



WEDDING CEREMONIES AT ST SOPHIA

- PLEASE READ CAREFULLY -

1. GENERAL

Thank you for choosing to get married at our Cathedral. Once we have agreed on a date for the ceremony, it will be entered as a provisional date in the church diary and will be held for 14 days. In order to confirm the date, you will need to pay a deposit of £200 (see Section 3, Payment Information). If you do not, your booking will be cancelled automatically. However, we would be grateful if you could let us know as soon as possible if you wish to cancel your booking so that we make the slot available to someone else.

2. PAPERWORK

In order to have a wedding at St Sophia you must do the following:

a) Civil Union: The religious service must be preceded or accompanied by a civil union. If the former, you can arrange this with your local town hall. If the latter, you must arrange for a registrar from Westminster Council's Register Office to come to the church on the day of your wedding. You will then sign the civil union papers straight after the ceremony. We do not have a specific contact but you can call the department on: 0207 641 7500. The website is:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/contact-westminster-register-office>

The religious ceremony cannot go ahead unless we have proof that you have made either of the above arrangements.

b) Certificate of non-impediment (Πιστοποιητικό Αγαμίας): At the earliest, six months before your wedding you will need to show us your certificates of non-impediment. If you have lived in the UK for over 3 years and you are

Greek Orthodox, you will be able to receive these certificates from St Sophia or other Greek Orthodox churches around the UK.

The first step is to arrange a meeting with one of the priests. At the meeting you must bring with you copies of your baptism certificates and your passports. You must also come along with two witnesses who will need to bring their own passports. The witnesses do not have to be Greek Orthodox but they cannot be close family members or your partner's family.

If either the bride or groom is not Orthodox but of another Christian denomination, s/he will need to show us his/her certificates of baptism.

The certificates of non-impediment are only valid for 6 months. If your wedding is over six months away you should not yet make the appointment.

c) Permission to marry (Άδεια Γάμου): Once you have your certificates of non-impediment the priest will apply, on your behalf, to the Archdiocese of Thyateira and GB (5, Craven Hill, London W2 3EN, Tel.: +44 (20) 7723 4787) in order for you to be granted the permission to marry. A charge is applied for this paperwork, therefore please bring a cheque at your meeting with us or you can pay the Archdiocese directly by bank transfer. Account details can be provided upon request.

d) Mixed religious weddings

It is possible to have a religious wedding with a non-Orthodox person in St Sophia, as long as that individual is Christian and baptised. We will need to see proof of his/her baptism.

The Greek Orthodox Church does not perform religious weddings between Christians & non-Christians. If such a union is to take place, the non-Christian party must be baptised.

3. PAYMENT INFORMATION

The total cost of a wedding at St Sophia is £550. A non-refundable, non-exchangeable booking fee of £200 is required upon confirmation of a wedding date. The balance of £350 will have to be paid two weeks before the ceremony is due to take place. The fees must be paid either by cheque or by bank transfer **not cash**. If you wish to make an additional donation to the church/priests on the day, you may do so at your discretion.

If you wish to book the Choir there is an additional £600 charge and for lighting the cross another £100. A deposit of £60 for the Choir must be transferred along with the £200 deposit for the church.

Cheques must be made payable to the "**Greek Cathedral St Sophia**". Please put the date of the booking and your name at the back of the cheque.

Bank transfers must be sent to: **HSBC, Greek Cathedral St Sophia, Sort code: 40-05-33, Account number: 61506935**. Please put your name as reference when making an online payment.

4. LIST OF ITEMS REQUIRED

- Στέφανα/Two crowns
- Δαχτυλίδια/Rings
- Ένα μπουκάλι κουμανταρία/Bottle of koumandaria
- Δύο λαμπάδες (max 8cm)/Two large white bridal candles (optional)
- Δίσκος με κουφέτα ή ροδοπέταλα/Silver tray for koufeta & rose petals
- Ποτήρι κρασιού/Wine goblet (optional)

5. ON THE DAY

Wedding times must be strictly adhered to. We do understand that sometimes a few minutes' delay is unavoidable, however, couples arriving very late must realise that they may miss their turn and will have to wait until all other ceremonies are completed.

Acceptance of this condition is binding on all couples that have their wedding at our church. No exceptions will be made and the church will accept no responsibility for the consequences of such a delay.

Strictly no confetti or rice permitted inside or outside the Cathedral.

6. PARKING

There is no on-site parking at our Cathedral, however there are parking meters on Moscow Road and the surrounding area. Parking is free on a single yellow line or pay and display meter after 1.30pm on a Saturday and all of Sunday.

Last updated Nov 2020

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the office of the Greek Cathedral St Sophia, tel.: +44 (0) 203 887 0692 or +44 (0) 207 229 7260, email: info@stsophia.org.uk, web: www.stsophia.org.uk