

Weddings at St. Mark's

Wedding Information Packet

St. Mark's Episcopal Church

910 East 3rd Ave. • Durango, Colorado 81301

www.YourDurangoWedding.com • (970) 247-1129

Included in this packet:

- St. Mark's at a Glance
- Guidelines for planning your wedding at St. Mark's, including general requirements for marriage and fees.
- Bride and Groom Information Form/Wedding Application

More resources are available at www.YourDurangoWedding.com:

- Wedding FAQ
- Wedding Resources: A list of photographers, florists, caterers and other wedding-service businesses in the Durango area

Forms and checklists available for download at www.YourDurangoWedding.com:

- Permission to Re-Marry Form
- Service Planning Worksheet
- Guidelines for Wedding Photographers
- Wedding Timeline & Checklist
- Financial Considerations
- Wedding Day Schedule

*W*e are delighted that you are considering St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Durango for the place to begin the next portion of your life's journey. You don't have to be an Episcopalian or a member of St. Mark's to have your wedding here (though at least one of the couple must be Christian).

St. Mark's at a Glance

- Durango's most beautiful indoor wedding venue
- 110-year-old stone church with beautiful stained glass
- Sanctuary seats 150 maximum
- Space comfortably allows for ten attendants
- Pipe organ, grand piano and excellent professional instrumentalists and vocalists
- Attached Parish Hall, excellent for medium-sized receptions
- Indoor and outdoor photo venues
- Spacious dressing facilities
- Professional Event Hosts to assist you

Wedding Guidelines

The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is a rite of the church in which two adults are joined together in a sacred relationship with each other and with God. As the Book of Common Prayer says, "Therefore marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God." (*page 423*) These guidelines are the standard by which weddings are celebrated at St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

General Requirements of the Couple

The Canons of the Church and the laws of the State of Colorado state that:

- You both must be at least 18 years of age and in sound state of mind, entering freely into this relationship.
- At least one one of you must be baptized.
- As a couple, you'll need to receive at least four hours of pre-marital counseling from a priest of the Church prior to the wedding. Arrangements can be made with the Rector for circumstances where standard counseling presents a problem.
- Other requirements unique to the individuals may be required under special circumstances.
- Since the marriage is at the sole discretion of the Rector, no other arrangements should be made until approval for marriage has been given.

If You Are Divorced

If one or both of you are divorced, permission must be obtained from the Bishop of Colorado to marry in the Church. The divorced person must fill out the Permission to Re-marry form available online or in the church office and provide written answers to several questions, along with a copy of the divorce decree. Any cost involved will be borne by the applicant. Proof the person is fulfilling the obligations of such a decree may be required (i.e., that alimony and/or child-support payments are being made).

Choosing a Wedding Date

You should notify the Rector of your intent to be married at least 30 days in advance of a proposed wedding. All wedding plans are subject to the approval of the Rector of the parish, The Rev. Andrew A. Cooley.

Wedding dates are available most of the year, except for Advent (between Thanksgiving and Christmas) and Lent (about two months in the late winter). Weddings are usually scheduled for Saturdays at either 11:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m. Rehearsals are scheduled on Fridays from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. or from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. Rehearsals often take an entire hour; please ensure that all are present to start on time and that rehearsal dinner plans don't impinge on the rehearsal time.

It may be possible to have your wedding on another day of the week. Check with Father Andrew Cooley and the Building Administrator who will inform you of available wedding and rehearsal dates.

After you consult with the Rector and it is determined that you meet all the requirements to be married, the Rector will confirm the availability of the church with the Building Administrator who will finalize your booking, and an Event Host will be assigned to you. Please do not make any sort of arrangement with wedding services – ordering invitations, photographers, florists, caterers, etc. – until you have confirmed your wedding date with St. Mark's Church. St. Mark's will not be held responsible for any costs you incur should you fail to finalize your wedding date before ordering services for your wedding.

Wedding Fees

The following fees are customary for any wedding taking place at St. Mark's:

Standard Donation: \$1,800

This amount includes:

- The building-use fee
- An honorarium for the clergy performing the service and providing counseling* and other services to prepare for the wedding ceremony
- Honoraria for the Organist, Event Host and Sexton

**A portion of the donation for clergy may be waived in the event another acceptable outside counseling professional provides the marital counseling, in which case a letter of completion of the marital counseling must be provided.*

A minimum deposit of \$900 is required to secure the wedding date on the St. Mark's calendar. The balance is due no later than seven days prior to the wedding rehearsal.

Active members of St. Mark's are offered a waiver of a portion of the donation.

Use of the Parish Hall for a reception requires additional fees and arrangements.

Use of St. Mark's Facilities for a Wedding Performed by Non-Episcopal or Non-St. Mark's Clergy

In some circumstances, St. Mark's may be available for Christian weddings utilizing clergy other than St. Mark's. Requests for the use of St. Mark's must be made at least 30 days in advance of the service date to Father Andrew Cooley.

Your Next Step

Please fill out the Bride and Groom Information Form/Wedding Application and submit a 50% deposit check to reserve your wedding date on the calendar. If you prefer, the entire donation may be submitted at the time of your wedding booking. In the event that your wedding is cancelled before the wedding date arrives, your deposit is refundable, less a \$100 administrative fee and any costs the church has incurred in preparation for your wedding. Checks should be made payable to St. Mark's Episcopal Church and mailed to the church (with your completed information form) at 910 E. 3rd Ave., Durango, CO 81301, or given to the St. Mark's Parish Administrator.

The Wedding Service and More Details

St. Mark's wedding guidelines have been established to provide you with a beautiful and memorable wedding experience.

Marriage License

You will need to apply for a marriage license in La Plata County no more than 30 days before your wedding date. The La Plata County Clerk's office is in the La Plata County Courthouse, located at 1060 E. 2nd Ave. in Durango. For information call (970) 259-6200, extension 1606.

The Officiant

The Rector of the parish is normally the celebrant of the service. Other ordained clergy may be invited to participate, with the consent of the Rector. Such consents should be sought at least 30 days before the service. Any financial arrangement between clergy, other than Father Andrew, shall be made between the couple getting married and the other clergy.

When the Rector is not available on the desired date, the services of another minister may be arranged with the Rector's approval.

Nuptial Eucharist

It is entirely appropriate and desirable, but not required, that Christian weddings be celebrated within the context of the Great Wedding Feast of the Church, the Holy Eucharist (communion). Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding by turning water into wine. To share the Eucharist with wedding guests is a high honor and special gift. The Eucharist is the preferred symbol of unity, and takes the place of unity candles.

Music for Your Wedding

Music is an integral part of weddings at St. Mark's. We strive to ensure that your wedding music will be professional, beautiful, and in keeping with the spirit of worship of the marriage ceremony. All music for your wedding at St. Mark's is arranged under the direction of Scott Hagler, Minister of Music, who will be pleased to help you with musical selections, soloists, and other musicians.

Organ Music. Scott Hagler or one of St. Mark's Associate Organists will play for your wedding. Except under rare circumstances, guest organists are not permitted. The organist for your wedding, assigned at least eight weeks prior to your wedding date, will assist you in planning your music and will be present at the rehearsal and the wedding. A Wedding Demo CD of processions and recessions is available in the church office. All processions and recessions must be selected from this musical collection. These pieces were selected for specific use at St. Mark's considering the wonderful pipe organ, acoustics and the capacity to shorten or lengthen the piece to the size and speed of the wedding procession.

The organist for your wedding will play for 15 minutes prior to the start time, as your guests arrive. You can allow the organist to choose this music or assist in choosing the music yourself. The organist will play for ten minutes at the end of the service as guests are leaving.

Singers and Instrumentalists. All singers and instrumentalists are booked through Scott Hagler, who can recommend a number of excellent singers and instrumentalists for your wedding. All voice ranges and many instrumental combinations are available including brass, strings and harp. If you have family or friends who wish to perform, it is preferable for them to do so at your reception.

Fees for soloists and/or other musicians are not included in the quoted fees, but are handled separately between the couple and the musician/soloist. Additional charges will be incurred for music requiring extra rehearsal time for the organist and/or singer/instrumentalists.

Please note: Neither amplified musical instruments nor recorded music are permitted at St. Mark's. The authority of the Minister of Music regarding all music is final.

Attendants

You should take into consideration the amount of space available when deciding on the size of your wedding party; at St. Mark's, ten attendants will fill the space. Canon law and the State require at least two witnesses to a marriage, traditionally the Maid of Honor and the Best Man. The two required witnesses should be baptized Christians, since they are witnessing and upholding Christian vows. Among their duties is to be sure the bride and groom arrive at the church on time and are physically, emotionally and spiritually centered and present to each other. They should also look after their interests on the day of the wedding, and see to the many details of the service so that the couple can focus on the sacrament.

Children in the Wedding Party

Experience has taught us that children under the age of four are usually too young to participate meaningfully in the entire wedding service. It is unfair to them to expect that they will enjoy or behave in an appropriate manner throughout such an occasion. Exceptions to this guideline should be discussed with the Rector before promising any child that they will be part of the wedding party. For instance, younger flower girls or ring bearers might be invited to be part of the procession, but then sit in a pew with an adult who is not responsible for other duties.

Involving Family and Friends in Your Wedding

We encourage you to select qualified readers, prayer readers, Eucharistic ministers and acolytes from among your family and friends. Please discuss responsibilities and expectations of these participants with the Rector before selecting them.

Writing Your Own Service

If there are changes you would like to make to the vows and prayers, discuss them with the Rector. Any changes must not alter the fundamental nature of the vows, the theology of Christian marriage, or the spirituality of the wedding. One area in which you can express a personal touch is in the selection of lessons and music. Lessons may be chosen from the Lessons guide, consistent with the Book of Common Prayer. You may also choose the person(s) to read these lessons or prayers (the Gospel must be read by a clergy person). Other lessons and prayers appropriate to a marriage may be chosen and read by selected readers, with the consent of the Rector.

The Rehearsal

A rehearsal is held the evening before the wedding for all persons involved in the service. (Other times may be arranged, within a week of the service, if it is impossible to have the rehearsal at the scheduled Friday time). The purpose of the rehearsal is to establish staging and logistics, to allow for some preparation and practice, and to solve any problems that may develop. No one will need to memorize the service, but everyone who is participating will need to know where to stand, sit, kneel, enter and exit and understand the intent of the elements of the service. Rehearsals must start and end promptly within the scheduled one-hour timeframe since another rehearsal may be scheduled on the same evening. Remember to bring the Marriage License to the rehearsal.

Ornaments in a Holy Place

St. Mark's Episcopal Church has a beautiful sanctuary for wedding ceremonies. During the year, we have various objects throughout the sanctuary that generally need to remain in place. Particular note needs to be made during the Christmas season, when we have candles, greens, a nativity scene, etc. set up for the season. We ask that no tape be used on any wooden surface; tape strips the varnish off the wood.

Photography and Videography

A meeting between the photographer and the Event Host should be arranged before the wedding so that the Guidelines for Photographers can be discussed and the photographer can visit the church to review lighting and placement of participants. Cameras used during the service may not use flash or be in front of the church. The service may be videotaped, but cameras must remain in a fixed, unobtrusive location. This is best determined during the rehearsal.

Please see the *Wedding Resources* section for a list of recommended area Photographers and Videographers.

Flowers

Flowers used behind the altar are limited by the size of our flower containers. Additional small arrangements may be used in the windows or as pew-end decorations. Flowers placed on the window sills must be in containers that protect the wood from water damage. If it is desired, and the Holy Eucharist is not being celebrated, one large floor arrangement may be used. It is suggested that you use one of our preferred florists, or invite your florist to visit the church before ordering the flowers so that they may see what the space looks like and get some idea of the best type of floral arrangements. If the flower girl is going to drop flower petals during the processional, the petals need to be silk, not real flower petals, so as not to stain the carpet. Your Event Host can advise you on decorating guidelines and recommendations.

Please see the *Wedding Resources* section for a list of recommended area florists.

Candles

There are two candles on the altar, six on the retable, and two candles on the lectern. Candles may be placed in the window sills. The use of a unity candle is discouraged in the Episcopal Church; rather, we offer the symbolism of the Eucharist. Your Event Host can advise you on decorating guidelines and recommendations.

The Bulletin

If you'd like to have an order of service for your guests but don't want to prepare them yourselves or are not ordering them from a commercial printer, St. Mark's can provide bulletins for \$1 each.

St. Mark's Wedding Application

Groom

Bride

Full name _____

Full name _____

Address _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home phone _____

Home phone _____

Work phone _____

Work phone _____

Cell phone _____

Cell phone _____

E-mail _____

E-mail _____

Occupation _____

Occupation _____

Age _____ Birthdate _____

Age _____ Birthdate _____

Marital Status: Bachelor Widower Divorced

Marital Status: Maiden Widow Divorced

If divorced, date of final decree _____

If divorced, date of final decree _____

Are you baptized? _____ Confirmed? _____

Are you baptized? _____ Confirmed? _____

What denomination? _____

What denomination? _____

Father's full name _____

Father's full name _____

Mother's full maiden name _____

Mother's full maiden name _____

Permanent address where you can be reached after your marriage:

Request for Dates & Times

The Wedding (Saturdays at 11:00 or 4:00 are standard)

Date & Time *First choice* _____

Date & Time *Second choice* _____

The Rehearsal (Fridays at 4:00 or 5:00 are standard)

Date & Time *First choice* _____

Date & Time *Second choice* _____

Premarital Counseling

Counselor's name (if not Father Andrew) _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

It is required that both parties sign this declaration of intent and in so doing understand and accept the conditions of the Episcopal Church and St. Mark's as stated in the Wedding Guidelines.

We, _____ and _____

desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. We believe that the union of husband and wife, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto.

Signature of Groom _____

Signature of Bride (Maiden name) _____

Mail or drop off your completed application with your deposit to: St. Mark's Church, 910 E. 3rd Ave., Durango, CO 81301