

St. James Episcopal Church - Altar Guild Wedding Preparation Guide

The Altar Guild of St. James Episcopal Church is pleased to assist you in planning your wedding ceremony, and we will do our very best to ensure a joyful and memorable occasion. Please take a few moments to familiarize yourselves with the information contained in this guide, as well as the general St. James Wedding Policy.

The following is a link to the St. James Episcopal church Wedding Policy: <http://www.stjamesamesbury.org/who-we-are-2/weddingscivil-unions/>

About Flowers and Décor:

Flower delivery- The florist should contact the St. James office well in advance of the wedding date to arrange delivery times, *to ensure the assigned Altar Guild member is available to be at the church to take delivery.* Once delivered to the church, the Altar Guild member in attendance will ensure placement in a manner that is appropriate to and protective of the furnishings of the sanctuary.

You may choose to place floral arrangements in any (or all of) the following positions only:

- On the retable (the shelf behind and above the altar) – sized so there is no obstruction of the center brass cross.
- Floor in front of the altar.
- Steps leading up to the choir box in front of the altar.
- At the back of the church.

An Altar Guild Member can assist you and/or your florist in determining floral arrangement measurements to best fit these locations: The shelf behind the altar (known as the retable) is 6 (six) feet in length and 9 (nine) inches deep. The center brass

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cross which sits on the retable is 31 inches tall, and 10 inches wide at the base. To leave ample space around the cross so it is not obstructed, think about leaving at least 1 foot on either side of dead center (so a minimum 2 foot gap in the middle.) For the retable, flower arrangements that can rest flat up against the wall are ideal, given the shallow depth of the shelf. Arrangement height should not be taller than the cross itself. Flower arrangements set on the floor in front of the altar should be sized to allow free access from the sanctuary and across the front of the altar, especially if your ceremony will include Celebration of The Eucharist.

Pew markers or bows are permitted, however, they may not be attached with adhesives of any sort, nails or push-pins. Pew clips are recommended. The church owns a limited supply, which are available for use.

Furnishings – The following items are available in the Church:

- Chancel table (altar) with white frontal (long cover) and two brass candlesticks with white candles, which will be lit during the service.
- One brass cross, centrally located on the wooden shelf behind the altar.
- Two ornate chairs.

Fixed furnishings or ornaments in the Church may not be otherwise altered or removed. A “Unity Candle” is not used in the Episcopal Marriage service.

Candelabras are not permitted.

No aisle runners are permitted in the Church.

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No rice, confetti, balloons, birdseed, rose petals, or other materials shall be thrown in or around the Church or Chapel.

Altar Guild Fee: -A base fee of \$100.00* is charged for the following services of the Altar Guild: One Altar Guild member is required to be present at all rehearsals and ceremonies within the designated time parameters, attend one preparation meeting to plan with the couple prior to the wedding, and will be responsible for preparing the sanctuary and returning all areas to be ready for Sunday morning service. All aspects of the church hall must be left clean and in good condition, as found on arrival, to be ready for Sunday morning services.

This constitutes an expected four to five hour time commitment.

Planning meeting and e-mail summary	1 hour
Rehearsal	1 to 2 hours
Ceremony	2 hours

**Additional charges will be assessed for additional time spent over five hours, and/or requests for additional Altar Guild attendants, per schedule of fees (available at time of wedding planning meeting.)*

All fees are payable to St. James Episcopal Church, in advance of the Wedding Ceremony.

Wedding Parking—If additional parking is desired for guests, the following link will help to guide you to the location of all downtown public parking areas. There are a number of lots for public parking in the nearby downtown area.

<http://www.discoveramesbury.com/pdf/AmesWebMapLarge.pdf>