



Saint Mark's
Episcopal Cathedral
1245 Tenth Avenue East
Seattle, Washington 98102

(206) 323-0300 phone
(206) 323-4018 fax
info@saintmarks.org
www.saintmarks.org



*Your marriage is a
sacrament – an
outward and visible
expression of God's
grace in bringing you
together and nurturing
your love.*



**God is love, and those who abide in love
abide in God, and God abides in them.
1 John 4, 16**

The Celebration and Blessing of Marriage

Weddings of Heterosexual and Same-Sex Couples At Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral

The marriage of two people is a holy union. It begins with your desire to form a lasting, life-long partnership with another in God's love, and continues throughout your lives as a process of intentional living and growing together. In a marriage, each of you as an individual, and together as a couple, gradually transform and mature in God's presence and image.

A wedding, then, is a rite of passage, a sacred ritual that celebrates your desire to enter into a life-long relationship. It symbolizes the ending of former ways of life and other future possibilities, and establishes a particular pathway into the future – one that you promise to travel together.

By uniting within the context of a faith community, you recognize that God is active in the love you feel for one another, and you place your relationship in God's care. Your individual stories – and your story as a couple – are celebrated in the context of the story of God and God's ways with the human community, as understood within a particular community of faith.

In a Christian marriage, your personal stories are seen in the light of God's action in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ's unfolding pattern in our lives is one of dying to self and rising to Christ, of transformation, and of self-offering. A Christian relationship is the living out of a self-giving way of being in community with one another, in the larger context of the Christian community.

Through a wedding, you as a couple enter into a life-long commitment. You make your vows before God and the gathered community of family, friends and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help you fulfill your vows. Your marriage is a sacrament – an outward and visible expression of God's grace in bringing you together and nurturing your love.

About Saint Mark's and the Episcopal Church

Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral seeks to be a place in which the living God is encountered by all people. Indeed, people at every stage of their spiritual journey find themselves at home at Saint Mark's.

As a Cathedral Church, the ministry of the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia is grounded here. The diocese, a geographic unit of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America, includes all Episcopal organizations in western Washington. Every Episcopal parish in western Washington has a relationship with Saint Mark's through the Bishop.


The Celebration and Blessing of Marriage takes place within the context of the Cathedral community along with Baptisms, confirmations, weekly celebrations of the Eucharist and other pastoral offices. The worship customs of the Cathedral community reflect the breadth and depth of the Episcopal tradition.

Before the Revolutionary War, the faith now known as Episcopalian was the Anglican Church, owing allegiance to the British Crown. In 1785, the first General Convention established the Episcopal Church within America. George Washington was an Anglican, and the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. is part of the Episcopal Church. A pew from which George Washington worshiped can still be seen in Saint Paul's Church in New York City.

The Episcopal Church in the United States of America is affiliated with the worldwide Anglican Communion, which grew out of the unique historical circumstances of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England. The second-largest church body in the world with some 70 million members, the Anglican Church is a church of tremendous theological breadth.

Grounded in the convergence between scripture, tradition and reason, the Anglican Church views the mind as a gift of God that allows us to respond more fully to God's desire for the human community. The Anglican Church takes seriously the idea of the community of faith as a context within which people from different backgrounds and varying perspectives can openly share their experiences of God, can attend to one another in a spirit of love, and can thereby gain insights that may help every member of the community to move closer to God's truth.



Saint Mark's Cathedral is home to a vibrant faith community with an active and diverse congregation. We are honored and delighted that you are considering – or have already chosen – the Cathedral as the setting for one of your life's most significant events.


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Weddings in the Episcopal Church

A heterosexual wedding in the Episcopal Church is governed by The Book of Common Prayer, Canon Law and the laws of the State. The Book of Common Prayer is the foundation for all Episcopal worship services – referred to as liturgies in the Episcopal Church – and provides the liturgical framework by which a wedding is celebrated. While the Episcopal Church has not yet developed a liturgy for same-sex marriages, the Church recognizes that in many of its dioceses, such celebrations and blessings are a usual part of the life of the community. For these liturgies, Saint Mark's uses an adaptation of the Office of The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage found in The Book of Common Prayer. Depending upon your situation, the appropriate rite will be provided for you as you plan your service.


*You are members of
Christ through
baptism. And now in
Christ's name you
administer the
sacrament of
matrimony to each
other, that by your
sacred bond a new cell
may be formed within
his body, the Church,
to the advantage of
both human society and
the kingdom of God.
Roman liturgy*


To be united in the Episcopal Church, it is required that:

- at least one of the couple be a baptized Christian,
- the ceremony be attested to by at least two witnesses, and
- for a man and a woman, the marriage must conform to the laws of the State and the Canons of the Church.
- for a same-sex couple, the marriage must conform to the intent of the Canons of the Church insofar as they address the quality of the relationship between the partners.

Prior Marriage

Please inform the Wedding Coordinator in the event that either member of the couple has previously been married. In such instances, the officiating priest must meet with you **at least 90 days prior to the wedding date** to discuss the previous relationship. For heterosexual couples, Canon law requires the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese for a new marriage to be made. In making such decisions, the Bishop will consider:

- the depth of understanding of the individual as to why the previous relationship did not endure,
- the continuing care of and consideration for the former spouse or partner and for any children involved in the relationship, and
- faithfulness to the dissolution of the previous marriage.

Scheduling

Weddings are scheduled on Saturdays during seasons of the Church year with a particular focus on celebrating new life, or with the intentional ongoing living of life. Marriage liturgies are not customarily scheduled during Lent, Holy Week or Advent. In addition, they are not scheduled on any major holiday weekend.

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Scheduling your wedding date at least six months in advance is advisable. This allows plenty of time to plan your liturgy, complete your series of counseling sessions, meet with the priest who will officiate at your wedding, and – if you are not already a member – become familiar with the Saint Mark's community. In addition, it increases the chance that your chosen date will be available given the Cathedral's full schedule of activities. Please refer to the back of this booklet for a typical planning schedule.

Cathedral weddings may be scheduled only by the Wedding Coordinator. Please contact the Wedding Coordinator at (206) 323-0300 ext. 221 for more information and to ensure that your desired date is available. While you may reschedule your date if necessary, deposits are non-refundable if you choose to cancel.

For Those from Out of Town

Accommodations may be made for couples who are from out of town. Because Cathedral weddings may only be scheduled by the Wedding Coordinator, please contact the Wedding Coordinator for more information and to ensure that your desired date is available.


Getting to Know Saint Mark's

If you are not already a member of the Saint Mark's congregation, you are encouraged to spend at least six months before your wedding attending services and otherwise getting to know the Saint Mark's community. The Wedding Coordinator will provide you with a Ministry Resource Guide to help you begin exploring the many diverse avenues from which you may choose to further develop your spiritual understanding. Abundant opportunities exist for involvement, expression, reflection and growth.

While Saint Mark's does not require that you become a part of the Cathedral community before getting married, we do hope that you will carefully consider the Cathedral as a potential church home during the time that you prepare for marriage.

Your Wedding and Marriage Preparation Team

From your first meeting with the Wedding Coordinator to the day of your wedding, a host of clergy, ministers, artists and volunteers are involved in helping you with your wedding and marriage preparation. The primary team with whom you will work includes the Wedding Coordinator, the priest who will officiate at your wedding, the Cathedral's music staff, and your pre-marital counselor.


*Because marriage is
about the way couples
share in the love of
God, every marriage is
the same and yet every
marriage is different.*
Kenneth W. Stevenson



The Wedding Coordinator

Distinct from the role of a secular wedding planner, Saint Mark's Wedding Coordinator is responsible for Cathedral's wedding ministry as part of the sacramental life of the Church. The Wedding Coordinator serves as your primary point of contact throughout your wedding and marriage preparation process.

The Wedding Coordinator is responsible for:

- Receiving, evaluating requests for and scheduling weddings.
- Providing you with resources and answers to your questions, and serving as an ongoing source of information, guidance and support.
- Connecting you with other members of Saint Mark's wedding and marriage preparation team, including music staff, your officiating priest, and the pre-marital counselor.
- Working with the Liturgy Office and the Office of Pastoral Care to help you plan your liturgy and produce your service leaflets.
- Facilitating the wedding rehearsal and working with clergy, parish administration, musicians, sextons, liturgical ministries, altar guild, flower guild and photographers to ensure a smooth-flowing ceremony.
- Maintaining parish records.
- Serving as an ongoing contact for you following your wedding day, as you grow into your marriage and in your desires to further strengthen your relationship with the Saint Mark's community.

Because Cathedral weddings may be scheduled only by the Wedding Coordinator, the Wedding Coordinator is your first point of contact when you are interested in having your wedding at Saint Mark's.

Counseling

While your wedding ceremony itself is very important, the development of a solid foundation for your ongoing marital relationship is of greater significance. Because we want to support your living into your wedding vows in an intentional and faithful way, Saint Mark's requires pre-marital preparation of all couples. We strongly encourage you to obtain your pre-marriage preparation through Saint Mark's Counseling Service, located next door to the Cathedral in Leffler House. To schedule an appointment or for more information, please call (206) 323-0339.

Pre-marriage preparation consists of six, 50-minute sessions over a period of approximately two months. During these sessions, a Washington state Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist uses a pre-marital inventory or a series of reflection questionnaires to discuss the following topic areas with you. Please note that although the counselor covers similar topic areas with all couples, your sessions are tailored to meet your individual situation.

Same-sex couples receive counseling with a sensitivity to the unique opportunities and challenges that are present in their lives. You are encouraged to explore legal protections available to same-sex couples in absence of state and federal laws that guarantee these rights.

Topics addressed in pre-marital counseling include:

- The marriage blessing as a sacrament within the Saint Mark's worshipping community.
- Your relationship history: present strengths and challenges as a couple.
- Your faith journey as an individual and as a couple.
- Interpersonal communication.
- Family of origin patterns relating to present day belief and relationship dynamics.
- Children.
- Career expectations and role adjustment.
- Finances.
- Conflict resolution.
- Sexuality and intimacy.
- Re-marriage and blending families.

Please call Saint Mark's Counseling Service at (206) 323-0339 to schedule session times as soon as possible. Because your counselor is required to write a report for your officiating priest that addresses the topics listed above, ***pre-marital counseling should be completed at least 90 days prior to your wedding day.***

In Case of a Previous Marriage

If you are a heterosexual couple and one or both of you has previously been married, an additional set of topics will need to be addressed by your counselor in order to provide the priest with sufficient information to effectively request permission to marry you from the Bishop of the Diocese. Please inform the Wedding Coordinator, and you will be provided with this list of topics.

If You Choose Not to Use Saint Mark's Counseling Service

Please note that if you have already completed or plan to complete your pre-marital counseling with another counseling service, your counselor will be required to write a report for your officiating priest that addresses the topics listed above. This report should be completed and delivered to your officiating priest ***at least 90 days prior to your wedding.***

If you choose to use another counseling service, please share the Counseling section of this booklet with your counselor before you begin your sessions, so that the report he or she prepares for the officiating priest may provide the officiating priest with sufficient information. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask the Wedding Coordinator.

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*Seldom or never does a
marriage develop into
an individual
relationship smoothly
and without crises.
There is no birth of
consciousness without
pain.*
Carl G. Jung
❧

*Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which
the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith "A whole I
planned,
You shows but half;
Trust God
see all, nor be afraid!"
Robert Browning
Nineteenth century*

Clergy

Cathedral clergy officiate at weddings except under unusual circumstances. In an effort to balance their schedules effectively, priests are assigned to weddings on a rotating basis. If you have an existing relationship with a Cathedral priest, please tell the Wedding Coordinator. While the Liturgy Office will make the best effort possible to accommodate your request, it is often difficult to deviate from the rotating schedule given the many commitments of the clergy.

Visiting Clergy

Visiting clergy may request to participate by a letter to the Dean sent in care of the Wedding Coordinator. Please do not invite clergy not on the Cathedral staff to participate in your wedding until you have spoken with the Wedding Coordinator and received permission from the Dean.

Music

The Saint Mark's Cathedral music staff will work closely with you and serve as a valuable resource as you select your music. You will be provided with expert assistance to ensure that music is appropriately planned and fitting for you as a couple. Because a wedding is a service of worship, the liturgical guidelines for music are subject to the same standards as music for any other worship service.

The Cathedral's staff organists play at all weddings at which organ music is desired. Because of the corporate nature of Cathedral worship services, vocal solos are generally not a part of liturgies at Saint Mark's. Hymns sung by the entire congregation are appropriate and encouraged. When vocal solos are desired, they are sung by Saint Mark's professional soloists whose voices work well in the large, reverberant Cathedral space. Saint Mark's music staff will make these arrangements and can also share with you a list of approved texts and solos for your liturgy.

In addition to the organ, other instruments – such as harp, strings or flute – also may be included as they reflect your relationship with God. Additional instrumentalists are secured by the music staff.

Please note that only sacred music suitable for Saint Mark's worship services may be played in the Cathedral. Music with secular or commercial associations, whether textual or musical, is not appropriate. All musicians and music must be approved by the music staff.

Please contact the Saint Mark's Organist/Choirmaster shortly after your first planning meeting with the Wedding Coordinator. The Organist/Choirmaster's telephone number is (206) 323-0300 ext. 220.

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*Come slowly–Eden!
Lips unused to Thee
Bashful–sip thy Jessamines–
As the fainting Bee–*

*Reaching late his flower
Round her chamber hums–
Counts his nectars–Enters–
and is lost in Balms.
Emily Dickinson
Nineteenth century*



Flowers

To facilitate deep engagement with the worship service itself, only simple, primary symbols pertaining to the liturgy are positioned on the liturgical platform. As a result, placement of flowers is reserved to the same locations as you would find at any other worship service.

In the nave (the large main worship space), one large flower arrangement may be placed on the cornerstone to the left of the liturgical platform. Additional flowers may be placed in the rear of the nave behind the pews. Pillars are available for this purpose.

In Thomsen Chapel, two smaller flower arrangements may be placed on the shelf above the high altar. An additional small arrangement may be placed in the rear of the Chapel near the entry.

To minimize damage, flowers and other decorations are not permitted on pews.

Florists

Because of the uniqueness of the Cathedral's space, it is recommended that your flower arrangements be prepared by one of the florists listed below. Their work is known to be appropriate for the setting. Should you wish to use another florist, he or she must schedule a visit to the Cathedral with the Wedding Coordinator prior to your wedding. Your personal flowers, such as bouquets and corsages, may be ordered from the florist of your choice.

Any flowers that you provide for the worship space remain in the Cathedral in thanksgiving for your wedding. An acknowledgement of your wedding is listed in that Sunday's service leaflets.

Recommended florists:

- R. David Adams; 1001 4th Ave., Suite 525; Seattle
206-623-9649
www.rdavidadams.com
- Daisy Wessel Flowers
206-725-1511
a62design@earthlink.net
- Floressence by Anne Bradfield
206-286-7850
www.eventfulflowers.com
- Garden Party; T.J. Montague
206-324-1755
- Magnolia Village Florist; 2455 32nd Ave. W., Seattle
206-285-0749 or 1-800-424-7977
www.ftd.com/magnoliavillageflorist
- Martha E. Harris Flowers; 4218 E. Madison St., Seattle
206-568-0347

*Love is a kindling of
one's mind and heart
that gives one the
willingness to know
and the courage to face
one's darkness.*
John S. Dunne

Candles

Altar candles may be lit for your wedding if your liturgy includes a celebration of the Eucharist. Additional candles, including Unity candles and candelabras, are not a part of Episcopal wedding liturgies.

Runners

Runners are not used as they distract from the elegant simplicity of the Cathedral's worship spaces.

Your Service Leaflet

Because of the participative nature of The Celebration and Blessing of Marriage in the Episcopal Church, your service leaflet is a very important part of your wedding preparation process. The service leaflet contains information that guides those in attendance at your wedding through your marriage liturgy, and helps them actively participate as a community supporting and witnessing your marriage.

A draft working form of the appropriate marriage liturgy will be provided to you at the beginning of the planning process. Production assistance for the final leaflet, the accuracy of which is paramount to a smooth-flowing service and a fully-engaged congregation, may be secured through Saint Mark's Liturgy Office for a nominal charge. Please ask the Wedding Coordinator for more information.

Still Photography

Photos by Professionals

Professional photos are usually taken starting one hour before the service begins. Because it is important that photos are completed prior to the arrival of guests, photo shoots usually last about 30 minutes.

Photos may be taken anywhere in the worship spaces and on Cathedral grounds.

Photography of any kind is not allowed during the service, with the exception of the processional and recessional. The photographer must stay behind the pews at all times so as not to distract from the liturgy. Photos must be taken by available light only, and any special arrangements must be made prior to the rehearsal.

If you plan on having a photographer, please inform the Wedding Coordinator. The appropriate information will be mailed to him or her to ensure he or she understands and is prepared for the regulations surrounding the taking of photos at a Cathedral worship service.

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one of dying to self and
rising to Christ, of
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Christian relationship
is the living out of a
self-giving way of being*

Photos by Guests

Please inform your guests that photography of any kind is not allowed during your wedding liturgy. The liturgical portion of your service leaflet will include the following:

Because our wedding is a holy service of worship and we want you to be fully present with us and to God during this time, we ask that you refrain from taking photos or shooting video during the worship service. Also, please remember to turn off all cell phones and audible pagers. Thank you.

Videography

Videotaping of your wedding is permitted in the nave. Special lighting may not be used, and the videographer should remain stationed in the organ loft during the service. You may wish to invite him or her to your rehearsal so he or she may be better prepared on the day of the service. If an audio feed is desired, please ask the videographer to talk with the Wedding Coordinator about what arrangements may be made. **All such arrangements must be in place prior to the rehearsal.** Microphones other than those that are a part of the Cathedral's sound system may not be positioned in the worship space.

Videotaping in Thomsen Chapel is not possible due to its size.

Facilities

The Cathedral nave comfortably seats 800 guests. Additional seating may be added with a maximum capacity of 1,200.

The Thomsen Chapel comfortably accommodates 60-70 guests with a maximum capacity of 80.

Confetti, rice, birdseed, rose petals, balloons or other such items are not permitted inside the Cathedral or on the grounds. Bubbles are a delightful alternative and may be used outside the Cathedral as you exit the worship space following your service.

Limousines and Special Transportation

If you plan to be picked up after your wedding by a limousine or other special transportation, please note that the area in front of the Cathedral is a fire lane. Your driver should remain with the vehicle while waiting for the conclusion of your service.

✠
*In a marriage, each of
you as an individual,
and together as a
couple, gradually
transform and mature
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and image.*
✠

The Rehearsal

The purpose of a rehearsal is to help make you and your party – the people you have honored with an important role in your service – more comfortable with their roles in your liturgy.

Attentive participation in the rehearsal helps every person, regardless of his or her role, become more familiar and comfortable with the worship space and the liturgy itself – thereby helping everyone to be more fully present to you and to God on the day of your wedding.

Because Fridays are the designated rest day for Cathedral clergy, rehearsals customarily take place on Thursday evenings from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.

The Day of the Service

In addition to the one-hour rehearsal, the standard Saint Mark's wedding fee includes use of the Cathedral for a maximum of three hours on the day of your service, including photography. Liturgies without a Eucharist usually take about 40 minutes; liturgies with a Eucharist last about an hour.

Weddings customarily must be completed by 6:00 p.m.

Because dressing room facilities at the Cathedral are limited, it is recommended that the party arrive dressed and ready for the service. A private room with a full-length mirror, sink and other accommodations is provided for final preparations.

The Reception

Saint Mark's has two reception spaces available:

- Bloedel Hall in the lower level of the Cathedral comfortably accommodates 160 round tables or 225 long tables and can accommodate up to 300 guests for a standing reception.
- The Leffler House Living Room, located next door to the Cathedral, can accommodate up to 50 guests for a standing reception.

Children in the Wedding Party

Children must be supervised by a designated adult. It is requested that children participating in the wedding be at least five years old, in consideration of their comfort with and enjoyment of their participation.

*When you have reached
the point where you no
longer expect a
response, you will at
last be able to give in
such a way that the
other is able to receive,
and be grateful.
Dag Hammarskjöld*

Fees

Saint Mark's Wedding fees include:

- Space Rental –
 - the use of the nave or Thomsen Chapel for an hour-long rehearsal and up to three hours on the day of the weddingRelated facilities
 - Utilities
 - Parking
- Services –
 - Clergy discretionary fund
 - Cathedral Organist
 - Wedding Coordinator
 - Altar Guild
 - Acolyte/cross bearer
 - Custodial staff
 - Sound and lighting technicians

Additional fees may include:

- St. Mark's Counseling Service
- Leaflet production assistance
- Cost of additional musicians, if desired
- Musician rehearsal fee, if required
- Reception rental of Leffler House or Bloedel Hall.

Overtime charges accrue at the rate of \$200 per half-hour for using Cathedral space for more than the allotted time. Overtime space use charges apply to both the rehearsal and the wedding itself.

Weddings are scheduled when a non-refundable deposit of \$500 is received by the Cathedral. The deposit is applied toward your total fee and the remainder is collected at the final meeting with the Wedding Coordinator approximately two weeks before your wedding date.



Payments may be made with a check or Visa or MasterCard.

Please contact the Wedding Coordinator to discuss fees for your wedding.

Welcome

For those who are not already members of Saint Mark's, we hope your wedding is the beginning of a deep and lasting relationship with the Cathedral community. We find that people who come to Saint Mark's at important times in their lives, including Baptisms, weddings and funerals, often find a connection at the Cathedral that lasts a lifetime. We hope that happens for you as well.

For more information about the many ministries of Saint Mark's, and ways in which you may learn more about and connect with the Saint Mark's community, you are invited to review the Ministry Resource Guide available online at www.saintmarks.org, or by calling our Newcomer Coordinator at 206-323-0300.


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To Get Started

To learn more about weddings at Saint Mark's, or to begin your planning process, please contact the Wedding Coordinator at 206-323-0300, ext. 221.

Resources

Saint Mark's Cathedral

www.saintmarks.org
(206) 323-0300
1245 Tenth Avenue East
Seattle, WA 98102

The Episcopal Diocese
of Olympia

www.olympia.anglican.org
(206) 325-4200
1-800-488-4978
1551 Tenth Avenue East
PO Box 12126
Seattle, WA 98102

The Episcopal Church in the
United States of America

www.episcopalchurch.org

The Anglican Communion

www.anglicancommunion.org

Wedding Preparation Timeline for _____

My wedding date is: _____

At six months _____

- Determine and reserve date and time with Wedding Coordinator.
- Pay deposit.
- Arrange initial planning meeting with Wedding Coordinator.
- Begin attending services, become familiar with the Saint Mark's community if not already a member.
- Schedule counseling sessions.
- Begin work on music.
- Communicate wedding plans with relatives and friends; begin securing witnesses, attendants and other wedding party members.
- *Prior marriage: Arrange first meeting with priest as soon as possible.*

At three months _____

- ***Counseling is complete.***
- ***Witnesses, attendants and other wedding party members have been confirmed.***
- ***Florist, photographer and other services have been secured.***
- Order marriage license/consider legal arrangements.
- Check in with Wedding Coordinator.
- Arrange first meeting with officiating priest.
- Work is underway with music staff.
- *Prior marriage: First meeting with priest has been completed.*

At two months _____

- ***Music selections are complete.***
- ***Scripture readings have been chosen.***
- ***First meeting with officiating priest has taken place.***
- Arrange second meeting with priest.
- Begin work on service leaflet with Wedding Coordinator.
- Marriage license secured/legal planning underway.
- *Prior marriage: Last of meetings with priest has been completed.*

At one month _____

- ***Last of meetings with priest has taken place.***
- ***Service leaflet is complete or nearing completion.***
- ***Marriage license has arrived/legal arrangements finalized.***

At two weeks _____

- Last of meetings with Wedding Coordinator takes place.
- Final balance paid and all final details reviewed.

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“The pathway of the
nuptial life is no longer
a simple itinerary; it is
placed on the road to
eternity, and the shared
advance of the couple is
therefore like the still
point of a turning
wheel.”
Paul Evdokimov
❧