

WEDDINGS
AT
CHRIST CHURCH



*Episcopal Canons and Policies
for Marriage at Christ Church*

February 2024

TO THOSE WHO WISH TO BE MARRIED IN CHRIST CHURCH

The Book of Common Prayer commends marriage to be “honored among all people.” It is established by God in creation for the joining together of two people into a holy, lifelong union in which the two become one. A wedding is filled with joy; it is also an occasion for reverence. The two partners, standing before God and the people assembled, pledge their lives to each other. The people proclaim their support. The priest pronounces God’s blessing. “Therefore,” the Prayer Book says, “marriage 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”(p. 423).

At this important time in your lives, we offer you our prayers and best wishes as you make plans for your new life together. The clergy and staff want to help make this day as holy and joyful as it should be. This booklet will provide you with helpful information for preparing for your wedding day and, more important, for your marriage.

The celebration and blessing of a marriage is, above all else, a service of worship. A ceremony of the church, it appears with all other sacramental rites of the church in The Book of Common Prayer; therefore, our policies concerning this service are subject to the same basic rules and expectations as other services in the church. Weddings performed at Christ Church are subject to the canons, laws and policies of The Episcopal Church and of the Diocese of North Carolina. Other parish policies and customs determine practices for weddings at Christ Church, having all parties in mind. Please read the following information carefully so that our mutual expectations are understood clearly.

The following should be read prior to your first meeting with the officiating clergy person:

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING DATE

A marriage ceremony that takes place within the church implies an ongoing relationship between the couple and the church. Before a wedding date can be scheduled, persons being married in Christ Church must have been a Christ Church member for a year or be the child of one who has been a member for at least a year. Adult membership classes are held on an ongoing basis. Please talk to the clergy about attending these classes if you desire to become a member of our parish.

Please understand that a wedding date is not firmly set until it has been scheduled with the officiating clergy person. Ultimately, no date is firm until the conclusion of premarital counseling. The date must be confirmed with Margaret Quigley, Wedding Coordinator, and the Organist/Choirmaster. In the event that the Bishop's dispensation is required (in the case of divorced persons), the date is not firmly set until the Bishop's permission is received by the officiating clergy.

Weddings normally are conducted at Christ Church on Saturdays. Weddings are not conducted during Lent, Advent or on other Saturdays that conflict with key programs of the parish.

If two weddings are scheduled on one day, the second wedding scheduled must take place no less than three (3) hours prior to or after the first wedding scheduled. If a reception is to be held at the church, the wedding must begin no later than 4 p.m.

PREPARATION

Because of the importance of entering into marriage, The Episcopal Church requires premarital preparation with the officiating priest for all persons married in the church. The priest, or a person appointed by the priest, will meet with you to talk not only about the service, its meaning and its design, but also about the dynamics of a lifelong union. The duration of this preparation is at the discretion of the officiating clergy.

A minimum of 30 days' notice is required prior to any wedding in the Church. When there has been a prior marriage and divorce, a minimum of six (6) weeks is required. Before a definite date is set, Margaret Quigley must meet with both parties. Formal announcements involving the use of the church should not be made prior to this meeting.

The Bishop must give special dispensation for marriage of persons who have been previously married and whose marriage has been dissolved by a civil authority. In the case of divorce, the officiating priest may request the persons to work with a clinical counselor. In the case of more than one divorce (by either party), a year's waiting period is required during which time the persons are required to work with a clinical counselor, and a written report is received by the officiating clergy. This is a diocesan guideline established by the Bishop. The officiant shall in all cases after divorce write the Bishop stating that he/she has prepared the couple for Christian marriage, that they have signed the Declaration of Intention, and that he/she requests dispensation to celebrate and bless the marriage. Copies of the divorce decree must be given to the officiating priest before the letter of request for dispensation can be written.

Marriage licenses issued in North Carolina may be used in any county in the state, and the marriage ceremony must be performed within North Carolina. Premarital physicals are not required. Applicants who wish to obtain a marriage license in Wake County may complete their application online at www.wakegov.com/rod or in person at the Wake County Register of Deeds, 300 S Salisbury Street, Suite 1700. Please visit the website for additional information and requirements.

Marriage license must be submitted to Margaret Quigley at least two (2) weeks prior to the marriage. The ceremony cannot be performed unless the officiant has the marriage license in hand. Ten (10) days following the ceremony, you may request a certified copy of your Wake County license online at <https://wakerod.permitium.com>, or in person at the office where you obtained your license.

THE WEDDING GUILD

The purpose of the Wedding Guild is to assist the Christ Church clergy when they perform the sacrament of Holy Matrimony. It should be remembered that the Wedding Guild consists of volunteers and every effort is made to help the two persons and their guests have a joyous worship experience at Christ Church.

A member of the Wedding Guild will contact you to set up an appointment approximately two (2) months prior to your wedding date. Margaret Quigley will provide you and the wedding guild member with the contact information.

THE CEREMONY

Weddings at Christ Church are conducted in accordance with The Book of Common Prayer (1979). The parish clergy welcome the celebration of Holy Eucharist as part of the wedding service, or it may be celebrated with the wedding party and family prior to the rehearsal. When Holy Eucharist is celebrated at the wedding service, the wedding party and the congregation are invited to join those being married in receiving Holy Communion. While it is the policy of Christ Church that all baptized Christians are welcome to join in receiving Holy Eucharist, there are sometimes circumstances in which it may seem best not to celebrate the Eucharist. Decisions about this should be made three months prior to the wedding date in consultation with the priest who will officiate.

A member of the clergy staff of Christ Church will officiate at all weddings at Christ Church. Other clergy members may assist upon approval of the officiating clergy person.

The officiating clergy person, with the assistance of the Wedding Guild, will direct the rehearsal, ceremony and any other details. Professional or other outside wedding directors are not invited to participate in the rehearsal or the wedding.

The Church/Chapel will open two (2) hours before the wedding is to start. All participants must be present at the church 90 minutes before the ceremony.

Seating capacity is 60 in the chapel and 550 in the church. Special seating of family members should be planned in advance and communicated to the Wedding Guild two (2) weeks before the rehearsal. Needlepoint pew markers are used to designate pews for the family.

Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on church premises.

Flowers must not be strewn inside the church.

Birdseed or rose petals should be used in lieu of rice outside.

The groom and best man customarily wait in the library prior to the ceremony. The bride and her bridesmaids may dress in the parlor and/or a conference room prior to the ceremony.

For security reasons, valuables should not be left unattended. A friend or wedding planner/coordinator should be appointed to remove all personal articles from the space used by the wedding party prior to the ceremony.

REHEARSALS

All members of the wedding party must be present and on time for the rehearsal. Volunteer members of the church, such as the Wedding Guild and Altar Guild, will expect to leave the church one hour after the start of the rehearsal. Please respect their offering of time. *The rehearsal will start on time regardless of who is present or absent.* We suggest that only those who are participants of the wedding party and parents of the couple be invited to attend the rehearsal. The officiating clergy, only, will direct the rehearsal, assisted by the Wedding Guild. The usual procedure is to place everyone in proper position and walk them briefly through the ceremony using cue words, then rehearse going out of the church or chapel. The officiating clergy person will then show the wedding party how to process properly. A second brief walk-through and retiring procession follows. This is generally sufficient. The organist will be on hand to give musical cues. Photographers may attend the rehearsal, but are not permitted to interrupt the proceedings. The rehearsal lasts approximately an hour.

PROGRAMS

Please contact Margaret Quigley for a wedding bulletin template/order of service. The program must be approved by the officiating clergy person before printing.

MUSIC

The Christ Church Organist & Choirmaster, David Jernigan, plays at all weddings and is in charge of all wedding music. For your convenience, a music list will be provided to you. While you may request certain pieces to be performed at your wedding, repertoire not found on the music list is subject to approval by the organist/choirmaster and will require an additional fee.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographers are subject to the approval of the Rector and must abide by established church policies. As will be noted in the bulletin, in order to preserve the dignity of the worship ceremony, photographers, professional or otherwise, may not take photographs during the wedding, either with or without a flash, and all cell phones and other electronic devices are to be turned off. Following the wedding, photographs may be taken in the church or chapel for a 30-minute period. Please inform your photographer ahead of time of his/her responsibility to gather the wedding party immediately following the service so that the desired pictures may be taken within 30 minutes. Prior to the wedding, photography is permitted in the parlor, courtyard, or bridal dressing area. Wedding portraits may be scheduled with Margaret Quigley.

A single video camera is allowed under the following conditions: it does not involve any additional lighting; the camera is placed on a tripod in the west balcony in a spot designated by the clergy person and remains stationary throughout the service. The videographer must remain in the balcony until the last prayer is concluded. No moving about is allowed during the service. It is the responsibility of the couple to make certain that photographers and video camera operators are aware of and abide by the church's policies.

FLOWERS

If you wish to supply flowers altar flowers for your wedding, it is suggested that flowers be provided by a local florist, due to the risk of late deliveries and the possible need for last minute repairs. Only altar flowers may be used at weddings. The flowers are given to the church and are sometimes used at our Sunday service, after which they are taken to the sick. As with altar flowers for any Sunday or special service, they may be designated in memory or in honor of someone. Flowers used on the altar may not be used at the reception or for any social purpose. Altar flowers may be no higher than the altar cross and may not be artificial. The maximum height, including vases, from the table to the top of the arrangement is 30 inches in the chapel and 44 inches in the church.

The large fluted vases or the medium octagonal vases are used in the church; a small vase can be centered at the foot of the altar cross. The medium octagonal vases or the smaller round vases may be used in the chapel. The florist should contact Anderson Davis at the church (919) 834-6259 or adavis@ccral.org to arrange pick up of the liners. The flowers for the altar should be at the church no later than 9:30 a.m. on the day of the wedding. Bridal flowers should be delivered at least one hour before the wedding.

RECEPTIONS AT CHRIST CHURCH

Receptions may be held in the Christ Church Parish House under the overall direction of the Wedding Guild. No alcoholic beverages may be served. Outside caterers must be approved by the Wedding Guild, and a Guild member must be present, regardless of whether a caterer is employed. Under no circumstances should outside caterers be contracted before they have been approved by the Guild. Contact should be made within a week of the initial interview if a reception at the church is being considered. Associated fees will vary depending upon size and length of the reception, and will be determined once details are provided to the Wedding Guild.

CRUCIFER

The role of a crucifer is to carry the church's processional cross into the church at the beginning of the ceremony and before the officiant and wedding party. A crucifer is optional except when Holy Eucharist is celebrated. If you wish to have a crucifer, please contact the Margaret Quigley.

FEES & THE MARRIAGE LICENSE

Fees are not charged for use of the church building or for the ceremony. Fees are necessary to compensate for the following services: facilities staff, organist, acolyte (if desired), extra altar candles. The following persons should receive separate checks made payable to them personally and are to be turned in to Margaret Quigley two (2) weeks before the wedding.

Organist \$325.00

The organist receives an additional \$50 for each of the following: special music, special rehearsal, soloist, instrumentalist, etc.

Crucifer (*if desired*) (name provided by Wedding Guild) \$25.00

The following fees are to be made payable to Christ Church in one check and should also be submitted to Margaret Quigley, 30 days in advance of the wedding.

Facilities staff (See Wedding Schedule) (Chapel) \$150.00

(Church) \$200.00

Extra candles (optional) \$85.00

Festive wedding bells following ceremony (optional) \$250.00

The service bell is rung at the end of the wedding ceremony.

The marriage license should be given to Margaret Quigley no later than two (2) weeks prior to the wedding. Please understand that no wedding ceremony may take place until the officiating clergy has the marriage license in hand.

It is customary to give a thank offering to the officiating clergy. The suggested minimum is \$500; check should be made payable to the officiating clergy and given to Margaret Quigley prior to the day of the wedding.

IN CONCLUSION

We hope this information is helpful to you in making your wedding plans. We wish the best for you in your new life together and pray that God will bless you in all that you do and deepen your love for each other and for God. Below are phone numbers of persons to be consulted prior to printing invitations and to contracting with a photographer, florist, caterer or any other non-church staff professional.

Officiating Clergy

(919) 834-6259

The Rev. James P. Adams, Rector (x101)

The Rev. David Frazelle,
Senior Associate Rector (x103)

The Rev. Mary Davila, Assistant Rector (x105)

The Rev. Daniel J. Reeves,
Associate Rector (x102)

Organist

David Jernigan

djernigan@ccral.org

Wedding Coordinator

Margaret Quigley

mquigley@ccral.org

CHECKLIST

1. Before date is firm:
 - a. Confirm with Margaret Quigley to get on the church calendar
 - b. Permission from the Diocesan Bishop (in cases of divorce)
2. Six (6) months before the wedding:
 - a. Confirm and meet with officiating clergy
 - b. Begin premarital counseling
3. Three (3) months before the wedding:
 - a. Meet with David Jernigan, Organist & Choirmaster
4. Four (4) weeks before wedding:
 - a. Program proof to Margaret Quigley
 - b. Approval of program by officiating clergy person
5. Six (6) Weeks before wedding:
 - a. Meet with the Wedding Guild
6. Two (2) Weeks before Ceremony:
 - a. Marriage license to Margaret Quigley
 - b. Fees to Margaret Quigley (refer to Fee Schedule)



Christ Church ♦ 120 E. Edenton Street ♦ Raleigh, NC 27601
(919) 834-6259 ♦ www.ccral.org