

Greek Orthodox Church of Zoodohos Peghe

3573 Bruckner Boulevard, Bronx, NY 10461

Phone: 718-823-2030 ♦ Fax: 718-823-2393 ♦ Email: secretary@zoodohospeghe.org

Frequently Asked Questions



Must we be members of Zoodohos Peghe Church to be married here?

Yes. We require that at least one member of the couple be a baptized and professing Greek Orthodox Christian.

One of us is Greek Orthodox Christian and the other comes from another Christian denomination. Can we be married at ZP?

Interfaith marriages require special care and counsel. If a couple is considering such a marriage, they should seek the counsel of their religious leaders long before attempting to plan a marriage service. If the pastor at ZP is confident that in marriage the couple can continue to live and express their faiths while fulfilling the expectations of Christian marriage, he will be glad to officiate at the service.

Does the church permit divorced persons to remarry?

Yes. The gospel is not about punishing people for past failures, but about inviting them to new life. However, before the church will marry a divorced person, it is essential that an honest assessment of the former marriage be taken. The Greek Orthodox Church allows you to marry up to three times. It is implied that both a civil and an ecclesiastical divorce has been granted for the previous marriage. If either of you petitions for a second marriage you must have in hand both the civil and the ecclesiastical divorce. If you do not have the ecclesiastical divorce you must contact your local pastor immediately. An ecclesiastical divorce process may take as long as six months. We advise you to start early. Your wedding request will be denied if you do not have all the necessary documentations.

Who can serve as officiating pastor?

Each wedding at ZP will be officiated by our pastor or in his absence by a member of the clergy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. You may request the presence of a specific visiting pastor. Please have that pastor contact the pastor of ZP. If you are interested in having a non-Orthodox pastor participate in the service, you should indicate that to the ZP officiating pastor during your first meeting. Ecumenical weddings have long been welcomed at ZP. Clergy of non-Christian traditions can be invited to participate in the service only after the approval of the officiating pastor.

Can we include family and friends in service leadership?

It is very appropriate for family and friends to be invited to participate in the leadership of the service, often being asked to read passages of Scripture. We ask that you keep in mind, however, that in the same way that weddings are times of great joy, they can also be times of considerable stress. Children are particularly vulnerable to these pressures and are often not well served by being expected to be a part of the wedding party. We discourage the inclusion of children younger than 10 years of age as flower girls, ring bearers, junior bridesmaids or groomsmen.

How long is a typical service?

Services range in length from forty-five minutes to an hour. Because of the complexities of traveling within the city and the difficulty out-of-town guests may have finding the church, we suggest that the bridal party be in church twenty minutes prior to the start of the wedding and the bride five to ten minutes before the start of the wedding service.

Is the church accessible for people with disabilities? Yes. ZP has been officially designated an "Accessible Congregation" by the Council on Disabilities. There is wheelchair accessibility from the side of the church, and several places within the sanctuary accommodate people with walkers or wheelchairs. ADA bathroom facilities are also available.

How do we obtain a wedding license?

A New York State license is required for marriage, though it need not be secured in New York City. It is always advisable to check the hours of operation at the Office of Marriage Licenses at City Hall if the license is being obtained in Manhattan. The license is good for 60 days, but not for the first 24 hours after it has been issued. A blood test is not necessary. If one or both of you has been divorced, it is necessary to present a copy of all pertinent official court divorce papers to obtain a marriage license. After the ceremony the wedding license needs to be signed by you, two witnesses (often the Best Man and Maid/Matron of Honor) and the officiating pastor. It will then be mailed by the Church Office to the Clerk of the City of New York for registration purposes. Thereafter you may secure a copy of your marriage license from the City. (Please note, the city does not automatically mail a copy of the signed license to you after the license is registered.) If you need proof of your marriage immediately following the wedding, please indicate that to the officiating pastor, who can make a photocopy of the completed license and give it to you before you leave the church.

What about the language used during the wedding?

The ceremony may be performed in both Greek and English or whatever combination is comfortable to you. Let the officiating pastor know of your decision at the pre-marriage conference.

What about a printed program for our wedding?

Couples often enjoy having a printed program, especially if the service will include non-Orthodox Christian participation. Programs can be produced and an outside printer can be engaged. A copy of the order of service will be provided at the pre-marriage conference.

Will the pastor attend the rehearsal dinner and reception?

Though the pastor appreciates the hospitality of such invitations, his schedules do not permit him to participate in the festivities that follow rehearsals and the wedding service. If there is no wedding or other official event following your service, the pastor will happily join you at your reception and offer a blessing as the dinner begins. He will then ask to be excused – Saturdays and Sundays are workdays for him! Please do not plan on including him for dinner.