

Guidelines for the Sacrament of Marriage



ALL SAINTS PARISH
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CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE is a solemn and public covenant in the presence of God. The Episcopal Church requires that at least one of the parties to be married must 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 or commonwealth and the canons of the Episcopal Church. Additionally it is required that the officiating clergy be given at least 30 days' advance notice (60 days if one of the parties has been divorced). It is recommended that couples contact the clergy six months in advance of the wedding.

Holy Matrimony celebrates and affirms the establishment of a lifelong relationship in the presence of God and representatives of society, and binds two people together in a legal and moral contract. Holy Scripture, speaking of the relationship in marriage, says, "and the two of them shall become one flesh," thus describing the intimacy of this new unit of society. The marrying couple minister the sacrament of marriage to each other; the priest confers the blessing of the church and (if so desired) presides at a Eucharist with special intention for God's guidance and continued presence in the marriage.

Any Sacrament of Marriage at All Saints will follow the order of service from The Book of Common Prayer and use the language of the ceremony, which includes references to God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The Book of Common Prayer allows many options where the couple may, with the guidance of the clergy, create a ceremony that is meaningful to them. However, clergy are not permitted to alter or change the words of the ceremony as directed by The Book of Common Prayer.

For same-sex weddings, the Episcopal Church has a rite used in its parishes to celebrate the marriage of two same-sex people to each other in the midst of Christian community. All Saints is an open and affirming congregation, and we will joyfully celebrate with you. All the guidelines for the Sacrament of Marriage apply.

PREMARITAL MEETINGS ARE REQUIRED of anyone desiring to be married in the Episcopal Church. Because marriage is a "state of life" and not merely a convenient contract to be dispensed with at will, it is required that those who wish to be married at All Saints Parish do so only after careful preparation. This generally requires three to six sessions with the Rector. In certain circumstances, meetings with another member of the clergy or a licensed therapist may be advised. The initial counseling session should take place before a definite time and date for the marriage are announced (and at least 60 days in advance). These sessions must be completed at least 30 days before the date of the wedding unless prior arrangements have been made with the Rector. There are also certain canonical requirements of the Episcopal Church that must be met. If one of the persons seeking marriage has been divorced and is seeking remarriage, it is necessary to obtain the written consent of the Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts prior to the wedding.

WHO OFFICIATES? The Rector of All Saints Parish typically officiates at all weddings in the church. Other Episcopal clergy and ministers of other denominations are welcome to assist at the written invitation of the Rector; requests for this should be discussed with the Rector well in advance. Arrangements concerning all aspects of the ceremony are the responsibility of the officiating priest. All plans affecting the service should be made in consultation with the Rector. For active members of other Episcopal congregations, we offer our hospitality and will gladly work with your Rector to ensure a beautiful and meaningful celebration of marriage.

WHEN CAN WE SCHEDULE A MARRIAGE? The Sacrament of Marriage is not celebrated during the seasons of Advent and Lent except in cases of serious, pressing, and compelling pastoral need. The parties to be married should contact the Rector at the earliest possible date to discuss the preferred date of marriage. Marriages are not scheduled for New Year's Day, Ash Wednesday, Easter Day, Pentecost,

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Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, or any day during Holy Week. By Episcopal canon law, it is within the discretion of any minister of this church to decline to solemnize any marriage.

A WEDDING LICENSE MUST BE OBTAINED two months before the wedding; the couple should contact the Clerk of the town or city where they reside to obtain a civil marriage license. The license should be given to the officiating clergy five days before the wedding.

WEDDING MUSIC is often part of the ceremony. Holy Matrimony is a service of worship in the church. All Saints Parish honors the standards of the Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Church regarding music at weddings. Please consult the Director of Music to arrange an appointment and consultation no later than 30 days before the service. All music to be played, either on the organ and/or piano, and the use of any other musical instrument and/or soloists/choir shall be approved by the Director of Music. A minimum honorarium of \$350 is required for the Church Organist; this honorarium is due even if an outside organist provides the music. An additional honorarium is offered to soloists and the choir; please consult with the Director of Music about the cost. These fees are due on or before the date of the service.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR FLOWERS should be made in consultation with the Chairperson of the Flower Committee even if you plan to use an outside florist. Flowers used for a wedding customarily remain in the church for the following Sunday services; please notify the Chairperson if the flowers will not remain in the church.

CAN WE DECORATE THE CHURCH? As weddings are a service of worship, you will want to consult with the Coordinator of the Altar Guild no less than 30 days prior to the ceremony to discuss our available church hangings, and if Eucharist is to be celebrated, to confirm the number of people attending.

CANDLE USE must conform to the customs and practices of All Saints. Generally, the following candles are used: two on the altar (required but only lit if there is to be Communion); other candles involve additional fees. The Paschal Candle is lit if the wedding falls during the Great Fifty Days of Easter. Unity candles are not part of the liturgical tradition of the Episcopal Church and are not used at All Saints. A crucifer/acolyte, if requested, will be assigned by the Rector and/or Minister of Ceremonies. Duties will include lighting of candles, carrying the processional cross, and assisting the Presider.

NO RICE OR BIRDSEED may be used anywhere inside the buildings or on the grounds of All Saints.

USHERS should be in place in the church ready to aid guests coming to the service 45 minutes before the service begins. Directions concerning greeting guests at the doors, distributing bulletins, and seating guests will be reviewed at the rehearsal.

SERVICE BULLETINS are helpful for an Episcopal wedding, especially for those guests who are unfamiliar with Episcopal liturgy. The Rector must approve your wedding bulletin before printing, and all printed bulletins should be at the church the day before the ceremony. All Saints Parish Office may prepare and copy basic bulletins for a fee (depending on the content desired) determined by the Rector.

PHOTOGRAPHS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART of wedding memories. Because a wedding is a sacred service of worship, we require the following:

1. The photographer may take pictures of the preliminaries and preparations before the service begins; of the processional entering the church; and of the wedding couple leaving the service. Flash may be used for these photographs.
2. Any photographs or video taken during the service should be taken from the back of the church (near the entrances) or from a place in the church designated by the Rector without flash and should not interfere or distract from the service. Please include this information in your wedding leaflet. If the photographer wishes to take photographs or video during the service, s/he should discuss and get verbal permission from the Rector at least one day before the wedding.
3. The church will be open two hours before the service for photographs. Pre-service photography should be completed at least 30 minutes before the start of the service.

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GETTING READY. Provisions can be made for members of the wedding party to dress at the church. Arrangements are made through the Parish Office. The wedding couple should arrange for friend(s) or relative(s) not in the wedding party to collect and remove all personal belongings including purses from dressing and waiting areas. All Saints is not responsible for personal items.

ALL SAINTS IS A SACRED SPACE frequently used by our parish community and many others in Brookline and the surrounding towns. Numerous groups use our space and may be meeting during the time of your wedding. They, too, will be asked to recognize and respect the wedding events. We ask that you honor and respect the space, caring for it and sharing it with the wider community, always remembering that this is a holy space dedicated to God. Smoking is not allowed in the parish at any time. All Saints is not responsible for the personal conduct of the wedding party or guests to the wedding or reception.

REHEARSALS are for reviewing and practicing the wedding ceremony in advance. Details regarding the wedding liturgy have been planned well in advance through meetings with the Rector. The rehearsal begins when the couple to be married, their witnesses, other attendants, ushers, readers, and others involved in the liturgy are present. The Rector is in charge of the rehearsal. Because the Rector works closely with the couple to plan the details of the ceremony, the use of outside wedding directors or consultants is generally unnecessary. Final decisions for all aspects of the ceremony are the responsibility of the Rector.

AN ON-TIME REHEARSAL DEPOSIT is required of all non-pledging members (including non-members of the church), according to the fee schedule. The deposit will be returned provided the rehearsal starts not more than ten minutes late; otherwise, it becomes an additional cost beyond the wedding fee. Rehearsals begin when all of the wedding party are present (including wedding party, readers, ushers, and other involved in the liturgy). If the Rector or clergy officiating the wedding is delayed due to an emergency, hospital visit, pastoral situation, or the like, that will not be considered a late rehearsal start time and will not be a reason for the deposit not to be returned.

RECEPTION SPACE is available at the church. The Guild Room is available for receptions. For a sit-down meal the Dining Room and Kitchen may be used. Please request a Facilities Use form, which lists the costs for both options, including charges for security receptionists and requirements regarding the service of food and beverages.

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COSTS AND DONATIONS

FEES cover the use and expenses of the church. The Rector of All Saints does not charge for his services at any wedding. It is customary, however, for a gift to be made to the Discretionary Fund of the officiating and assisting clergy. These gifts are used in the charitable work of the church. The amounts of these gifts vary but usually range from \$400 to \$500. Please make this check payable to All Saints Parish with “Rector’s Discretionary Fund” in the memo line.

There is no charge for the use of the church to pledging members of the parish, although a donation to the parish is encouraged as a symbolic action expressing the couple’s intention that their marital love will overflow to the benefit of the poor and needy, and the advancement of God’s mission on earth. We request that non-pledging members make a donation of at least \$1,000. For all weddings there will be two security receptionists on duty for a minimum of three hours at a cost of \$20 per hour per security receptionist. A Sexton (building manager) will also be on duty for both the rehearsal and service, an honorarium of \$150.00 is paid to him directly.

Donations are tax deductible; fees and honoraria are not. In the case of non-pledging members, all fees and donations are due 30 days prior to the wedding date; checks (or, if preferred, one check) should be payable to All Saints Parish. Fees associated with a wedding not taking place will be returned. Questions regarding costs should be directed to the Office Manager.

Check List of Arrangements

- _____ Initial contact with the Rev. Dr. Richard Burden, Rector: 617-738-1810, ext. 105, rector@allsaintsbrookline.org
- _____ Obtain marriage license from municipality 60 days prior to the wedding
- _____ Contact Music Director: 617-738-1810, ext. 103
- _____ Contact Flower Committee: Lynne Montross, montross@enders.tch.harvard.edu
- _____ Contact Altar Guild: Maggie Hogan, 617-566-7591, mahogan1@verizon.net
- _____ Contact Office Manager: 617-738-1810, ext. 101, office@allstaintsbrookline.org
 - Will you produce your own service bulletin?
 - Will you be leaving your flowers in the church?
 - Will your ceremony include the Holy Eucharist?
 - Will your reception be at All Saints? If yes, fill out a form to reserve the requested room(s).
 - Confirm the date/time of your rehearsal and ceremony (and reception) for placing on the All Saints master calendar.
- _____ Give check(s) for the use of church, reception room(s), Rector’s Discretionary Fund, and security receptionists to the Office Manager 30 days before the service
- _____ Pay honoraria (Organist, Soloist, Choir, Sexton) on or before the date of the ceremony

Check List of Expenses (where applicable)

- Donation for use of church by non-pledging members: \$1,000 to All Saints Parish
- Donation for use of church by pledging members: unspecified to All Saints Parish
- Honorarium for the Organist: \$350 or more if special musical requests, paid directly
- Honorarium for Soloist and/or Choir: variable, arranged with musicians, paid directly
- Donation to Rector’s Discretionary Fund: \$400–500 to All Saints Parish
- Honorarium for the Sexton: \$150 (covers both rehearsal and ceremony), paid directly
- Fee for use of room(s) for reception: consult All Saints room fee schedule, to All Saints Parish
- Fee for two security receptionists: \$20 per hour (minimum \$60 per person)
- On-time rehearsal deposit: \$250 to All Saints Parish (returned or applied to donation for use of church if rehearsal starts no more than ten minutes late)

NOTE: Donations are tax-deductible; fees and honoraria are not.