

CHURCH OF SAINT ASAPH

Weddings and Unions at the Church of St. Asaph

The people of St. Asaph's Church wish you every happiness and God's blessing on your wedding day or day of your union. We hope that your relationship will always be a sign of God's grace and presence to you and to others. In the liturgy, the couple invites the gathered community to join with them in asking God's blessing on their marriage or partnership. It is meant to be festive and joyous with everyone present fully participating in the prayers, the hymns, and in thanksgiving to God.

This booklet is a useful guide to help you begin planning your special day with us.

Setting the Date

We believe that making a life decision as important as this deserves the best and most careful preparation possible. To assist those desiring to be married or joined in union at St. Asaph's, we have developed the following guidelines, which concur with the laws of the Episcopal church, the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, the laws of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the policies of this parish. Please consider them carefully. We want your liturgical celebration to be planned as smoothly as possible, and to be a meaningful and memorable occasion.

1. Church law requires at least thirty days notice before a wedding takes place. Beyond that, there must be time for pre-marital counseling, so it is important to call the parish office as early as possible. A six-month to one-year period is not too soon.
2. If either party has experienced a divorce, permission to marry must be obtained from the Bishop of the Diocese. This entails additional paperwork and additional time. Several months before the anticipated wedding date must be allowed.
3. For all weddings, the wisest sequence of planning would be to talk with the clergy first, before contracting the use of a reception hall, etc. This not only allows for proper preparation for your marriage, but shows a respectful ordering of priorities for your lives together. A festive party is great fun and a worthy tradition, but the blessing of God on your new life together is of higher importance.
4. It is also required that at least one of the parties will have been baptized.

5. We do not schedule weddings or unions during Holy Week, nor normally during Lent (the Church's season of discipline and self-denial, penitence and fasting).

Marriage License

A marriage license from the state is a prerequisite to Solemnization of Matrimony. The state of Pennsylvania requires a one day waiting period before the use of the license. Both the prospective bride and groom must apply at the same time for a license. One of the couple must be a resident of that county, but the license may be used in any of the Pennsylvania counties. The license should be deposited with St. Asaph's Parish Administrator a minimum of three days before the ceremony. The appropriate certificates will be signed at the rehearsal and the marriage license will be mailed to the County Clerk's office after the ceremony.

Because they are not recognized by the state, there are no licenses for holy unions.

The Clergy

1. The clergy of St. Asaph's will always preside over any wedding at the parish. Exception: neighboring Episcopal clergy may arrange to "borrow" St. Asaph's for weddings of their parishioners when the neighboring Episcopal Church is not suitable for some reason.
2. Other ordained persons may assist in the wedding celebration when invited by the Rector to do so. If you wish such an arrangement, discuss it with our clergy before making further plans.
3. The priest is responsible to provide for instruction on Marriage or Union, and to confirm that your intentions match those of the Church. To that end, the priest will have several counseling sessions with you.
4. Church law reserves to the priest the right to decline to solemnize any marriage or union.

Planning the Ceremony

All liturgical celebrations at St. Asaph's are done in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer. However, within this rite there is room for some creativity and special observances that are important to you. These must be planned with the clergy and be well thought out before the rehearsal. A celebration of Holy Eucharist is a normal part of celebrations at Trinity. The decision to include or omit the Eucharist is to be made in consultation with the clergy.

Music

1. It is our policy that the Director of Music (DM) arranges for all music at St. Asaph's, including weddings and unions. Other musicians may be used, but must be approved by the DM. A standard fee is to be paid to St. Asaph's DM.
2. All music performed during the liturgy is planned well in advance and with the DM

and the clergy, and is subject to their approval. You will need to meet with the DM early in the planning stages and perhaps again later to choose music. Please call the parish office to make an appointment.

3. Other musicians may be a part of the ceremony, if you wish. Soloists and instrumentalists are all appropriate. St. Asaph's DM will arrange for all extra musicians (there will be additional fees). Guest singers and instrumentalists taking part in the ceremony are subject to the approval of the clergy and the DM regardless of whether or not the parish musicians will actually take part in the service.

Decorations

1. Flowers are a traditional and beautiful part of a wedding. Your budget and tastes determine the type and amount of flowers to be displayed in the church. It is the parish custom that one or two large bouquets used directly behind it are the couples gift to the church and will remain in the church. Additional flowers, which the couple may take away immediately following the ceremony may be placed at other locations such as the baptismal font.
2. Strong colors show up well in the church.
3. Florists always underestimate the size of flowers at St. Asaph's. We strongly encourage you to have your florist come to the church and consult with our clergy regarding the size and placement of flowers.
4. The Altar is reserved for Holy Communion. No objects of any kind (candles, flowers, displays) may be placed on the altar. You may decorate aisles with ribbons or flowers. Kneelers will be provided for the couple.
5. There shall be no aisle runners. Please do not ask.
6. There shall be no "unity candles." Please do not ask.
7. St. Asaph's does not permit the use of rice or confetti. Bird seed or flower petals may be thrown outside the church.

Printed Programs

All weddings and unions have programs with the entire liturgy printed in them. These programs help guests to more fully participate in the celebration. All information regarding content (names, musical selections, readings, etc.) must be submitted to the presiding clergy at least two weeks before the ceremony.

Altar Guild

St. Asaph's Altar Guild has a well-deserved reputation for its ministry of hospitality at weddings and unions. They stand ready to help the wedding party— from getting dressed, to locating emergency pins and tissues, to cueing the members of the

wedding party at the beginning of the procession. **“Wedding consultants” and/or “wedding directors” are neither necessary nor permitted** to direct wedding or union activities at St. Asaph’s. There are no exceptions to this policy. Please do not ask.

Rehearsal

The purpose of the rehearsal is to acquaint members of the wedding/union party with their respective roles in the service so that the service may be conducted in a relaxed but worshipful manner.

1. The rehearsal is usually a day or two before the ceremony, usually beginning between 4 pm and 6 pm. It will begin promptly and will last approximately one hour. All participants in the ceremony (attendants, ushers, parents, readers) should participate in the rehearsal.
2. For weddings, the bride and groom and two witnesses (usually the honor attendants) are required to sign official documents. This occurs at the rehearsal.
3. Please remember that the rehearsal takes place in a house of prayer, and proper respect for this space will be observed. Cell phones are not to be used in the church and should be turned off so they do not ring during the rehearsal. Dress may be casual if you wish.

Photography and Videography

The campus of St. Asaph’s is a beautiful setting for photography, with its colorful stained glass, its dignified appointments and unusual areas like the cloister. Couples naturally like to have photographs of their special occasion. We ask that you be aware of the following guidelines for photography in the church. It is imperative that these policies be communicated to your photographer before engaging his or her services.

1. The ceremony is a worship service, so an atmosphere of reverence and a focus on prayer is kept. No flash pictures may be taken during the service. There will be no exceptions.
2. The photographer (or other guests with cameras) may not step in the center aisle during the ceremony and no climbing on chairs or other furniture is allowed at any time.
3. During the ceremony, photographs and videotape recordings may be taken only from the rear of the church, or from a pre-arranged position at the side, and without flash or additional lighting.
4. Photographs may be taken in the church (either posed or casual) beginning 90 minutes before the service starts and concluding no less than 30 minutes before the ceremony, and/or for 45 minutes immediately following the service. There will be no exceptions.
5. Clergy are usually available only immediately after the ceremony, if it is your wish that clergy be included in the photographs.

- Please be aware that there may be several activities scheduled in the church on any given day, and all time needed for your wedding or union must be planned in advance with the parish staff.

Fees and Schedules

When you decide to have your wedding or union at St. Asaph’s, you will be asked to sign a Fee Agreement in order that all fees and charges are clear to everyone. Normal fees and charges are listed below, but will be finalized after consultation and agreement with the Rector (or other presiding clergy). All costs must be paid in full when the marriage license is deposited at the church or no less than two days in advance of the ceremony.

Fees for weddings and unions are as follows (these may be modified for individual situations):

	Parish Members	Non-members
Director of Music*	\$150	\$200
Counseling	0	\$300
Housekeeping**	\$75	\$75
Security	\$25	\$25
Priest***	Honorarium	Honorarium
Rental of Church	0	\$500
Aisle Candles	\$140	\$140

*The Music Director’s minimum fee covers consultation, rehearsal, and the liturgy itself. There are additional charges when soloists or instrumentalists are involved.

**The Custodian’s basic fee of \$75 covers overtime work in the church itself. Charges beyond this minimum include \$25 when aisle candles are used, \$30 per hour (two-hour minimum) to accommodate extra time for other rooms left in disarray. Other charges may also apply if food is served anywhere in the church facilities (see Receptions & Other Matters).

***The services of the clergy are part of their sacramental office and no fees are set. An honorarium is customary, however, and becomes part of the Discretionary Fund of the clergy performing the ceremony. It is appropriate to give any honorarium directly to the clergy. Gifts to the Church beyond the basic fees are always welcomed as a thanksgiving on such festive occasions.

Receptions and other matters

- Maximum seating capacity for St. Asaph’s Church is approximately 190.
- St. Asaph’s can provide a room in which members of the celebration may dress. The church will be opened two hours before your ceremony is to begin. No

exceptions. Please do not ask.

3. For security reasons, personal items and valuables should be entrusted to a designated person before the service begins. A friend or family member should be designated to take care of any gifts brought to the church. St. Asaph's cannot be responsible for the loss or theft of any gifts, personal items, or clothing.
4. St. Asaph's does not have a furnished nursery and is not in a position to offer nursery care for attendants.
5. The Garth, the Lawn, and the Field may be used for wedding receptions.
6. Spaces used for a reception, lunch or dinner must be cleaned afterwards and left in the condition in which they were found. Decorations must be removed, furniture put back in place, cups and saucers and plates cleaned and returned to storage, floors cleaned, kitchen cleaned. The custodial staff supervises this work but is not responsible to perform it except by prior arrangement, and then at a rate of \$30 per hour (two-hour minimum).
7. Any professional caterer you engage is expected to furnish all necessary supplies and utensils, and to hold kitchen use to a minimum.
8. When family and friends cater the reception, they must clear the use of all facilities with the parish office.
9. The wedding party is responsible for any damage incurred in the use of parish facilities.
10. Smoking is prohibited in all buildings on the campus of St. Asaph's Church.

Use of alcohol

The use of alcohol at any function at St. Asaph's is at the discretion of the rector and wardens. Serving alcohol on premises requires:

1. Clear and distinct labeling of all beverages and foods which contain alcohol.
2. Attractive, non-alcoholic alternatives offered as conspicuously as alcoholic beverages.
3. Awareness of all federal, state and local ordinances regarding legal age, serving of obviously intoxicated persons and liability for the actions of intoxicated persons. The wedding/union couple assume full liability for their event and their guests.