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## *Weddings - General Information*

from *www.stpaulshouston.org*

### **Frequently Asked Questions about Weddings at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Houston**

updated July 2, 2009

#### **May we have a wedding at St. Paul's if we are not members of the church?**

Yes you may.

#### **How far in advance can we book a wedding at St. Paul's?**

You may book your wedding as far in advance as you wish. However, weddings of non-members will not be confirmed until 180 days prior to the wedding. Unless the bride or groom (or a parent, guardian, or grandparent) has been a member of St. Paul's for at least six months before scheduling a wedding, the wedding is regarded as a non-member wedding.

#### **When are weddings held at St. Paul's?**

Weddings are held on Saturdays at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., or 7 p.m. Weddings will not be scheduled on Sundays, certain holidays, or the weekends of those holidays — New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Weddings also will not be scheduled during Holy Week, which is from Palm Sunday through Easter Day.

#### **How many people will St. Paul's sanctuary seat? The chapel?**

The seating capacity for the sanctuary is 600 adults. The chapel seats 65 adults.

#### **May we select our own minister to officiate at our wedding?**

St. Paul's male or female clergy are assigned on a rotating basis to officiate. A minister from another United Methodist Church or other denomination or faith may assist. When the officiating minister for your service has been determined, the Wedding Coordinator will inform you. Please call 713-528-0527 to make an appointment with the designated minister for a conference to be held no later than three weeks before the ceremony. During the conference, the minister will discuss with you the details of the service and the meaning of marriage in the context of the Christian faith.

#### **Is marriage counseling required?**

An optional marriage seminar, "Being One," is included for couples who marry at St. Paul's. "Being One" is conducted, usually quarterly, by Dr. Sherry Beeman and Dr. Bill Kerley, who are psychotherapists married to each other. This seminar fulfills the "Together in Texas" marriage education requirements.

#### **May we select our own music and musicians?**

Responsibility for all music at St. Paul's is delegated to the Organist/Choirmaster, who will assist you in planning the music for your wedding. As soon as you have booked your wedding, please call the Organist/Choirmaster at 713-528-0529, extension 30.

Only St. Paul's staff musicians may play the organ or sing at a St. Paul's wedding. If you want the St. Paul's Choir to sing at your wedding, they should be booked at least six months prior to the wedding. Nonetheless, due to scheduling conflicts, the St. Paul's Choir may not be available for the requested date.

### **How old must one be to participate in a St. Paul's wedding?**

Children must be at least six years old to participate in a St. Paul's wedding. That includes ring bearers and flower girls.

### **May we write our own service?**

All weddings will use "A Service of Christian Marriage" as published in The United Methodist Hymnal or other services approved by The United Methodist Church.

### **How do we schedule our wedding?**

To schedule your wedding, contact the Wedding Coordinator via email ([anngunn@stpaulshouston.org](mailto:anngunn@stpaulshouston.org)) or call 713-528-0527.

Please remember that weddings scheduled by non-members will not be confirmed earlier than 180 days prior to the wedding; this allows priority to church members. However, non-member weddings may be scheduled with the Wedding Coordinator in advance of the 180-day period on a tentative basis. Deposits made prior to this time will secure a date from being given to another non-member couple.

Member weddings will be confirmed by St. Paul's upon payment of the wedding deposit.

If your wedding date is cancelled by the church prior to the 180 days before your wedding, your deposit will be refunded. However, any cancellation by the wedding

party will result in forfeiting all non-refundable payments.

### **What are the fees?**

\$1,500 \*Building Use for Sanctuary

\$800 \*Building Use for Chapel

\$275 Minister's Honorarium

\$275 Organist

\$150 Vocalist, each (optional)

\$1,500 St. Paul's Choir (optional)

\$2 Candles (each)

*\*The Building Use Fee includes use of the Bride's Room, the Groom's Area, parking lots, safety staff, a wedding assistant and related services for two hours before through one-and-one-half hours after the wedding begins.*

### **What is the Payment schedule?**

**Deposit.** A \$200 deposit is required to secure the availability of St. Paul's for your wedding. This deposit is partial payment of the total fees paid to St. Paul's for the wedding.

**Second Payment.** A non-refundable payment of \$500 for a sanctuary wedding or \$250 for a chapel wedding is due toward the total fees owed to St. Paul's at either six months before the wedding date or upon booking the wedding if the wedding date is fewer than six months from the booking date.

**Balance.** The balance of the fees is due and payable no later than 14 days prior to the wedding date.

Weddings will be removed from the calendar if the fees are not received according to the payment schedule.

### **What if we have a cancellation?**

If you must cancel your wedding for any reason, please notify the Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible so this date may be made available for others.

**When may we schedule our rehearsal and who must attend?**

The rehearsal time must be set with the Wedding Coordinator when the wedding is scheduled. These are to be at 5, 6, or 7 p.m. on the evening preceding the wedding.

All members of the wedding party, including parents, grandparents, and ushers, should be present at the rehearsal. Please stress promptness to them. Due to the large number of weddings and rehearsals at St. Paul's, there may be as many as three rehearsals on the same evening. If members of your party are more than 15 minutes late, your rehearsal may be cancelled.

**Any Other Pertinent Details?**

- A Wedding Guild member will be available at the rehearsal and wedding to help make the wedding go smoothly.
- A Bride's Room is available for the bride and her attendants to use beginning no sooner than two hours before the wedding begins. A Groom's Area is available during this same period.
- If the St. Paul's parking lots are to be used longer than 1.5 hours after the wedding begins, the bride and groom must provide professional security.
- No rice, bird seed, or flower petals (real or artificial), or anything of this nature may be thrown on the church premises by anyone, including a flower girl.
- Absolutely no alcohol is allowed on the church premises at any time before, during, or after the wedding. Smoking is permitted only outside the buildings.

**Responsibility**

These FAQs are not intended to provide every answer about weddings at St. Paul's. For more information, including reservation forms and policies, please see elsewhere in the Weddings section of this Website. It is the responsibility of the bride and the groom to ensure that any outside vendors to whom these policies apply be provided a copy of the relevant policies and that these policies are followed.

If you have additional questions, please contact the Wedding Coordinator, Ann Gunn at [anngunn@stpaulshouston.org](mailto:anngunn@stpaulshouston.org) or 713-528-0527.