

Baptism, Weddings, Funerals Customary



St. David's Episcopal Church

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The Rev. Eric S. Cooter, Rector

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Baptism

Holy Baptism is the sacrament by which one becomes a Christian and a member of the Church. All ministry originates in baptism. Therefore, living out one's baptism is at the heart of our life together and thus, it is a community and not a private turning point in one's life. The Episcopal Church defines baptism as "full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body, the Church" (Book of Common Prayer, p. 298), and recognizes as valid any baptism administered with water and in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Baptism is an event of primary significance and celebration not just for the individual but for the whole church.

DATES FOR HOLY BAPTISM:

Easter Vigil, (Saturday Evening before Easter)
The Day of Pentecost (Seven Sundays after Easter)
Sunday after All Saints Day (Sunday after Nov. 1)
Baptism of our Lord (Second Sunday in January)

Baptisms are only scheduled during public worship on the dates listed above and should be arranged with the church office at least a month prior to the date of Baptism. A requirement for baptism of an infant is that the Clergy meet with families for instruction. For adult baptisms, the Clergy will meet with the individual to provide instruction in preparation for the sacrament. Please contact the church office to arrange a time to meet with the clergy 941-474-3140.

About Funerals

St. David's clergy and staff are always ready to offer comfort and solace at the time of a member's death and to work with the family to plan a suitable funeral, memorial service, or burial. Funerals are normally conducted in the Church unless there are unusual circumstances. Our hope is that the service will be a blessed, comforting, and solemn rite of the Church. Here are a few things to keep in mind as you consider how we might help you during your time of grief:

Some helpful information about the service:

- All funeral services are performed according to The Book of Common Prayer and thus, no additional rituals are inserted into the service. Music for the service will be under the direction of the priest and Music Director.
- Having photographs of your loved one available is a wonderful way to share memories. An appropriate way of sharing is to place a photograph in the Narthex (church entrance) near the memorial book. We encourage you to consider sharing any family photographs in the Parish Hall during the reception. The Church Office will be happy to assist you with this.
- Although "Times of Reflection" or "Eulogies" are a part of many faith traditions today, we ask that you consider creating space for family sharing and other special reflections during the reception following the service.
- The Eucharist (Holy Communion) is our worship in the Episcopal Church. We encourage you to plan for communion during your loved one's service.
- Funerals are not held on Sundays, however Saturdays and other days of the week are always available. Saturdays are preferred by many families because it affords out-of-town family the flexibility for travel.
- Our Parish Hall is available for a reception after the service. Please speak with the Church Office about arrangements.
- St. David's memorial garden is available for the interment of the ashes of your loved one.

Marriage & Wedding Inquiries

Couples seeking to be married at St. David's Episcopal Church, or their parents, must be active members or currently engaged in the membership process. This process includes regular attendance at worship, participation in newcomer classes, and financial support of the work of the Parish. All couples must also meet the canonical requirements of the Episcopal Church, which include premarital counseling with parish clergy. If you are interested in being married at St. David's, we invite you to begin attending our Sunday worship services. For more information, please contact the Parish Office by phone 941-474-3140 and arrange a time to chat with our Clergy.

Wedding Guidelines

General Understandings:

Christian marriage is a joyous event which is a sacrament as well as a civil contract and legally binding relationship. Thus, the marriage ceremony itself is a public act of worship and is conducted by Rector of St. David's using the established rites of the Episcopal Church. To help couples begin a healthy marriage we require them to undergo a premarital prep with a member of the clergy. This includes regular attendance at worship.

Canonical Requirements (rules of the Episcopal Church):

- Persons intending to marry must give at least 45 days notice to the priest. However, a minimum of 60 days notice is preferred by St. David's Parish clergy to assure proper preparation and calendar availability.
- At least one of the parties must be baptized.
- In addition to the introductory meeting, the priest meets with the couple for a minimum of six sessions prior to the wedding for marriage preparation. These sessions include instruction in the sacramental meaning of Holy Matrimony. A schedule for this instruction is usually arranged at the initial interview.
- There must be at least two witnesses to the marriage.
- The priest may decline to solemnize any marriage.
- Persons who have been previously married and divorced may be married in the Episcopal Church. Permission must be

obtained from the Bishop, upon recommendation of the parish priest. If such a situation exists, the priest should be consulted at least three months in advance of the wedding date.

- Marriage “was established by God in creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ adorned this manner of life by his presence and first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee... Therefore, marriage is not to be entered unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God” The Book of Common Prayer, p. 423

Policies and Customs:

- A priest of St. David’s is the officiant. Other special circumstances should be discussed with the priest at the first meeting and are at the discretion of the priest.
- All marriage services are performed according to The Book of Common Prayer. No additional rituals are inserted into the service.
- The Marriage license is to be brought to the rehearsal and presented to the priest at that time. The license and parish register are witnessed and the license is signed and mailed by the officiating priest following the ceremony.
- Flowers: Flowers placed in the church are symbolic of the joy of the occasion and represent a thank offering to God. The arrangement of flowers is under the supervision of the Church Office, who will be glad to advise about the quantity and kind of flowers which might be appropriate. The couple is expected to provide flowers and should make the necessary arrangements with the Church Office. All flowers must be delivered no later than 90 minutes before the wedding begins.
- Music: Our Music Director works with the couple to select music for the service. Soloists are likewise selected with the consultation of the Music Director. The Church Office will assist in providing contact information.
- Photos: Due to their distraction, no flash photographs are permitted during the ceremony. Photographs may be posed before or after the service, with a time not to exceed 45

minutes. Please ask the photographer to consult with the priest prior to the service. Video recordings are permitted with no additional lighting. The officiating priests will instruct the photographer about the location for filming permitted in the church.

- Rice/Seed: We ask that no rice, paper, confetti, petals, birdseed or anything else be thrown in the Church or on the Church property. These are not healthful for wildlife, they are a safety issue (slipping) for guests, and they harm our floors.
- Rehearsal: A rehearsal of the entire wedding party is usually held the day before the wedding at a convenient time, but to start no later than 5:30 pm. The rehearsal is conducted by the priest, assisted by the Director of Music and the Altar Guild representative. No wedding consultants or outside directors are permitted to participate in the rehearsal.
- Programs: We are delighted to assist couples with crafting a service bulletin for weddings. Printing is done by the couple. Any printed materials to be used during the wedding must be approved by the officiating priest at least two weeks in advance.
- Parking: Couples are to speak with the Parish Administrator to make arrangements for parking.
- Fees: Please see the Church Office for a list of up-to-date fees. *There is no fee for the clergy.* There are however, certain fees associated with music, flowers, reception etc.