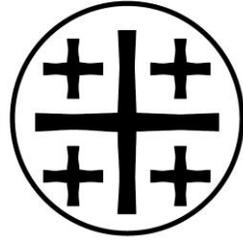
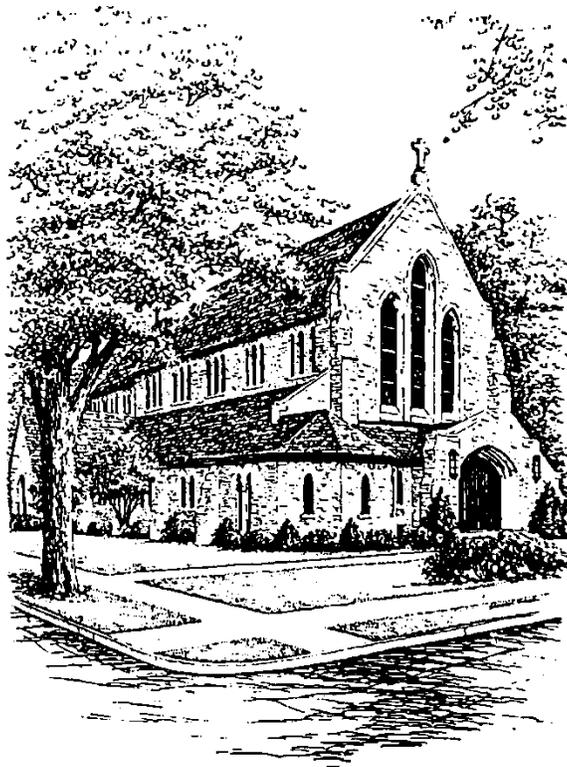


Christ Church

Episcopal



Wedding Guidelines



July 2015

Christ Church
(Episcopal)

5655 North Lake Drive
Whitefish Bay, WI 53217-4849
414-964-3368

www.christchurchwfb.org

CHRIST CHURCH

WEDDING GUIDELINES

Introduction

Welcome to Christ Church, and congratulations on your upcoming wedding! This is an exciting and important milestone in your life, and the preparations for your wedding can be both wonderful and, at times, overwhelming.

Membership

If you are a member of the church, marriage is yet another milestone on your spiritual journey within this particular community. If you are not a member, we hope that you consider becoming one! Membership at Christ Church involves coming regularly to worship. Couples considering marriage need to come at least three times to worship before meeting with a clergy person to discuss marriage. If, after coming to worship, a couple decides that they will make Christ Church their spiritual community, other commitments follow. Membership involves a commitment of one's time and talents (volunteering in some way) as well as some kind of monetary commitment to the community. On rare occasions for special circumstances, Christ Church clergy will prepare and marry non-members.

Church Canons

The canon law of the Episcopal Church prescribes the various procedures for marriage at all parishes in the church, including our own. There are, in addition, the canons of the Diocese of Milwaukee which set additional policies. All of our procedures at Christ Church reflect these norms and accustomed practices for weddings in the Episcopal Church.

- **Baptism**
The church requires that at least one of you be a baptized Christian.
- **Book of Common Prayer**
The service must be rooted in the forms and structures of the Marriage Service found on page 423 of the Book of Common Prayer. Please review this service as soon as possible. It can also be found by going to www.bcponline.org Click on "Pastoral Offices" on the left side. Click on "Pastoral Offices" again. Go to "Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage."
- **Notice**
The Episcopal Church requires a minimum of 60 days notice of marriage plans. Christ Church likes to have at least four months notice for the use of the space. In the case of a second marriage, additional time may be required to meet the Diocesan requirements for the Bishop's approval.
- **Instruction**
The church requires that couples shall be instructed as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony and receive premarital counseling from a priest or church-authorized therapist. This pre-marital instruction will cover a variety of subjects determined jointly by

the priest and the couple themselves. The sessions are an important resource for the couple in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of their relationship as they prepare for life-long commitment. When the couple lives elsewhere, and with the approval of a Christ Church priest, this instruction may be done by an Episcopal priest where the couple resides. At Christ Church we currently use the book, *The Marriage Journey*, by Linda Grenz and Delbert Glover.

- **Previous Marriage**

The Episcopal Church considers marriage a life-long union and covenant. While divorce and re-marriage are permissible, the church insists on a careful reflective process on the part of anyone considering a second marriage after an initial marriage has failed. According to canon law, no clergy of the Episcopal Church is permitted to solemnize the marriage of anyone who has been previously married and divorced without the consent and approval of the Bishop. In the case of more than one previous marriage, special procedures apply, and the couple is responsible to disclose this information before the clergy proceeds with counseling.

This procedure involves additional time with the clergy, time for documents to be prepared and submitted, and time for the Bishop to review the petition and give his judgment. No announcements of wedding dates should be made until the Bishop's approval has been received.

BASIC PROCEDURES

Date

Finding a date is the first step in the process. No date may be placed on the parish calendar until it is cleared with the rector.

Weddings are not scheduled during the season of Lent, including Holy Week. Weddings will not be scheduled on holiday weekends.

Other Clergy

If clergy other than one of our parish priests will be asked to assist at the wedding, the first step is to contact the Rector of Christ Church. The desired person can function in this capacity only with the consent and invitation of our Rector. This is mandated by the canons of the Episcopal Church.

Locations Other Than Christ Church

It is expected that the wedding will take place in the church or chapel. If not, the permission of our Rector is required. Even if a wedding takes place in another location, the marriage must be performed under the auspices of Christ Church and the Diocese of Milwaukee, using the Book of Common Prayer for the marriage rite.

Christ Church Wedding Coordinator

The Christ Church wedding coordinator provides a tour of building, familiarizes bride with

building, coordinates time of rehearsal, rehearsal itself, serves as liaison with organist for music, liaison between church and florist (space and flower questions), facilitates rehearsal with clergy, and assists during the ceremony.

Outside Wedding Coordinator

Any wedding consultant must understand that all the details of the wedding and rehearsal are under the jurisdiction of the officiating priest.

THE REHEARSAL

The rehearsal is an important part of the wedding preparation. During this time, all the details of the ceremony are finalized and participants become familiar with the practical logistics of the wedding service. A successful rehearsal facilitates a less stressful wedding day. For this reason, all wedding participants are expected to participate in the rehearsal. The rehearsal may be led either by the officiating priest or by the Christ Church wedding coordinator. Please note that because of his duties in getting ready for Sunday (along with other weekend commitments), the priest is rarely able to attend the rehearsal dinner or the wedding reception.

Length

Except in unusual circumstances, the rehearsal lasts approximately one hour. Please allow for this and travel time when scheduling the rehearsal dinner.

Scheduling

The wedding rehearsal is normally held the day before the wedding. If there is to be a rehearsal dinner, it should be scheduled not less than an hour and a half after the hour set for the rehearsal.

Participation

All members of the wedding party are expected to participate fully in the rehearsal: bride, groom, bridesmaids, groomsmen, ushers, readers, father and/or mother of the bride, flower girl, and ring bearer.

Promptness

All members of the wedding party are expected to attend the rehearsal and to be on time. It is neither fashionable nor good manners for the wedding party to be late for either the rehearsal or the wedding. Remember that when family and friends meet together for this joyful occasion, there will be the desire to talk, relax and enjoy one another's company. Be sure to allow plenty of time.

Responsibility

Our Rector or other staff clergy conduct both the rehearsal and the wedding. All details and arrangements are subject to approval of the clergy conducting the wedding.

Alcohol and Tobacco

The use of alcoholic beverages on church premises prior to or during a rehearsal or wedding is

not appropriate and is expressly forbidden. Tobacco may only be used outside the Beaumont Avenue entrance (south door). There is to be no tobacco use inside the church or at any other outside area.

Paperwork

Portions of the wedding license are filled out and signed during the rehearsal. This is also when the appropriate information is inscribed in the parish register. Please be sure to bring the license to the church either for the rehearsal, or, preferably, the day before.

HOLY COMMUNION

The sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, or Holy Eucharist, is the central act of worship in the Episcopal Church. It is appropriately the first act of the bride and groom as husband and wife. It is also appropriate that they join in this joyful feast with the family and friends who have come together to witness their vows.

Regardless, for a variety of reasons, which will be explained to you by our clergy, it may be preferable for the ceremony not to include Holy Communion.

MUSIC

First Step

After the initial conference with our Rector or staff clergy, if an organ accompaniment is desired, an appointment should be made with the parish organist to discuss and select the wedding music. The bride and groom are free to contract with other vocal or instrumental musicians, but all music must be chosen with the oversight of the clergy.

Christ Church's Director of Music and Organist

The organist is a member of the parish staff. When organ music for a wedding is desired, our organist will most likely play for the service. In the event that the organist is not available, the clergy or organist will provide names of an alternate.

Music

There is a wealth of appropriate and beautiful music suitable for wedding processions. The parish organist will be glad to play a number of selections for you during your meeting. You are responsible for contacting the organist to schedule this meeting.

Music for a wedding, as in all music of the church, should be in keeping with the religious nature of the service. The Joint Commission on Church Music in the Episcopal Church offers many helpful guidelines. The final decision as to the appropriateness of the music resides with the officiating clergy in consultation with the parish organist. This includes any instrumental or vocal soloists.

DECORATIONS

Flowers

Flowers for the wedding are the responsibility of the bride and groom. The wedding coordinator may be able to provide helpful direction.

Program

The church will provide a basic one page program. If you desire something more than this you will need to take responsibility for the design, printing and cost of the programs.

Aisle Cover

Because of safety concerns, no carpet or runner may be used for the center aisle.

GARDEN RECEPTION

Christ Church is blessed with a beautiful garden that can make for a wonderful area for a champagne toast or short reception during the summer months. If you are interested in utilizing the garden for this purpose, please coordinate well in advance with the Christ Church wedding coordinator.

The garden may be used for up to 1.5 hours after the close of the ceremony. There may be additional costs related to cleaning and coordinating. If alcohol will be served, it is the policy of the Episcopal Church that equally attractive non-alcoholic alternatives must be offered and displayed alongside alcoholic options. Only adults over the age of 21 may serve or be served alcohol.

Please note: The Great Hall of Christ Church can be used as a rain location with appropriate planning.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO RECORDING

Photographs

Because marriage is a sacrament of the Church, we have specific guidelines governing photography in the church.

Pre-wedding pictures in the Garden Area, Bride's Room or John Thompson Room (for men) must not delay the functions of the ushers, groom and bride or their attendants. Ushers need to be available for their duties one half hour before the time of the wedding. The bridal party must be out of the church one hour before the wedding to allow for set up and arrival of guests.

The Procession is a part of the Entrance Rite of the liturgy. Therefore, any photographer who wishes to step out into the aisle during the procession must be discreet.

No flash pictures may be taken during the service. Pictures may be taken without flash. However, the photographer must be unobtrusive and quiet.

Post-wedding pictures may be taken with flash from the back of the church as the bridal party recesses at the rear of the church. Post-wedding pictures may also be taken in the Garden, and at the altar rail area.

It is not appropriate at any time for the photographer to go behind the altar rail or to move any ecclesiastical furniture or equipment.

Video Recording

Video photography is allowed, if the video camera is mounted on a tripod and placed in a location designated by the clergy. Video equipment is never to be present in an obtrusive manner (e.g., stationed in the center aisle). Video photographers must follow the same procedures and limitations listed above. Be certain that this is made clear when you are discussing contracts with potential providers.

BRIDE'S ROOM

Room Locked

If they plan to dress at the church, the bride and bridesmaids may bring their dresses the day before or early on the day of the wedding. It is the bride's responsibility to arrange for delivery of dresses to the bride's room before the wedding, and to check to see that they have arrived. Please let the church staff know so that the Bride's Room may be locked after the dresses have arrived. The room will be opened an hour and one half before the service. During the service and/or reception the room will be locked. The bride will be responsible for having all personal belongings removed from the room following the ceremony and/or reception.

COSTS

Checks to cover these fees should be brought to the office along with the marriage license on Thursday before the wedding.

Church Wedding Coordinator	\$250 (written to the coordinator).
Sexton (nave space and cleaning)	\$75 (written to "Mega Cleaners")
Christ Church Clergy	\$600** (split between clergy and clergy's

	discretionary fund which benefits those who are in need).
Outside Clergy	Speak with the particular clergy person
Organist (optional)	\$250 (includes rehearsal and ceremony; written to organist)
Soloist (optional)	varies
Instrumentalist (optional)	varies
Bulletin (optional)	Black and white all-inclusive bulletin with liturgy up to 100 bulletins \$25 100-300 bulletins \$50 More than 300 bulletins \$75

**The clergy are happy to waive some or all of this fee where there is financial hardship.

OTHER WEDDING EVENTS

The clergy are flattered that sometimes a couple would like them to attend the events that surround the wedding such as the rehearsal dinner and/or the wedding reception. But our primary responsibility lies in preparing the couple for marriage and preparing and officiating at the liturgical event itself. Therefore, please do not feel obliged to invite the clergy to these extra events. Because of the variety of demands on our time and energy, we will most likely not be able to come.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

The bride and groom must apply for a wedding license at the County Courthouse where one of them is a resident. The Milwaukee County Courthouse is located at 901 N. 9th Street, phone 414.278.4070 or 414.278.4071. Applications for marriage license are taken from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday in Room 105. The cost is \$100.00 (April 2009). Payment is in cash only. **Both** of you must be present. The following documentation is required: **certified** copy of both birth certificates, each applicant's original social security card, proof of residency (drivers license), and the name, address and phone number of clergy performing the ceremony.

Waiting Period

An application must be made at least 8 days but not more than 30 days prior to the date of marriage. The license is effective for 30 days upon the issuance date.

A license issued in one county in Wisconsin to two Wisconsin residents can be used for a marriage performed anywhere in Wisconsin. If both parties are out-of-state residents, it is important to call the County Courthouse to determine requirements for a license. Blood tests and physicals are no longer required.

If either party has been married before, documentation must be presented that shows legal proof of the termination of any former marriages (**certified** copies of divorce judgments, court annulments or the death certificate of previous spouse).

The marriage license should be brought to the church office on the Thursday before the wedding. Checks for the organist, sexton, etc. should also be brought at that time.

AFTER THE WEDDING

As you begin your married life together, Christ Church wishes you all blessings and much happiness. We also take an interest in your ongoing spiritual nurture as individuals and as a couple. If you are remaining in the area, we look forward to your continued participation in the Christian life of our community. If you are relocating, we hope that you will become active in a church in the area of your new home. Either way, remember that the Episcopal Church and its clergy are a resource for you not just through your wedding day, but for all the days of your life together.