

Getting Married

at



Congratulations!

*M*arriage is one of life's great blessings, a wedding one of its great joys. We at St. Stephen's want your wedding to be a memorable occasion, reflecting both the long tradition of Christian marriage and also the individual hopes and desires that you bring to it.

This brochure tells you what you need to know to be married at St. Stephen's: it explains who may be married here, what preparation will be necessary, what guidelines we offer for the service itself, how much it will cost and where to go from here.

Who may be married at St. Stephen's?

Anyone may be married at St. Stephen's who desires a Christian ceremony in the Anglican tradition and has a relationship with St. Stephen's. Couples do not have to be active members of the church in order to be married here, but one at least, either bride or groom, ought to be a baptized Christian. Where one partner is an active member of another church or faith community, arrangements can be made for an interdenominational or interfaith ceremony.

Couples living out of town may be married here provided that suitable marriage preparation is arranged where they live, with verification in the form of a certificate from a recognized marriage preparation program or a letter of reference from a local priest or pastor.

Divorced people may be married at St. Stephen's with the approval of the Marriage Commission. (Please see "What Preparation is Required" below).

At the moment, the Anglican Church of Canada does not offer a service that recognizes the union of gay or lesbian couples.

What preparation is required?

Anglican guidelines require that a couple be "duly prepared to enter into marriage" (from the marriage service in the Book of Alternative Services). Ordinarily this means participation in a church-sponsored marriage preparation program. Such programs deal with communication, conflict resolution, personality differences, sexuality, and the spiritual dimensions of marriage. Alternatively, where participation in such a program is not possible, a couple may seek pre-marriage counseling from a minister or from a qualified counselor.

In the case of remarriage after divorce, a couple is required to apply for permission to marry through the diocesan Marriage Commission. This is to ensure that all legal commitments arising from the former marriage (s) have been discharged and that any emotional issues have been or are being addressed. We supply the application form and guide the couple through the application process.

In all cases a couple must supply the church with a valid marriage license procured from an authorized provincial licensing bureau. This should be in our possession, if possible, several weeks before the ceremony takes place.

What guidelines are offered for the service?

St. Stephen's offers the marriage ceremony according to either of the prayer books authorized for use in the Anglican Church of Canada, that is, the Book of Common Prayer (1962) or the Book of Alternative Services (1976). These books represent both traditional and contemporary strains of Anglican liturgy.

Couples may add their own statements of intention, but the vows will ordinarily be those found in either prayer book.

While a wedding at St. Stephen's should respect and reflect the ethos of the Anglican tradition, considerable latitude exists to make personal choices regarding music, readings, prayers, the decoration of the church, and such personalized statements as the lighting of a unity candle or the design and use of pew bulletins.

Professional photographers – both still and video – are welcome to record the service so long as proper decorum is observed and nothing is done to detract attention from the ceremony itself, including flash pictures, the use of harsh spotlights, and any distracting movement. Photographers must speak with the officiating minister prior to the service.

The use of confetti is discouraged entirely; and rice, seeds, bubbles, etc. are restricted to the outdoors.

How much will it cost?

Technically, the marriage ceremony costs nothing: it is a sacrament of the church and, as such, is offered freely. However, it is customary to make a donation to the church at the time of a wedding, to hire various people to assist with the service (organist, caretaker, and verger), and to offer an honorarium to the officiating minister.

All fees, donations, and honoraria are to be paid one week prior to the ceremony. The Marriage License is also due at this time. This reduces the number of details that must be attended to on the wedding day itself and spares both parties embarrassment should the payments be forgotten or neglected.

A schedule of fees and other suggested payments is included below. These amounts are subject to change and do not include such discretionary items as flowers, bows, and candles.

Fees*:

Organist:	\$200
Wedding Coordinator:	\$125
Caretaker:	\$75

Donation :

St. Stephen's Church	\$200
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Honorarium :

Clergy:	\$200
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**Some fees may not apply if the wedding is small and held in our chapel.*

Where to go from here?

If you wish to proceed with your plans to be married at St. Stephen's Church, please contact the church office and ask to make an appointment with the Rector, the Reverend Brian E. Pearson. After an initial meeting, to become acquainted with one another and to begin discussing your plans, the date and time of your wedding will be confirmed. At this time a \$250 non-refundable donation to St. Stephen's is due. This will hold your wedding date. To confirm details please contact the Wedding Coordinator and the Organist at least one month before your wedding.


St. Stephen's
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Office Hours:
Monday – Thursday
9:30 a.m. – 1:30 pm

Staff:
The Reverend Brian E. Pearson, Rector
The Rev. Cathy Fulton, Associate Priest
Jeffrey Jones, Music Director
D. Lynn McKeown, Parish Administrator
Brigid Stewart, Wedding Coordinator
David Peko, Caretaker