

## All Souls Episcopal Church Holy Matrimony

### *All Souls' Episcopal Church*

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Holy Matrimony "is an honourable estate, instituted of God, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church... and therefore is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in fear of God." (The 1928 Book of Common Prayer, page 300).

Your desire to have a church wedding indicates that you want to ask God's blessing upon your marriage. We at All Souls are delighted that is your desire.

A wedding in the Episcopal Church is the celebration of a sacrament, and as such is directed toward God. The congregation is present to witness the vows you will make before God and to join with you in praying for God's blessing upon your marriage. This does not prevent you from having a beautiful wedding, but it does set certain limitations upon what may properly be done. Concerning weddings at All Souls all the provisions of the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer shall be followed.

In order to establish a uniform policy with regard to weddings at All Souls' Church, and to make known the customs of the Church, what follows is intended to be of help to you in planning your wedding. Your wedding service is important, but the marriage that grows out of it is even more so.

*Information for Holy Matrimony*

## Wedding Policies and Information

It is customary that, except for weighty cause, weddings are not celebrated during the Lenten season. Nor may weddings be scheduled on Saturdays between 4:00 and 7:30 p.m. when they would conflict with our regularly scheduled service.

### MEETING WITH THE CLERGY

The National Canons (Church Law) of the Episcopal Church concerning Holy Matrimony (enclosed with these guidelines) require the couple to meet with the officiating clergy for premarital instruction as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony. Therefore, it is extremely important for the bride and groom to arrange for a conference with one of the priests of All Souls as far in advance of the ceremony as possible. This conference should be held **before any announcement is made, the date set, or invitations are printed.** Invitations should not go out until all arrangements have been made with the clergy. Those who may desire the use of the Church must request one of the priests of All Souls to perform the ceremony. Couples who desire another Episcopal priest, or a minister of another denomination, to assist will consult the All Souls clergy for their recommendation, and will be governed thereby.

### WEDDING CONSULTANTS

While a wedding consultant may be helpful with plans surrounding the wedding one will not be needed for the ceremony itself. At an Episcopal wedding, the officiating priest is in charge of all things pertaining to the service.

## DECORATIONS

The focus and purpose of our church is the centering of our lives in Christ Jesus. It is therefore important that nothing detract from or obscure the meaning of the service or the flow of the service.

### **Flowers:**

Altar flowers are delivered before 4:30 p.m. on Friday for our weekend services so it is not necessary for you to supply a fresh arrangement. However if you wish something special, you may do so keeping in mind the following:

A. During the Church's holiday seasons, Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, the Church's decorations will be left in place. At all other times you may place flowers on the retable (behind the Altar). No flowers may be placed directly on the Altar. It should be remembered that flower arrangements may never dominate the Altar or obscure the Altar Cross.

B. Floral arrangements may be also placed in the Narthex, the Church windows or on the ends of the pews.

C. All floral material must be live (i.e. not dried or silk) and should remain in place for the enjoyment of the remaining week's services (Sunday or otherwise). Whether you use the regular Sunday flowers or choose your own, please notify the Church office as soon as possible. The Church recommends using Trochtas or New Leaf Florists.

D. Rose petals may not be thrown. The petals stain the slate floors and tilework inside and outside of the

Church.

**Candles:**

The candles used during your wedding service are the six office lights on the Altar. You may also place candles in the Church windows, but you must use glass hurricanes that are supplied by your florist.

**MUSIC**

All details regarding the music at your ceremony are under the direction of Dr. Laura van der Windt, the parish organist. This will insure that the music selected will be in keeping with the dignity, beauty and sacredness of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony and in keeping with the tradition of the Episcopal Church.

You need to meet with the church organist at least one month prior to your wedding to discuss your selections and fees.

**PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO TAPING**

The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony should be free from any intrusions. Guests will be asked not to take either photographs or videos during the ceremony i.e. after the bridal party enters the nave until the embrace.

Professionals will be allowed to take photos of or tape during the ceremony but will not be allowed to use lights/flash. They are asked to remember the sacred nature of the service. Therefore we ask that they place themselves well behind the congregation and remain unobtrusive. We also ask that they be respectful of the church and not use the hymnals or prayer books to prop up cameras, etc. The

Columbarium Chapel is for prayer and meditation and we ask that it is used only for this purpose. It is expected that professionals will be appropriately dressed.

**ACOLYTES**

Should you wish, one of the church's acolytes may be available for lighting the office lights and carrying the Cross.

**CUSTODIAL INFORMATION**

Our housekeeper is responsible for the opening, closing, and cleaning of the building for both the rehearsal and the wedding. Please check with the Church office as to hours that the church building is open, etc. Arrangements must be made through the Church office as to delivery of flowers, dresses, etc. (dates and times).

**RECEPTIONS**

The Parish Hall is available for receptions. The bride and groom need to secure their own caterer, and to coordinate the details of the reception with the officiating priest and Church office. Reception set up form (available in the office) must be filled out and returned to the Church office at least 1 week prior to the reception.

**FEES**

Fees for weddings are set as follows:

Organist - \$200.00

(Additional charges may be for extra rehearsal time, etc. please check with organist)

Sexton (Reception) - \$150.00

Wedding Coordinator - \$100.00

The wedding coordinator will be at the Church 2 hours before the service.

Fees are made payable to individuals performing the above service and are to be paid at or before the rehearsal.

**From the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church:**

**TITLE I, CANON 18**

**Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony**

Sec. 1 Every Minister of this Church shall conform to the laws of the State governing the creation of the civil status of marriage, and also to the laws of this Church governing the solemnization of Holy Matrimony.

Sec. 2 No Minister of this Church shall solemnize any marriage unless the following conditions are complied with:

- (a) He shall have ascertained the right of the parties to contract a marriage according to the laws of the State.
- (b) He shall have ascertained that both parties understand that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will, and with intent that it be lifelong.
- (c) He shall have ascertained that both parties freely and knowingly consent to such marriage, without

fraud, coercion, mistake as to identity of a partner, or mental reservation.

- (d) He shall have ascertained that at least one of the parties has received Holy Baptism.
- (e) He shall have instructed both parties as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony, or have ascertained that they have both received such instruction from persons known by him to be competent and responsible.

Sec. 3. No Minister of this Church shall solemnize any marriage unless the following procedures are complied with:

- (a) The intention of the parties to contract marriage shall have been signified to the Minister at least thirty days before the service of solemnization; *Provided*, that for weighty cause, the Minister may dispense with this requirement, if one of the parties is a member of his Congregation, or can furnish satisfactory evidence of his responsibility. In case the thirty days notice is waived, the Minister shall report his action in writing to the Bishop immediately.
- (b) There shall be present at least two witnesses to the solemnization of the marriage.
- (c) The Minister shall record in the proper register the date and place of the marriage, the names of the parties and their parents, the age of the parties, their

residences, and their Church status, and the witnesses and the Minister shall sign the record.

- (d) The Minister shall have required that the parties sign the following declaration.

"We, A.B. and C.D., desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the liturgical forms authorized by this Church. We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their physical and spiritual nurture, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society, and we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto."

Sec. 4. It shall be within the discretion of any Minister of this Church to decline to solemnize marriage.

## CANON 19

### Of Regulations Respecting Holy Matrimony: Concerning Preservation of Marriage, Dissolution of Marriage, and Re-Marriage

Sec. 1 When marital unity is imperiled by dissension, it shall be the duty of either or both parties, before contemplating legal action, to lay the matter before a

Minister of this Church; and it shall be the duty of such Minister to labor that the parties may be reconciled.

Sec. 2 (a) Any member of this Church whose marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a civil court may apply to the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which such person is legally or canonically resident for a judgment as to his or her marital status in the eyes of the Church. Such judgment may be recognition of the nullity, or of the termination of the said marriage: Provided, that no such judgment shall be construed as affecting in any way the legitimacy of children or civil validity of the former relationship.

(b) Every judgment rendered under this Section shall be in writing and shall be made a matter of permanent record in the Archives of the Diocese.

Sec. 3 No Minister of this Church shall solemnize the marriage of any person who has been the husband or wife of any other person then living, nor shall any member of this Church enter into a marriage when either of the contracting parties has been the husband or the wife of any other person then living, except as hereinafter provided:

(a) The Minister shall have satisfied himself by appropriate evidence that the prior marriage

has been annulled or dissolved by a final judgment or decree of civil court of competent jurisdiction.

- (b) The Minister shall have instructed the parties that continuing concern must be shown for the well-being of the former spouse, and of any children of the prior marriage.
- (c) The Minister shall consult with and obtain the consent of the Minister's Bishop prior to, and shall report to that Bishop, the solemnization of any marriage under this Section.
- (d) If the proposed marriage is to be solemnized in a jurisdiction other than the one in which the consent has been given, the consent shall be affirmed by the Bishop of that jurisdiction.

Sec. 4 All provision of Canon I. 18 shall, in all cases, apply.