Introduction

Marriage is one of the most joyful occasions and we are pleased that you desire to have your wedding service at St. Paul’s Harlan. The day should be one you will remember with joy as you start your life together. Marriage is another entry into the life of faith and we encourage you to continue that life together here or at a house of worship near to you.

Requirements for Marriage in the Episcopal Church

You should know that because St. Paul’s is an Episcopal Church there are certain guidelines which must be followed. At least one of the parties to the marriage must be a baptized Christian (of any denomination) and the wedding ceremony must be attested to by at least two witnesses. The couple must also agree to sign the Declaration of Intention which is included in this packet.

A minimum of two pre-marital counseling sessions with the priest is required prior to the wedding day. These sessions allow time for the priest to get to know the couple and vice versa. They also set aside time to discuss the Church’s understanding of marriage, to explore the nature of life as a married couple, and to plan the service. In some cases, the priest may suggest the couple seek other counseling.

If either party is divorced, the following procedure must be observed: the priest, in consultation with the couple, must determine that the prior marriage has been legally dissolved and that continuing concern is being shown for the well-being of the former spouse and of any children. The Bishop of Iowa must then give written consent to the proposed solemnization of marriage.

Marriage License

A marriage license can be applied for at any county court house in Iowa. Please note that there is a three-day waiting period from the time of application to the issuance of a license. Here is a link to the instructions concerning application for a marriage license: [Marriage License Instructions](http://forms.gmdsolutions.com/recorder/marriage_instructions.pdf)

Scheduling a Wedding Date

The date must first be cleared with the priest through the parish office. Normally weddings take place on Saturdays. Weddings are not scheduled during the seasons of Advent or Lent, due to the penitential nature of those seasons. Since Lent’s dates depend upon Easter, it usually begins sometime in February and lasts until late March or Mid-April.

Rehearsals

Rehearsals are usually scheduled for the afternoon or evening before the wedding. They generally take 30 minutes to one hour, depending on the nature and size of the wedding. Please arrive on time.

Planning the Service

The priest at St. Paul’s look forward to working with you to shape the specifics of the service. We find that prayerful attention to service planning is a wonderful way to keep focused on the true nature of your wedding day. There are several variations of the marriage service you may use and there is room for much individual variation. ‘

Following are links to two of the variations: [Witness and Blessing of a Marriage](https://www.churchpublishing.org/contentassets/104caa0c8b8741819c171f642de395a3/the_witnessing_and_blessing_of_a_marriage.pdf) and [Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2](https://www.churchpublishing.org/contentassets/104caa0c8b8741819c171f642de395a3/the_celebration_and_blessing_of_a_marriage_2.pdf). In addition, there are more traditional forms on the service in the Book of Common Prayer (with the main service on p. 423) [Marriage Rite](http://www.bcponline.org/).

Please read the marriage services carefully to make sure that this is the type of service you want. Although the service will follow one of these outlines, there is room for striking a balance that reflects both your relationship and the traditions of the Church.

The readings during the service will be from Scripture, whether from the list appointed or other passages, chosen in consultation with the priest. We encourage the participation of friends and family members in the reading of lessons and the offering of prayers. The church will provide a copy of the readings that includes the opening and closing responses called for by the Prayer Book.

A celebration of the Holy Eucharist is a wonderful way to start your life together and to celebrate the blessing of a marriage. In the Episcopal marriage rite, communion is optional, at the discretion of the couple. It is our custom is to welcome all baptized Christians, regardless of age or denomination, to receive communion. If one of the couple is of another faith or there are other circumstances, communion should be omitted.

Service Bulletins

You are responsible for any printing of bulletins, but clergy can assist you in what you need to include and provide an outline.

Music

St. Paul’s has an organist who has first right of refusal before another organist may be hired. Vocal and instrumental music may be used; St. Paul’s has an organ and a piano

The music should reflect the corporate nature of the service as the congregation is gathered to witness and affirm the joining together of the two of you in Holy Matrimony. Wedding music should never be a distraction from the meaning of this sacred event nor should it serve as a showcase for the musician or singer.

Music before the service should set the atmosphere for the occasion. The wedding processional and recessional should express the joy and dignity of the occasion. It is appropriate to have the congregation sing a hymn or two during the service, but certainly not a requirement. In any case, music should be live and not recorded unless there are very unusual circumstances.

Flowers and Other Adornments

Flowers, boutonnieres, and bouquets may be brought in by a florist or the wedding party. We ask that the florist be in touch with the church concerning delivery and if you are leaving flowers for Sunday morning as an offering or taking them with you to the reception.

“Unity candles” are not used. Please refrain from the use of rose petals, rice, bird seed, or any type of confetti thrown after the service.

Aisle Carpet Runner

Because the church aisle has a permanent carpet in place, the use of a white aisle carpet runner is optional and you must furnish your own. No paper as it is not stable enough and could present a fall hazard.

Respect for the Church

The wedding party is expected to treat the Church with respect. The Church is a place of prayer, and an atmosphere of reverence for the presence of God is expected. It should go without saying that food and drink are allowed only in the fellowship hall under the church.

Photography

We work hard to maintain a joyful and worshipful atmosphere throughout the wedding ceremony. Therefore, there shall be absolutely no use of flash pictures or lights for photographs during the wedding ceremony. Your photographer may use a flash for pictures of the wedding party entering and leaving the church, provided they are taken at the rear of the church. Under no circumstances may the photographer come down the aisle or be in the front of the church during the service. Photographs without flash may be taken from the rear of the church.

The best way to photograph a wedding party is either before or after the service. Photographs may be taken before the ceremony, as long as they are concluded 30 minutes before the start of the service, or for 30 minutes following the ceremony.

Videotaping is permitted during the service, with available light only and with the videographer adhering to the same restrictions as above. The videographer and equipment must be unobtrusive. The use of any lights is strictly prohibited. The designated place for a video camera is in the back of the church where the bridal party can be recorded entering and leaving the church. Under no circumstance is the videographer to move about in the church before the service and must remain stationary during the recessional.

Seating Capacity

The Seating capacity of St. Paul’s is approximately 80 people.

Other Clergy and Wedding Coordinators

Generally, the parish priest officiates at all weddings held at St. Paul’s**.**  Other clergy that you may wish to participate must be invited to do so by the priest. Outside wedding consultants may not be used for any component of the wedding ceremony itself.

On the Day of the Wedding

The wedding party should plan to arrive one hour before the wedding. Have ushers in place no later than 45 minutes prior to the start of the service. A good rule of thumb is at least one usher per 50 people in attendance. Some ushers should be persons other than those in the wedding procession, to help seat latecomers.

As we have no dedicated sexton (cleaning) you are asked to leave the church as you found it.

Fees

There are no fees for the sacraments of the Church. The costs associated with a wedding cover the costs of the event.

To cover costs related to weddings held at Trinity, please note the following

If you are a member of Trinity or a family member, there is no cost. Otherwise contact Trinity at (712) 755-2793 for a list of current fees.

The following are to be paid in separate checks made out to the individuals listed:

Clergy Honorarium at couple’s discretion.

Organist

Wedding Information Form

(To be completed and returned to priest)

Spouse A’s Full Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone: Home\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bachelor or Widower\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Number of this marriage\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Baptized? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ In what denomination? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Spouse B’s Full Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone: Home\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bachelor or Widower\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Number of this marriage\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Baptized? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ In what denomination? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Ceremony \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal: Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Witnesses \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Permanent Address after Marriage \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Declaration of Intent

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 two people as it is set forth in the liturgical

forms authorized by this Church. We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship,

encouragement and understanding, for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their

physical and spiritual nurture, and of the safeguarding and benefit of society, 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.

Clergy \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**St Paul’s Episcopal Chruch**

**8th & Farnam Streets  
Harlan, Iowa 51537**

Policies for Photographers at Weddings

The couple who is arranging for you to photograph their wedding is being married at St. Paul’s**.** These guidelines serve to make everyone aware of the Church’s expectations and requirements. Our central concern is that the service retains its dignity and beauty. A wedding is neither a press conference nor a pageant. St. Paul’s offers a beautiful setting and the words of the liturgy set forth both the seriousness and joy of the event. We expect that all those involved, the couple, their attendants and guests, and any professional or other photographers, to act in a manner consistent with that beauty and solemnity.

The photographer should be as inconspicuous as possible. Wandering down aisles or popping out to interrupt the procession is not allowed. Once the prelude music begins, the photographer should take a position in the rear of the church and stay there. Flashes or other lighting will not be used during the service. This extends to the wedding guests who are taking pictures as well. Photographs may be taken before or after the service. If the presence of the priest is desired, please arrange that with the priest before the service.

Photography sessions should end thirty minutes before the service begins and are not to extend more than thirty minutes after the service. Parish staff have to prepare the church for the next day’s services and should not be kept waiting for an extended period of time.

Videotaping arrangements should be made with the priest well before the service begins and will conform to the restrictions given on lights and movement.