



# Riverside Weddings

AT GLORIA DEI

## **Guidelines for Self-Uniting Weddings in Gloria Dei Church:**

As a congregation committed to following Jesus, we at Gloria Dei want to support couples who are ready for the adventure of marriage. We rejoice with you in this time, even as Jesus rejoiced at the wedding where he performed his first miracle (*see the Gospel of John, chapter 2, verses 1-11*).

At Gloria Dei, we believe that God designed marriage to be a source of joy for the couple, helping each person to grow in love for their partner, for God, and for the world around them. In marriage, each spouse commits to providing help and comfort to their partner, in both prosperity and adversity. We believe that marriage is to be unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong – and we encourage couples to seek the love of God and the support of their community. Gloria Dei hopes to be a community for you.

The Gloria Dei Church building has been established for Christian worship services – to include the celebration of marriages. While our congregation is committed to the Episcopal tradition, we recognize that no particular church or denomination has God entirely figured out, and we believe that God seeks to be in relationship with all people. Therefore, we also want to support couples who might not be part of our tradition, but who are open to inviting God into their special day. If that is you, we ask that you follow these 5 guidelines when planning your service:

1. The service should contain some statement of your beliefs about the purpose of marriage that is in keeping with the broad Christian tradition.
2. The service should include one or more readings from the Bible. There are many verses for your consideration. *Suggested readings include:*
  - Ecclesiastes 4:9-12a: *Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other ...*
  - 1 Corinthians 13:1-8a: *If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ...*
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:11,15-21: *Encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. ...*
3. Your exchange of vows should in some way acknowledge God's love and help. *Such as:*
  - With God's help, may you each bring your best self to the other. May you each bring intelligence and commitment as well as faith to the task that is set before you. May you maintain enduring respect and trust. May all who follow your lives with interest and affection have cause often to rejoice, not only in your happiness, but also in your brave and generous living.
  - In the name of God, I take you..." or "With God as my witness..."
4. The service should include a blessing by Gloria Dei's priest (or another Episcopal priest), and should include a time of prayer for the couple, for the community gathered, and for the world.
5. We will ask you to sign a *Declaration of Intention* indicating that you accept the guidelines noted above. The priest at Gloria Dei will provide further resources, talk with you to answer questions, and assist you in your planning process.

