

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church

Wedding Policy

Christian Marriage is a solemn and public covenant in the presence of God. We understand the celebration of committed, life-long, faithful relationships as part of the Church's work of offering outward and visible signs of God's grace among us. We understand that blessing originates in God, the giver of every good gift. The Church participates in God's blessing of covenantal couples in three intertwined aspects: first, we thank God for the grace already discerned in the life of the couple; second, we ask God's continual favor so that the couple may manifest more fully the fruits of the Spirit in their lives; and third, we seek the empowerment of the Holy Spirit as the Church commissions the couple to bear witness to the gospel in the world.¹ The following guidelines are based on The Book of Common Prayer and Canons of The Episcopal Church. The Wedding Policy is to assist you as we celebrate and ask God to bless the marriage of a couple seeking that blessing.

The rector is in charge of all weddings celebrated at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church. The liturgy for the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage in The Book of Common Prayer (pages 423-432) or supplemental liturgies authorized by The Episcopal Church in *I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing* are the authorized liturgies for Christian marriage in The Episcopal Church, which includes scripture readings, prayers, and the exchange of vows. The service may also include a homily and celebration of Holy Eucharist, if so desired.

Those who intend to be married at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church are subject to the following: At least one member of the couple must be baptized. The authorized liturgies of the Episcopal Church must be used. A minimum of thirty (30) days notice of the marriage must be given as required by Canon Law. If one or both, members of the couple have been previously married this must be discussed with the rector during the first session. Premarital conversations are required. This includes three to six sessions with the rector and/or designated individuals approved by the rector.

The First Steps

The first step is to make an appointment with the rector who will approve all marriages at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church. If the marriage is approved to be held at St. Dunstan's, a date will be arranged. While Canon Law of the church requires at least thirty (30) days, it is advisable to make arrangements for a wedding as far in advance as possible. Please do not assume that the church and/or the clergy will be available for the date you have in mind. Please do not make any arrangements for your wedding until your wedding date has been approved by the rector. Marriages are not scheduled for the following days: New Year's Day, from Ash Wednesday until after Easter Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church reserves the right to schedule multiple weddings on the same day.

Participation of clergy from another church, denomination, or faith must be arranged with the rector during the first meeting. It is protocol for the rector to extend the invitation to the visiting clergy.

¹ Liturgical Resources 1: *I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing*. Church Publishing, 2015.

Music

Music Arrangements for the wedding music must be made with the organist of St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church. If St. Dunstan's organ is to be used, then St. Dunstan's organist is to be asked to play. Should our organist be unavailable, you must clear use of the organ with the organist and have approval for another organist, who must contact St. Dunstan's organist prior to any music selection approximately two to three months prior to the wedding. All musical selections must be approved by the organist. If other instrumentalists or soloists are desired, this must be discussed with the organist.

Use of a musical instrument other than the organ must be approved by the organist. The music must be sacred and appropriate for a worship service. The organist can help you select authorized pieces and texts. No secular music may be played or sung as a part of the wedding ceremony. If used, the appropriate time for soloists to sing is after the mothers are seated and before the procession begins.

Sexton

The sexton is responsible for preparing the facility for your use and cleaning and returning the space to the configuration needed for subsequent functions. His responsibilities include set up of the nave (including the altar) for the worship service. He is not expected to assist in the set up for a reception, nor is he expected to assist in the set up of flowers or personal items needed by the wedding party or their families.

Flowers and Decorations

The only flowers permitted in the church (other than those worn or carried) are flowers placed in the vase on the reredos or in flower stands on either side of altar. Should you wish to have flowers, arrangements should be made promptly with your favorite florist in consultation with the rector and the wedding coordinator. Flowers may be arranged or set up only on the day of the wedding. Only fresh flowers are a part of the service. Artificial flowers are not used at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church.

The traditional candles which are a part of the worship service at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church are used during the wedding. These are the only candles which are used and are provided by the church.

Examples of flowers or decorations which are not a part of our traditions include, but are not limited to: bows or other pew decorations, flowers on the altar itself, a unity candle, candelabra, aisle cloths, scattered flower petals, rice, birdseed, or bubbles.

If a guest register is used it should be at the reception, not at the wedding ceremony.

The Wedding Coordinator

The rector will instruct you to consult with the wedding coordinator within two weeks of the approval of the wedding. The wedding coordinator works under the direction of the rector. She will work closely with you to ensure that the wedding will be both beautiful and run smoothly. She will be available for consultation during the planning period; will attend the rehearsal and the wedding to assist both the couple and the rector.

The Facilities at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church can accommodate approximately 75 guests. Dressing room facilities can be made available for the bride and her attendants in the rector's office and children's room.

The groom and his party are encouraged to arrive at the church dressed in their wedding attire.

The groom will wait for the start of the ceremony in the sacristy.

Furniture or other items at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church should not be moved except under the direction of the wedding coordinator.

The Garden may be used for weddings and/or receptions. A tent or tents may be erected provided they aren't staked into the ground so as to not damage the underground sprinkler system.

The McDowell Room is available for receptions and gatherings. Set up and decoration for receptions in the McDowell Room must take place the day of the wedding and not before without the permission of the rector. The use of the kitchen is included with use of the McDowell Room. Furniture may not be moved in the McDowell Room without the permission of the rector.

Readers

It is appropriate for someone associated with the bride and groom to read scripture during the marriage ceremony. The reader(s) must be approved by the rector and should plan on attending the rehearsal. If qualified readers are not available the clergy will read the scripture. Please be prepared to inform the wedding coordinator how many pews will need to be reserved for family/special guests.

Photography and Videography

Furniture should not be moved for the ceremony, pictures, or videography except under the direction of the rector.

Still photography of the wedding must be unobtrusive. The photographer will be allowed one hour before the ceremony for still photography whether inside or outside the church. If you desire any family members in the pre-wedding photographs, those persons should be at the church 1½ hours prior to the wedding. Photography of the wedding party must end 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the ceremony.

Once the procession has begun, the photographer may not take pictures with a flash except to take a picture (from the back of the nave) of the bride as she starts down the aisle. The photographer should consult with the organist so as to not obstruct the view.

After the ceremony, your photographer will be allowed 30 minutes for the photography in the nave. Time will start when all guests have been escorted outside and the doors to the nave have been closed.

No photographs may be taken during the service by family, friends, guests or photographers other than the wedding photographer outlined above. If at any time the clergy or wedding coordinator views as inappropriate the posing of any of the wedding participants or guests, he/she has the right and responsibility to stop the photographer from taking a picture.

The Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal usually takes place the day before the wedding ceremony at 5:30 p.m. The rehearsal will last approximately one hour. Please plan at least two (2) hours between the starting time of the rehearsal and the starting time of your rehearsal dinner. All members of the bridal party, including children, are expected to participate in the rehearsal. Please ask everyone to be on time, appropriately dressed and ready to begin at the appointed hour.

Rehearsals are for reviewing and practicing how the wedding was planned, not for planning the wedding itself. Decisions will have been made prior to this time with the rector. We do not use “stand in” brides in rehearsals. The rector or officiating clergy will be in charge of the rehearsal. Members of the wedding party must not arrive at St. Dunstan’s Episcopal Church for the rehearsal or the wedding ceremony under the influence of alcohol/illegal drugs. The primary role of the clergy is in premarital counseling, the rehearsal, and the wedding ceremony. Appearances at after rehearsal parties and receptions are secondary and possible only if parish and pastoral duties allow. Therefore, please do not wait for the rector or other clergy to arrive before starting these social functions.

The Wedding Day

The rector will determine the arrival time for all the wedding participants. Inform all family members who are to be in pictures prior to the wedding of the designated time to be at the church. Those guests who are to be seated in the reserved pews, except mothers and grandmothers, should be seated fifteen (15) minutes prior to the beginning of the ceremony. Inform all family members/friends and the wedding party who are to be in pictures after the wedding to be readily available immediately after the ceremony. Weddings at St. Dunstan’s Episcopal Church start on time. There will be no delays for seating of guests who arrive late.

Fees and Donations

For the use of the Church Nave

Members of St. Dunstan’s Episcopal Church: there are no fees for the use of facilities.

Non-members of St. Dunstan’s Episcopal Church: \$1,000, which includes the following fees:

Sexton (Janitorial services) \$100.00

Organist \$250.00

Fees for the Sexton and Organist apply to members and non-members

For Receptions in the McDowell Room the fee is \$300.

The above fees may be included in one check made payable to “St. Dunstan’s Episcopal Church” no later than two weeks prior to the wedding rehearsal.

Clergy – It is customary to give a thank offering to the officiating clergy for the time involved in consultation, counseling, rehearsal and the wedding. The suggested minimum is \$100.00. A separate check should be made out to the name of the officiating clergy. All these fees/offerings are due in the church office two weeks before the rehearsal.

Alcohol

It is permissible to serve only beer and/or wine (which includes champagne or sparkling wine) alcoholic beverages at any function taking place in the facilities of St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, and subject to the following policy.

The rector is to be notified in advance of the intent to serve alcoholic beverages.

Responsible adults must be in control of the serving of alcoholic beverages at all times, in order to assure moderate consumption and to prohibit serving to minors. Such responsibility includes providing alternative transportation for anyone whose driving ability might be impaired

Alternate non-alcoholic beverages are to be offered to participants at any function with equal dignity and hospitality. Suitable alternative beverages might include: non-alcoholic sparkling wine, punch, bottled water, soda drinks, fruit juice, coffee or tea.

Liability

Any damage to the church premises, furniture, or furnishings by the florist, the photographer, videographer, caterer, wedding party, family or guests shall be repaired at the expense of the couple, their families or the wedding party. The repairs will be made at the discretion of the rector and to the satisfaction of the junior warden. St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church is not responsible for loss of, or damage to any personal items brought to the church. The couple and their families agree to indemnify St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church for any such loss or damage for which St. Dunstan's may be found liable.

Contact Information

Rector: The Reverend Thomas Joyner
thomas@stdunstansauburn.org
205-381-7485

Wedding Coordinator: Judy Simon

Organist: Nancy Jones
admin@stdunstansauburn.org
334-750-6099

Sexton: Cuyler Leonard
334-728-3278