

Asking permission?

Our church teaches that marriage is intended by God to be a lifelong union of husband and wife. We also understand that not all marriages remain intact. Divorce is a part of our lives and a sign that we do not yet live in a perfect world. We accept those who have been divorced and those seeking remarriage in our church, and they are welcome to receive communion in our services.

Because the church believes marriage is intended to be a lifelong union, for an Episcopal priest to perform a new marriage, he or she needs to request permission from the local bishop.

This is different from the process used by the Roman Catholic Church, where the couple requests permission to be remarried. In the Anglican church, the priest requests permission to perform the service. It's not like the Bishop has a lot of authority over you, though he or she does retain authority within the church, to govern the sacraments, and the bishop has authority over those who minister in the church.

In this way, the church struggles to be pastorally sensitive to those who have gone through a divorce while upholding its teaching that marriage is intended to be a lifelong union. For more information, please speak to one of our pastors.

*We invite you to join us
for the journey of a lifetime.*



**Experience the difference that knowing
God's promises can make in your life.**

FAQ's

Frequently Asked Questions

■ **My previous spouse died. Do these guidelines effect me?** No.

■ **How long before a wedding date should we contact the pastor?**

Since the pastor can not agree to officiate at your ceremony until he or she has received permission from the bishop, it is best to get started on this first, even before setting a date.

■ **Does it take a long time for the Bishop to send back his consent?**

When only one previous marriage is involved the process is quite speedy. You can move through all the steps in as little as 30 days. Where there have been multiple marriages in the past, the process takes longer, up to 6 months.

■ **Who came up with these rules?**

The guidelines we use are those given to us by the Bishop, the Diocese of Virginia, and by long standing custom of the Anglican Church.

■ **But ...**

Please contact one of the Pastors with your questions and concerns. We're here to help you build stronger relationships. We're sure that's also what you want too ...

**For more information,
call us at 703.971.5242**

**or visit us online at
www.dovefromabove.org**

About Remarriage in the Church

*... because we realize we
do not live in a perfect world*

**We are told, "What God
has joined together let no
one put assunder."**

**But what happens
when a marriage ends?**

Is remarriage possible?



Church of the Spirit

**KINGSTOWNE COMMUNITY CHURCH
5775 Barclay Drive ♦ Kingstowne, VA 22315
703.971.5242 ♦ www.dovefromabove.org**

Info Sheet

Let us know how we can help you:

- I'd like more information about arranging for a wedding at Church of the Spirit.

Please provide your contact information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Bride's Name: _____

Groom's Name: _____

Prospective Dates: _____

We would like to hold the service:

- at Church of the Spirit
- at a nearby traditional-style church
- outside
- other

Diocesan Guidelines for Remarriage

Where do I start?

After you have read through this brochure, please feel free to contact one of our pastors to make your intentions known. We can then help you walk through the process.

We will be glad to work with you to meet your needs, although at the same time we need to follow the guidelines given to us by the Bishop.

Why follow the guidelines?

You are probably the exception to the rule, but experience has shown that there are many additional strains to couples entering a remarriage. These guidelines have been developed over many years to offer you a chance to:

- ◆ realistically and honestly face the causes for the failure of a previous marriage or marriages
- ◆ guarantee that the spouses and children from previous marriage(s) are cared for properly
- ◆ address whether there are patterns of behavior that are destructive to building a strong relationship in accordance with God's teaching
- ◆ provide a chance for grieving, healing and a renewed sense of joy in a new relationship
- ◆ invite God to bless your new relationship fully

The guidelines deliberately discourage unions that are formed in reaction to the stresses of a prior union; hence, the emphasis on time to heal and settle issues from a prior union.

What are the steps?

The guidelines provide a minimum diocesan standard to be used by the local clergy. These steps include:

- ◆ No date for a wedding can be announced or firmly set until this process has been followed and the Bishop's consent has been given.
- ◆ Where there has been only one previous marriage, the pastor will meet with the couple to discuss the reasons for the dissolution of the first marriage, and then file a request for consent with the Bishop's office.
- ◆ The couple, or at least one party with the support of the other must intend to live out their marriage in the community of faith as members of some congregation.
- ◆ When one or both parties has been married more than once, they are to seek professional counseling by someone other than the pastor. The counselor will send a written statement to the pastor expressing his or her opinion of why the previous marriage failed, and whether or not the couple has a reasonable chance to establish a lifetime union of mature intimacy. A copy of this report needs to be sent to the Bishop with the letter requesting his consent.
- ◆ One year must have passed since the final decree ending a marriage before requesting permission for a couple to enter into a new marriage.

Since the process takes some time to complete, it is best to get started early, and certainly long before making reservations for a reception hall ...