

Making Arrangements for Your Marriage...

...at St. Aidan's Anglican Church,
London, Ontario.

Christian Marriage

Marriage is a gift of God and a means of God's grace. In marriage, husband and wife give themselves to each other, and they begin a new life together in the community. An act of Christian marriage assumes a commitment to the way of Jesus Christ in our lives together.

The parish of St. Aidan, London, is a community of Christian people who express their faith and love for God by regularly gathering around the Lord's Table to share in the Holy Eucharist (*the sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood*) and by daily serving others in Christ's name.

We believe that Christian marriage is a sacrament -- that is, a powerful means and sign of God's grace for God's people -- and so we are committed to the vision of marriage stated above, and more importantly, to your future relationship as husband and wife.

The celebration of Christian marriage is not a private affair; it is a celebration of the whole people of God. It is our belief that when you are married here you not only involve the priest and organist, but also the whole parish family, which feels some responsibility for you, not only on your wedding day, but in your future life together. As the Church, we offer more than a building for your celebration; we offer a community of faith that can provide you with support and nurture in the Christian life.

We believe that a marriage with Christ as its centre is a binding and life-giving relationship through which you may know God's love and share that love with others!

Preparation for Marriage

Because we are very much interested in the quality of your relationship as husband and wife, regular participation in the church's worship and activity is presumed, and a period of instruction and reflection is expected as you prepare for your marriage.

Each couple is asked to meet on at least three occasions with one of the Associate Rectors or another pastoral minister of the parish. The purpose of these meetings is to make initial arrangements, prepare the wedding liturgy, take time to consider your future marriage, reflect upon God's presence and the role of faith in marriage, and come to know each other in a more meaningful way.

In addition, the couple will participate in a marriage preparation weekend or other pre-marital nurture event.

Music

As in any act of worship, music plays an important role in your celebration. Not all selections of music are suitable for weddings and for use in Church. The marriage celebration is an act of Christian worship. Therefore, its music should direct people's attention to the love of God as made known in Jesus Christ, and contribute to the prayer and praise of the assembly.

The gathered people are not passive spectators; they are there to participate and celebrate with you! Music that includes the congregation should be part of your planning.

The choice of music for your wedding is to be made in consultation with one of the Associate Rectors and the Organist in accordance with the Canons (*regulations*) of the Anglican Church of Canada, and supportive guidelines and suggestions.

The musician for weddings in the parish shall be the organist of the congregation. Exception to this may be granted if some personal friend of the bride and groom is a competent musician. In such a case, the congregation's organist is still entitled to his/her fee. However, the decision to have a friend shall not be accepted and extended without the approval of one of the Associate Rectors and Church organist.

Soloists or instrumentalists must be chosen in consultation with the Church organist. The use of taped music is unacceptable for use in Liturgy.

Flowers

Arrangements for flowers should be made in consultation with, and approved

by the Parish Administrator. It is your responsibility to order the flowers for your wedding and ensure they will be delivered to the church by 10:00 a.m. on the day of your wedding.

Flowers for your wedding remain at the Church for the Liturgies (*worship services*) of the Sunday following your wedding, unless other arrangements are made with the Parish Administrator.

Banns or Licences

Marriage Banns by Law are published only when either or both parties of the marriage are regular participants in Sunday worship and have not previously gone through a ceremony or ceremonies of marriage. In all other situations the couple must purchase a marriage licence at City Hall. The licence must be submitted to the Church office no later than one week prior to the date of your wedding.

Photographs

Because of the wedding ceremony's solemn nature, it is our custom that no photographs are taken during the Liturgy. Exceptions to this are permitted during the Entrance Procession of the wedding party, the signing of the register (only if it occurs at the end of the Liturgy) and after the dismissal. If you like, parts of the ceremony can be re-enacted after the Liturgy for photo purposes.

If you wish to have your wedding videotaped, the camera and its operator must be set-up in a discreet location approved by one of the Associate Rectors, and remain stationary throughout the Liturgy.

Officiating and Assisting Clergy

The role of the Presider (*the officiating priest*) at a wedding is to serve as chief witness to the vows being made and to bless the union on behalf of the Church. In this way, his/her presence recalls the importance of the Lord for the couple who celebrates this sacrament. One of the Associate Rectors of the parish normally serves as the Presider.

In special circumstances, a couple may desire some other Anglican Priest or an ordained minister of another Christian tradition to officiate or assist at

Parish Administrator	\$50.00
Altar Guild	\$50.00
Server (<i>if necessary</i>)	\$25.00
Worship Booklet	<i>at cost</i>

In addition, it is customary for the clergy to receive an honorarium (the amount of which is at the discretion of the Bride and Groom), and for non-members of the Parish Vestry to make a donation to the Church (an Income Tax receipt can be issued to the contributor of the donation if requested when the donation is made). For these considerations, the Parish Council of St. Aidan's Church recommends each of the following as a minimum standard:

Clergy Honorarium	\$200.00
Church Donation	\$200.00

Fees and Honoraria should be given to the Presider at the wedding rehearsal. Each of the above should be submitted in a separate marked envelope with the appropriate amount in each. If you are writing cheques, they should be made out to the individual and not to the Church.

Your Wedding Rehearsal

The rehearsal is normally scheduled for the evening before your wedding. Its purpose is to help you, the members of your wedding party, and those serving in liturgical ministries to prepare well for the next day's celebration.

All members of the wedding party, including parents, lectors and intercessors should be present at the rehearsal. We ask that all those involved be at the Church and ready to begin promptly at the time scheduled.

One of the Associate Rectors or his designate is always in charge of the rehearsal and the wedding liturgy. If you have employed wedding consultants or other persons of similar position, they must confer well in advance with the Associate Rector.

Use of the "Unity Candle"

Though becoming increasingly popular at weddings, St. Aidan's Church does not observe the Unity Candle custom in its Marriage celebrations.

While some of the significance associated with this rite is to be commended, there are a number of meanings suggested by it that are misleading or in conflict with the Christian understanding of marriage. For example, the temporal unity between husband and wife that the Unity Candle aspires to represent confuses itself with the eternal unity between Christ and the believer symbolized by the baptismal candle.

Since your matrimonial union finds expression in the words of your vows, the joining of hands and the rings given and received, it is preferable that the unity candle not be used in your wedding celebration.

Remarriage According to the Rites of the Church

Where one or both persons intending to marry have gone through a ceremony or ceremonies of marriage, permission to marry must be received from the Bishop of Huron through application to the Matrimonial Commission. This provision will be more fully explained if it does or may apply to you. The couple and the Presider and/or an Associate Rector of the parish shall prepare the application. The application should be submitted no later than three months prior to the intended date of marriage.

Other Considerations

- Please submit your marriage licence and registration form to the Church office no later than one week prior to the date of your wedding. Licences must be purchased at least four days prior to the wedding day, but must not be more than ninety days old.
- Please be reminded that the scattering of confetti, rice, birdseed, and rose petals or other flowers is not permitted in the Church or on the Church property. Please help us keep the Church building and grounds presentable for your wedding as well as other celebrations of the Christian community.
- At least one member of the couple must be baptized to celebrate their wedding in the church.

- Weddings are not celebrated on Ash Wednesday, during Holy Week (*the week before Easter Sunday*), during the Paschal Triduum (*the weekend of Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday*), and on Christmas Day. Other than under exceptional circumstances, weddings are not celebrated during the season of Lent, and on the day of Christmas Eve.
- Weddings must be arranged at least three months ahead of the desired date of celebration, and any requirements outlined above must be fulfilled before a wedding can be performed, unless exceptional circumstances are determined to exist and the required permission of the Bishop of Huron is secured.
- The general building policies of St. Aidan's Church are in effect for all marriage celebrations.

If you have any questions about the material outlined above, please feel free to consult one of the Associate Rectors of the parish by telephone or E-mail.

Your Christian sisters and brothers of St. Aidan's Church rejoice with you as you seek to enter the holy relationship of Christian marriage! We offer you our prayer and support as you begin your new life together. We hope these guidelines will help make the task of preparing your celebration an easier one and contribute to a wonderful wedding day!