

INFORMATION REGARDING WEDDINGS

St. John's Episcopal Church
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Christian Marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman. In the Episcopal Church it is required that one, at least, of the parties be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested by at least two witnesses; and that the marriage conform to the laws of the State and the Canons of the Church (Book of Common Prayer, 1979)

This guide explains the various requirements and expectations concerning Holy Matrimony at St. John's Episcopal Church. Other suggestions in this book are included to help you plan your wedding.

REQUIREMENTS

All weddings at St. John's must be performed in accordance with the liturgy and canons (Church Law) of the Episcopal Church. The Rector must approve all arrangements. The following are firm requirements: 1) Possession of a marriage license issued in any County of this State. This license must be procured in advance and delivered by the couple to the clergy before the day of the wedding. 2) One of the two parties must be a baptized Christian. 3) At least thirty (30) days notice must be given to the clergy. This requirement may only be waived for compelling considerations by the clergy's direct petition to the Bishop. 4) If either party has previously been married and divorced, a special application must be made to the Bishop for his judgment. A firm recommendation from the parish clergy to the Bishop is expected. In such situations, one of the parties is expected to be a Communicant Member of the Episcopal Church, regularly attending and contributing to the Parish.

5) The couple must be willing to meet with the clergy for three conferences during normal office hours. The purpose of these meetings is to establish a relationship between the bride, groom, and rector, to plan the wedding and especially the service, and to discuss the vocation of marriage.

Since mothers of the bride are often very involved in planning the wedding, many brides and their mothers will also find it helpful to schedule an early conference with the clergy.

6) All weddings must conform to the rite of Holy Matrimony as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. The service is flexible enough to allow personalized aspects reflecting the experience and backgrounds of the couple. The couple must be willing to sign The Declaration of Intention, printed elsewhere in this booklet. This is the Church's statement concerning the nature of Holy Matrimony.

7) The date and time of the wedding must be approved by the clergy. This should be accomplished as soon as possible in consultation with the Parish calendar. The wedding date, however, will not be set until the first conference between the bride, groom and parish clergy. It is highly advisable to begin planning for a wedding one year in advance.

8) One of the parish clergy will normally coordinate all matters related to marriage preparation, the rehearsal, and the wedding itself. Guest clergy may be invited, by the parish clergy, to share in the wedding. If there is a Wedding Coordinator, that person will need to meet with the clergy and abide by all the provisions of this policy.

EXPECTATIONS

The following considerations are listed as expectations of all weddings which take place at St. John's Church.

- 1) At least one party (and hopefully both), or their parents, should be regularly attending services and contributing to the Church.
- 2) Holy Matrimony is a liturgy of the Church that occurs in the Church.
- 3) The service should ideally include the celebration of a Eucharist.
- 4) Fees are as follows:
 - a) Organist - \$250
 - b) Sexton - \$80 for housekeeping before and after the ceremony.
 - c) Candles - \$50 for aisle candles (see Candlelight Weddings). No charge for Altar Candles.

d) Clergy honorarium – \$250

These fees should be given to the parish administrator on the Monday prior to the wedding rehearsal and each honorarium should be marked and put in separate envelopes.

SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions are intended purely as a guide. The clergy are always available to make helpful suggestions as requested. The Church GPS address for invitations is:

St. John's Episcopal Church
1A N. Hanover Street
Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013

By tradition, weddings are usually not celebrated during the season of Lent and never during Holy Week, including Holy Saturday and the week following Easter Sunday.

MUSIC

All music is under the direction of the parish Director of Music who normally plays the organ for all parish weddings. The organist will be happy to suggest music and accommodate the musical tastes of the bride and groom. In selecting the music, remember that the Canons of the Church stipulate the use of sacred as opposed to secular music. Contemporary sacred music is, of course, as appropriate as traditional music. Any arrangements with a singer or instrumentalist should be made through the family, in consultation with the parish organist, who should be notified well in advance. In the past, piano, strings, harp, trumpet, and woodwinds have sometimes been added to wedding music.

REHEARSAL

The rehearsal will be conducted by the presiding parish clergy. It should be scheduled during the week before the wedding at a time when all participants will be able to attend. All participants shall arrive on time. Those who must attend include: the Bride and Groom, the Father of the Bride (or whomever is to escort her), the Maid (Matron) of honor and Best

Man, Bridesmaids and Ushers, including Ring Bearer and Flower Girl, the Organist, Singer or other musicians.

The parents and family of the Bride and Groom are welcome to attend the Rehearsal as well. Programs, if printed outside, should be provided. At all times in the church, attire appropriate to the dignity of the church is required.

FLOWERS AND OTHER DECORATIONS

The only flowers needed in the church are the two matching arrangements for the altar. These are traditionally white, but may include flowers of any color and variety. The arrangements must fit the brass liners of the church vases. So long as this is understood, any florist may be used at the couple's discretion. The arrangements of flowers must be delivered by the florist at the church at least two hours before the service. These flowers remain on the altar for the Sunday Service as a Thank Offering from the couple.

A white carpet runner is not permitted. Cloth or plastic carpet runners make footing very unsafe when placed over the church tile floor.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO

Photographs are not permitted during the Service except by someone who can use available light, at the times and places previously arranged with the clergy. The wedding may be videotaped using available light and from the back of the church. Photographs with flash, however, may be taken during the procession and recession from the back of the church. A limit of ½ hour may be used at the conclusion of the Service for photography sessions in the Church or the Church Yard. It is strongly urged that couples consider having all their photographs taken prior to the wedding.

Bulletins

Bulletins may be distributed to guests. They are especially helpful when the wedding includes the Eucharist and singing of hymns. The bride and groom might wish to include a personal message of greeting as well as the names of the wedding party. Bulletin format and content must be approved by the clergy and may be printed professionally or through the parish office. If printed by the parish office, a donation of \$100 is requested.

RECEIVING LINE

Many couples elect to receive guests immediately after the

service. The receiving line may form at the front door of the Church, or in the Church Yard, weather permitting, or in the cloister. The throwing of rice, confetti, or bird seed is prohibited.

The consumption of all alcoholic beverages and/or the use of any drugs is strictly prohibited in or on the church grounds, including the Church Yard and the rooms used by the bridal party.

RECEPTIONS

The Parish Hall may be used for receptions by members of the parish. Kitchen facilities and ample space for up to 150 persons is available. There is a three (3) hour time limit for receptions. Alcohol usage is limited to wine or wine punch with approval of clergy.

Catering arrangements are the responsibility of the wedding party, and must be coordinated through the church office. Rental fees are \$500 for contributing members of the parish.