

# WEDDING GUIDELINES

## Christ Church Coronado



## WEDDING GUIDELINES

### Introduction

At Christ Church, we take great pleasure in participating in the creation of new Christian families through the celebration and blessing of marriages. When a couple present themselves to be united in Holy Matrimony, it is an occasion of great joy and thanksgiving for the entire parish; all that we do is for the purpose of facilitating the wedding ceremony, to augment the celebration of the marriage, and to ensure that the new marriage relationship is begun on a firm foundation. These goals require careful attention and work on the part of the church, the prospective bride and groom, and their families and friends. Whereas the customs and traditions of the church surrounding Holy Matrimony are derived from our sacramental theology and liturgical heritage, we must recognize that the expectations of society at large no longer reflect a Christian theological foundation. Therefore, we offer this guide as an explanation of Anglican theology and customs concerning marriage in the hope it will provide not only information about planning a wedding at Christ Church but also a sound and positive theological perspective, as well.

To begin, Christian marriage is defined in the *Book of Common Prayer* (page 422) as a solemn and public covenant in the presence of God. This emphasis upon covenant relationship as opposed to legal contract underscores the high seriousness with which the church addresses marriage. It calls for the same kind of mystical union enjoyed by God and his people Israel and by Christ and his Church. It is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God (BCP., page 423).

Once the religious seriousness with which the Episcopal Church takes the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is fully comprehended, all of the Church's expectations and traditions concerning the actual marriage rite are perfectly consistent. In fact, almost every potential conflict regarding a marriage can be avoided if all parties constantly hold before them one abiding principle: the liturgy of the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is a service of worship for the Church, just as Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist are. Therefore, marriage in the church is neither private nor personalized; it does not celebrate the ideal of romantic love between man and woman but rather the real bond of love between Christ and the Church. Marriage is not required of any Christian, but it is a sacramental relationship.

## Marriage in the Episcopal Church

Canonical requirements leave a great deal of leeway, but there are some restrictions which must be taken into account.

- ✓ At least one member of the couple must be a baptized Christian.
- ✓ At least two witnesses must be present.
- ✓ The couple must have been prepared for Holy Matrimony by a suitable premarital counseling program.
- ✓ The couple must attest that they freely and knowingly consent to the marriage and that they hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the liturgical forms authorized by the Church.
- ✓ All laws of the state must be honored.

*If either party to the proposed marriage has ever been married, the Rector may not proceed with a wedding without the Bishop's written consent.*

This process takes up to **sixty days** and as the Bishop's consent is not to be taken for granted, no date may be set nor banns published until such authorization has been received. If one partner has been the husband or wife of any other living person, a certified copy of the divorce decree must be provided to the Rector who must confirm to the bishop that such document is in hand.

## Planning a Wedding at Christ Church

The first step is to contact the Rector to discuss the wedding, any special arrangements that need to be made, and to plan for counseling. *To avoid confusion, do not announce a date until it has been confirmed by the Rector.*

If a reception at the Church is desired, the Parish Administrator must also be consulted concerning availability of facilities.

Next it is time for the couple to contact the Parish Wedding Guild Director and the Music Director. Both will want to make appointments to discuss the needs and preferences of the bride and groom for this wedding. The Wedding Guild Director is a valuable resource person who will guide and support the couple and their families until the ceremony is completed.

*At Christ Church we do not permit an outside wedding consultant to direct a wedding.*

## Premarital Counseling

Premarital counseling may vary somewhat according to the needs of the couple and the methods of the Rector. At the first meeting of the Rector with the couple, a plan for counseling will be worked out.

On occasion, the Rector may arrange for someone else he trusts to conduct the counseling where either of the couple are living.

*Suitable counseling prior to the wedding is not optional; therefore, the wedding may not take place without it.*

## Music

Bearing in mind that a wedding is a service of worship and that music must be appropriate to the occasion, we try to accommodate the tastes and preferences of the couple. The Parish Music Director normally plays for all weddings and must be consulted. If the couple wishes to engage a particular soloist and/or additional musicians, they must consult with the Parish Music Director before issuing an invitation.

Remember--the final test of the suitability of a piece of music is not its beauty, popularity, or sentimental meaning, but its appropriateness to worship in the church, and the Parish Music Director in consultation with the Rector have responsibility for making this decision. Some secular pieces which would not be permissible for use in the wedding ceremony itself might do very nicely for a party the evening before or a reception afterward; thus, preserving the integrity of the service as well as fulfilling a desire of the couple.

## Floral Arrangements and Other Decorations

Flowers for a wedding are similar to those used for other worship occasions during the season in which the wedding takes place. Though a wedding is a cause for celebration, it does not overshadow the church's celebration of Christmas, Easter, and other major Holy Days. Again, the primary consideration is the appropriateness of decorations as they contribute to, and do not detract from, the worship of the church.

No artificial flowers may be used. Only one arrangement is to be placed on the Altar. At Christ Church we do not permit the use of additional candle stands, flower stands, kneeling benches, aisle runners, pots, or urns from an outside supplier. No tacks, nails, pins, screws, or tape which will deface or permanently damage furniture, or walls may be used to secure any decorations on the church property. No rice, confetti, bubbles or other objects be thrown on the church premises because of safety hazards and the cleanup problems they pose.

During Christmas and Easter and on Pentecost, the Church is decorated more elaborately than usual with numerous arrangements. The Wedding Guild Chairman can provide information about these decorations and the effect that they would have on wedding arrangements at those times. Since the focus of the church during Lent is on spiritual growth and penitence, weddings in the church are not customary between Ash Wednesday and Easter Day.

Because of the considerable preparation involved for the principal feasts and fasts of the liturgical year, Christ Church is not available for weddings on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday or the Saturday preceding, any day of Holy Week, Easter Day, or Pentecost or the Saturday preceding.

## Photography

Photographers customarily make pictures of the wedding party before the ceremony. No photographs may be taken by anyone from the nave of the church during the wedding ceremony. As the bride and groom exit down the aisle, the photographer may shoot without flash from the Narthex (main entrance) door. Only photographers engaged by the bride and groom may take photographs. If you wish to have a photograph with the officiating Rector, be sure to ask him to remain after the service. In order to video tape the wedding, the placement of the camera or changes in the lighting must be prearranged.

Photographers should be fully informed of our policies. This will avoid any misunderstandings which may later result from being uninformed. Once the prelude music begins, no photographs may be taken until the ceremony is over and guests have had an opportunity to leave. The Wedding Guild Chairman and the photographer should have a conference prior to the day of the wedding.

**Please do not place your photographer in an untenable position by asking him or her to do something that has not been approved by the Wedding Guild Director.**

## **Special Requests**

If the couple wish to make some special arrangement for music, decoration, or other effects, we urge them to consult us before making any arrangements. We do try to be accommodating, but if we cannot comply with a particular request we will gladly explain why. Difficulties arise, if a couple or some family member makes additions or changes in the plans without consulting the staff responsible for the arrangements.

## **Acolytes**

Christ Church will provide the acolytes for the wedding. Only those who are trained and serve at Christ Church may be used for the wedding.

## **Wedding Rehearsal**

Normally, the wedding rehearsal takes place on the evening prior to the wedding. Everyone who is to have a role in the ceremony is expected to attend. Please impress upon all participants the need for promptness, as the rehearsal cannot begin until all are present. Everyone will practice the role he or she will have in the wedding, including the couple. Any participant who has a major part in the ceremony must be present at the rehearsal. Only those actually participating in the wedding must be at the rehearsal.

All others not having a part in the actual ceremony need not be present as such presence is often a distraction to the purpose of a rehearsal. The Rector, with the assistance of the Wedding Director, will conduct the rehearsal. Outside bridal consultants are not necessary and are not permitted to offer any consultation regarding the liturgical celebration.

The marriage license must be presented to the Rector at this time for safekeeping, since no wedding ceremony can take place without a valid license.

## **The Reception**

A reception after the ceremony may be held in the parish hall or in the courtyard in good weather. It is required to make the necessary reservations, (these need to be made as soon as possible after the wedding date has been set) but the Wedding Guild Director will meet with the bride and her caterer and coordinate setup with the sexton.

The kitchen is available only for serving foods prepared ahead of time. The parish and its staff cannot take the responsibility for the property of the wedding party or caterer. The caterer must leave the kitchen and the parish hall as it was found.

If the couple wishes to use the parish hall or the courtyard, they must employ the parish sexton for clean-up services. However, the sexton is not in the employ of the caterer for service duties; serving personnel must be provided as needed. It is requested that the reception end by midnight, to give the sexton a reasonable amount of time to clean up the parish hall before services on Sunday morning.

## ADMINISTRATIVE

If a couple needs the use of the parish hall on the evening before the wedding, the parish office must be contacted (619) 435-4561 and given as much advance notice as is possible. The order of service leaflet or program will be printed in the parish office. All information for the leaflet must be provided to the parish office administrator **no less than two weeks prior to the ceremony.**

If requested, Banns of Marriage may be published up to three weeks before the ceremony. Prayers of thanksgiving for the couple will be offered by the congregation during the week following the ceremony. For parishioners, prayers of thanksgiving for their marriage will be offered by the congregation each year on the anniversary of the couple's marriage.

The couple agrees to reimburse Christ Church for any damage to the Church property resulting from actions of wedding parties, guests, or persons employed to carry out services during the wedding service and/or reception.

## WEDDING MUSIC AT CHRIST CHURCH

After meeting with the rector and setting a wedding date, the couple should schedule a wedding music consultation with the Parish Music Director, Spencer Velky.

**This consultation should occur before making any specific plans for music, additional musicians, or soloists.**

Spencer will assist the couple with planning all music for the wedding. Once the music is planned, Spencer will be responsible for the music and securing any guest musicians needed. Please see the wedding guidelines for complete information.

The primary instrument for services at Christ Church is the organ.

Weddings at Christ Church are liturgical ceremonies held within the context of the Eucharist (Holy Communion). A rich variety of music, therefore, is used, including organ music, congregational hymns, a psalm and the service music sung by the congregation. Choral anthems and vocal or instrumental solos may also be used.

The parish choir may be used for weddings. Using the choir supports the congregation in singing hymns, psalms, and service music for the wedding. This is very helpful for most weddings, especially when many wedding guests are not Episcopalians. The choir can also present anthems appropriate for the celebration and blessing of a marriage.

When the entire choir is not used, a cantor or small ensemble from the choir is highly recommended to provide leadership of congregational music. The choir members at Christ Church are most familiar with our liturgy and music, and they rehearse regularly with our Parish Music Director. Guest vocal or instrumental soloists are welcome to participate in addition to our choir members, with approval from Spencer.

**WEDDING FEES**

Non-refundable deposit of \$500.00 must be paid to secure the wedding date on the Parish Calendar. The deposit will go towards the \$2,000.00 nonmember fee made payable to Christ Episcopal Church and forwarded to the parish administrator three weeks prior to wedding, for disbursement.

Breakdown of Fees:

CLERGY

CHURCH

PARISH HALL/COURTYARD

SEXTON: (Required)

WEDDING GUILD: (Required)

ACOLYTES: (per acolyte Required)

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING: No Fee

PROGRAMS: \$ (standard 8.5 x 11 black and white) wedding booklet program. \* Format includes everything from the Book of Common Prayer and music inserted into the program (BCP and Hymnal will not be required during service with this layout).

WEDDING MUSIC FEES: Basic Wedding. The fee includes meeting to plan music (hymns, service music, and instrumental music), preparing musical materials for the wedding service leaflet, securing copyright permissions as needed for the service leaflet, arranging, rehearsing and playing organ music for the wedding.

**ADDITIONAL WEDDING MUSIC FEES**

Wedding with one or two additional soloists and/or Parish Choir..... \$250/\$500

The fee includes everything listed under Basic Wedding, as well as planning and rehearsal time with Parish Choir Quartet OR instrumental soloists OR vocal soloists.

Wedding with three or four additional soloists and/or Parish choir..... \$750/\$1000

This includes everything listed under Basic Wedding, as well as planning and rehearsal time with instrumental soloists, vocal soloists, and/or Parish Choir. For each additional soloist a \$250.00 per soloist fee will apply.

**WEDDING FORMAT**

Date of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Programs Needed: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact #: \_\_\_\_\_

(**\*\*\*please note that FULL names of all must be furnished\*\*\***)

Bride (Full Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Groom (Full Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Parent (Full Name): \_\_\_\_\_ Groom's Parent (Full Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Maid of Honor: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Man: \_\_\_\_\_

Photographer: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Caterer: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Florist: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Side # of pews needed: \_\_\_\_\_ Groom's Side # of pews needed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Party responsible for billing:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions or need assistance completing this form, contact Grace Boulard, Office Manager (619) 365-8836 or Pam Bumbasi, Parish Administrator (619) 435-4561.

**THIS DOCUMENT TO BE FORWARDED TO PARISH OFFICE**

# WEDDINGS - ORDER OF PROCESSION

## PROCESSION (IN)

Acolytes

Choir

(Banner)

Groomsmen X 2

Groom            Best Man

Altar Servers

(Assisting clergy)

Celebrant

Bridesmaids X 1

Maid (Matron) of Honor

Bride or Couple

## PROCESSION (OUT)

Acolytes

The Wedding Couple

Wedding Party X 2

Choir

(Banner)

Altar Servers

(Assisting clergy)

Celebrant