and therefore are not allowed. The release of butterflies is not permitted. Bird and grass seeds are acceptable if tied up in bunches, distributed as people leave the church, and used only outside the buildings.

### *Arrival, Dressing, etc.*

The wedding attendant will open the buildings one hour before the scheduled time of the wedding, and will be available to help run final preparations smoothly. There will be an additional fee assessed for opening early. Separate dressing areas are available for the bride's party and the groom's party.

Neither smoking nor the consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted in the buildings at any time.

### *Photographs*

Please remember that a wedding is a service of worship, not a photo opportunity. The parish requests that professional photographers be limited to one still and/or one video photographer. Flash pictures and video lights are not permitted. Pictures or videos requiring the photographer to be visibly moving around during the service are not permitted. Posed pictures can be taken after the service. Please restrict indoor sessions to twenty minutes as the building will be locked. The clergy ask the courtesy of being consulted by photographers before the service. Please notify photographers, friends and family of these requests.

### *Programs*

If a couple wishes to have wedding programs it is their responsibility for preparing and printing them. The clergy will provide an outline of the program.

### *Receiving Line*

Arrange for the receiving line at the place of the reception, rather than at the church. It is inconsiderate to your guests who are left crowded in the aisle, and to the volunteers who have to ready the church for services following yours.

### *Parking*

Notify your guests in advance that special parking for weddings will be arranged in the “No Parking” area on the south side of Catherine St. between State and Division, and on Division between Catherine and Lawrence Streets. Notify the church office if anyone is ticketed while parked in these areas.

### *Fees*

Please bring the payment for wedding fees and the marriage license to the parish office no later than the Wednesday prior to the wedding. One check is made payable to St. Andrew’s Church and includes the fee for the wedding attendant as well as a small amount for the clergy’s discretionary fund. A second check for \$200.00 should be made payable to the organist, Deborah Friauff.

**Use of the Church for the Wedding**

**Pledging members:** **\$ 425.00**  
( $\$225 + \text{organist fee of } \$200$ )

**Non-pledging members** **\$ 675.00**  
( $\$475.00 + \text{organist fee of } \$200$ )

**Non- members** **\$ 1025.00**  
( $\$825.00 + \text{organist fee of } \$200$ )

**Use of the Chapel for the Wedding (Maximum of 50 guests)**

**Pledging members:** **\$ 425.00**  
( $\$225 + \text{organist fee of } \$200$ )

**Non-pledging members** **\$ 500.00**  
( $\$300.00 + \text{organist fee of } \$200$ )

**Non- members** **\$ 625.00**  
( $\$425.00 + \text{organist fee of } \$200$ )

The larger fee for those who are not pledging members of the parish includes a contribution toward the ministry of the parish.

*Deposits:*

One-half (1/2) of the fees are due within 30 days after the date is reserved

*Visiting Clergy:*

Clergy not on staff at St. Andrew's are welcome to take part in your wedding ceremony. Generally they would be invited to preach or lead the prayers. This should be discussed with the St. Andrew's clergy officiating at your wedding who will determine the exact role the visiting clergy will take. If there is an honorarium for, or expenses incurred by visiting clergy, those should be arranged between the couple and the visiting clergy. In certain cases, the permission of the Bishop of the Diocese of Michigan is required for visiting clergy. If such permission is needed, a member of the St. Andrew's clergy can advise you on that procedure.

*Suggested Hymns for the Wedding Ceremony*

Since the Wedding service is a religious one, it follows that all music used as an adornment to the liturgy should be sacred in nature or intent. A list of suggested hymns for the ceremony may be obtained by contacting the parish office, it is not intended to be comprehensive, rather it is hoped that these suggestions will give an idea of the general nature of hymnody most appropriate for a church service.