



# **A Wedding Manual**

St. Andrew's Episcopal Cathedral  
305 E. Capitol Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39201  
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standrews.ms

Adopted by the Vestry on May 25, 2026

## **THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE**

“Dearly beloved: We have come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the joining together of N. and N. in Holy Matrimony.” And so begins our liturgy in the Episcopal Church. It is a beautiful liturgy, and we are delighted you are considering having your celebration here at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Cathedral.

The Episcopal Church holds that marriage is created by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will; a physical, spiritual, and mystical union between two people; a public covenant of lifelong intention; a holy sacrament instituted by God.

The church describes matrimony as “holy” because the couple is set apart in a covenant relationship signifying an intimate union between Christ and the church. In the sacrament of Holy Matrimony, the couple enters into a life-long union, makes their vows before God and the Church, and asks for the grace and blessing of God and for the support of the parish faith community to help them fulfill their vows. They seek, with God’s help, to love, honor, comfort, forgive, and be faithful to one another, reflecting the relationship between Christ and his Church.

Because of this understanding of marriage, the Episcopal Church views a nuptial marriage liturgy as an act of worship of God.

A nuptial celebration of **the Holy Eucharist** is suggested as a part of the wedding liturgy. It is most fitting for the married couple’s first act to be that of offering their marriage in thanksgiving at The Lord’s Table and sharing in the Sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood. Since, in the Episcopal Church, Holy Communion is open to all baptized persons who desire to receive the sacrament, it is not appropriate for only the couple to receive, but rather offered to the whole congregation.

The following manual will guide you through the process of planning a wedding at St. Andrew’s Cathedral. You are always free to call us with questions. Other numbers you will need:

### **Wedding Coordinators (one will be assigned to your wedding)**

Mary Alice Browning 601-497- 4157

Holli Roach 601-502-7338

### **Canon for Music**

Jessica Nelson 601-487-2738

### **Flower Guild Coordinator**

Sheryl Fox 601-503-0031

### **Cathedral Administrator**

Michelle Lewis 601-260-5573

### **The Dean**

The Very Reverend Anne M. Maxwell 601-354-1535

## INITIAL PLANNING

The Episcopal Church requires that at least one member of the couple be a baptized Christian, and St. Andrew's requires that one member be **an active member of the Cathedral**, or in some cases, an active member in the Episcopal Church in the town in which they reside, or a graduate of St. Andrew's Episcopal School.

**Dates and Times** are those that are most appropriate to our liturgical calendar. We do not schedule weddings on or during: Thanksgiving Day, late Advent, Christmas Eve or Day, Lent, Holy Week, Easter Eve or Day. The Wedding may be as early as 11:00 am and no later than 7:00 pm.

**Premarital Counseling** is a minimum of three sessions and must be completed two months prior to the wedding date. This can be scheduled with the priest assigned to the wedding once approved by the Dean. A professional counselor or a priest in another city may be used in certain circumstances. If one member of the couple has been **previously married**, the divorce must have been final **one full year prior to the proposed wedding date**. Second and third marriages must be approved by the Bishop in writing prior to setting a wedding date. Fourth marriages are not allowed. Cathedral clergy will be happy to explain these canon laws of the church.

**Visiting Clergy** are invited by the Dean if requested by the couple. Contact the Dean **before** inviting outside clergy. Cathedral clergy will be responsible for the liturgy and serve as chief celebrant.

**A Service Bulletin** is helpful for members of the congregation who are not familiar with Episcopal liturgy, which is why St. Andrew's requires one to be printed. We need four weeks' notice in order to complete and print the bulletins. If you would prefer to use an outside printer, arrange that with the wedding coordinator.

## THE WEDDING GUILD

The Wedding Guild is responsible for assisting the priest in all of the mechanical arrangements for a wedding. Members of the Wedding Guild are volunteer parishioners who are competent and happy to advise the couple on all matters pertaining to weddings, especially as they relate to the customs of St. Andrew's Cathedral.

OUTSIDE WEDDING CONSULTANTS ARE NOT PERMITTED.

## FLORIST AND PHOTOGRAPHER

We have learned after many years some helpful guidelines for both florists and photographers. **Before signing a contract**, let the Wedding Guild Coordinator know whom you are considering so we can send detailed instructions. A signed copy of the instructions should be returned to the church so there is no confusion.

## **MUSIC FOR THE WEDDING**

When music is desired for a wedding, the Canon for Music of St. Andrew's is engaged.

The wedding liturgy is, first of all, an act of worship of God and a church service of festival proportions. The music should be appropriate to the solemnity of the occasion. A vocalist, a small choir, or instrumentalists, if desired, can be used in the wedding service. All arrangements are to be made through the Canon for Music. The Canon for Music will assist the couple in selecting the music.

If a soloist, choir, and/or other instrumentalists are asked to participate in the service, it is the responsibility of the wedding couple or the soloist/group to contact the organist for a rehearsal prior to the wedding day.

The final decision on the appropriateness of music resides with the Dean in consultation with the Canon for Music.

## **THE MARRIAGE LICENSE**

The marriage license is issued by the Hinds County Circuit Clerk in Mississippi. To receive a license, both parties must apply in person. Proof of age, such as birth certificates, driver's licenses, or passports, must be presented. Cash is required to obtain a license. Those under the age of 21 must also have parental consent.

**The marriage license should be brought to the officiating priest at the rehearsal.** The Cathedral will return it to the county after the wedding.

## **SPACE FOR WEDDINGS**

**Chapel or chancel weddings** accommodate smaller groups of people. Chancel weddings take place in the raised area around the altar. The chancel will seat approximately 60 guests, while the chapel seats approximately 70.

**The Nave or the Church** provides seating for a maximum of 400. It is quite proper to have a small wedding using the nave. Portable seating is not used in weddings, as back aisles must remain clear for entrance and exit. There is a limited amount of space for standing as per the Fire Marshall's restrictions.

## **THE WEDDING REHEARSAL**

Wedding rehearsals are scheduled at 5:00 p.m. on the evening before the wedding. All members of the wedding party are expected to attend. All participate fully in the rehearsal. No "stand-ins" are allowed.

## THE WEDDING DAY

All members of the wedding party should arrive at the Cathedral not less than one hour before the scheduled time for the wedding, unless photographs are being taken prior to the wedding. The entrances to the Cathedral on Capitol Street and the parking garage on Pearl Street will open at least two and a half hours prior to the wedding hour.

The wedding party may use St. Francis Hall and/or the EYC space on the lower level. A Wedding Guild member will be attending this area.

St. Andrew's recommends that no food be served prior to the wedding. However, if, because of the time of the wedding, food is needed for the wedding party, the families are responsible for clean-up in these areas. Ice water is provided by the Cathedral.

The Wedding Guild will assist the wedding party prior to and throughout the service. Immediately following the liturgy, please remove all possessions of the wedding party and **restore all areas as they were found**. The Cathedral assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.

**Alcoholic beverages are not permitted prior to the service. Smoking is not allowed at any time on Cathedral property.**

## REHEARSAL DINNERS AND RECEPTIONS AT THE CATHEDRAL

The Parish Hall, St. Francis Hall, and courtyards are available for wedding receptions for a fee. (See Fee Schedule on pages 7-8)

These facilities must be reserved well in advance. In order to prepare for the following day's ministries, the reception should not extend past 11:00 p.m.

The caterer must contact the Wedding Guild Coordinator to approve the reception plans and to acquaint the parties with the facilities.

The following items are available for use at wedding receptions at St. Andrew's Cathedral:

- 18 8' tables
- 16 6' tables
- 1 Oversize table top 49" x 97" with table skirt
- 8 60" round tables, toppers, and skirts
- 100 Chairs
- 2 Silver punch bowls (4 1/2 gallon capacity and 2 gallon capacity) with trays and ladles
- 2 Small glass punch bowls (1 gallon capacity), Glass punch cups (limited number)
  
- Wine glasses (limited number)
- Small glass dessert plates (limited number)
- Limited refrigerator and freezer space
- Ovens and gas cooktop
- Warming Ovens

If the caterer desires the use of any of the above items, the Cathedral Sexton, at the caterer's instructions, will set up before the reception and remove the items after the reception. The family furnishes the flowers and decorations, cakes and any other food, beverages, napkins, and serving pieces. Decorations may not be attached to the walls or woodwork by pinning, gluing, nailing, or taping.

Following the rehearsal dinner or the reception, it is the responsibility of the caterer and families to leave the kitchen, Parish Hall, and courtyards clean and straight. All trash should be sealed in plastic trash bags and given to the Sexton for disposal. The Cathedral Sexton is not available to serve at the reception.

## **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

Alcoholic beverages are permitted within the following guidelines:

1. **Alcoholic beverages may not be offered or consumed on Cathedral property until the reception.** The Clergy, Wardens, and Wedding Coordinator reserve the right to exclude from the wedding or wedding-related event any persons who appear to be intoxicated.
2. **A non-alcoholic alternative beverage MUST be offered.** It, too, should be equally accessible, attractively displayed, and in an obvious, visible place in the Parish Hall, St. Francis Hall, and/or the courtyards.
3. Any beverage that contains alcohol should always be clearly identified as such; this policy also applies to any food (such as fruit compotes, desserts, etc.) where the alcohol has not been "cooked out."
4. If the reception is to include more than 50 guests, two professional bartenders should be engaged to serve (one bartender for every 50 guests). Unopened bottles should be stored in the kitchen or under skirted tables and out of sight unless they are needed. The setting up of any type of "fountain" is against Cathedral policy.
5. Alcoholic beverages cannot be sold without a license; doing so is a violation of Mississippi State law. All other applicable Federal, State, and local ordinances, including those governing the serving of alcoholic beverages to minors, must be observed. At no time shall persons under the age of 21 years be allowed to possess, consume, or serve alcoholic beverages of any kind on church property or at church functions other than during the celebration of the Eucharist.
6. Care must be taken to ensure that responsible persons are in control of the serving of alcoholic beverages. The group or organization sponsoring the activity or event at which alcoholic beverages are served must assume responsibility for providing alternative transportation for anyone whose driving might be impaired.

## **RICE, BIRD SEED, CONFETTI, and FLOWER PETALS**

Rice, bird seed, confetti, and flower petals are not to be thrown at or on the wedding couple. Bubbles, sparklers and butterflies are also not permitted to be used. This policy is to ensure the safety of the guests leaving the Cathedral, as well as that of the wedding party.

## **CLERGY HONORARIA**

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is one of the sacraments of the Church and is part of the normal ministry of every priest. Just as with any other area of ministry, the clergy does not charge “fees” for carrying out their duties in the life of the parish. However, it has become the norm that families of the couple contribute a “thank offering,” or honorarium, to the priest in charge of the service

A suggested range would be from \$300-\$500, plus any incurred travel expenses. Again, in special circumstances or in cases of financial hardship, these amounts might not apply. Please feel free to discuss this honorarium with your priest, who, above all else, desires to serve you in the wedding ministry of the Church.

If paying by check, checks for the clergy’s honoraria should be made directly to the officiating priest and are customarily presented to him/her on the night of the rehearsal.

## **FEES**

The following fees are established to cover the use of the church and the services of the Wedding Coordinator, Canon for Music, Security, Sexton, and Acolytes. **A 50% refundable deposit is due when the wedding is booked. The balance is due 30 days prior to the wedding.**

Where costs are of serious concern, the Dean will be happy to discuss the matter with the couple.

### **Wedding Fees**

For Active Members in good standing of St. Andrew’s Cathedral

(good standing means active attendance and consistent pledge for one year prior to the wedding date)

\$900.00	Church or Chapel (includes sexton for rehearsal and wedding, security wedding 4 hours only)
\$350.00	Organist (consultation and playing)*
\$200.00	Wedding Coordinator
\$25.00	Per acolyte provided by the Cathedral (optional)

## For Diocesan Episcopalians and Alumni of St. Andrew's Episcopal School

\$2,000.00	Church or Chapel (includes sexton for rehearsal and wedding, security wedding 4 hours only)
\$450.00	Organist (consultation and playing)*
\$500.00	Priest
\$250.00	Wedding Coordinator
\$25.00	Per acolyte provided by the Cathedral (optional)

\*Because the Canon for Music is responsible for the coordination of all music in liturgy, therefore, if the couple chooses to have another musician play for the wedding, there will be a bench fee of \$200 payable to the Canon for Music.

### **Rehearsal Dinner and/or Reception Fees**

For couples desiring to have a rehearsal dinner or a reception at St. Andrew's

\$1,000.00	Use of Parish Hall, courtyards, and kitchen, additional first-floor spaces as needed; includes 4 hours sexton and security
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### **Payment**

Payment shall be made after consultation with the assigned Wedding Guild Coordinator. Checks should be made payable to St. Andrew's Cathedral and mailed to P.O. Box 1366, Jackson, MS 39215-1366.

If damage to the Cathedral occurs, a detailed statement for the damages incurred will be sent to the couple as soon as the cost of making the repairs has been assessed. Payment for these damages and any other additional unforeseen expenses should be made immediately upon receipt of the statement.