



## **A CUSTOMARY FOR**

### ***The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage***

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This customary is a guideline for a couple wishing to have their marriage witnessed and blessed at All Saints' Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church takes marriage very seriously. It is our hope that this will serve both to eliminate some of the pitfalls in the planning and celebration of the sacrament and serve also as an aid in the discernment process leading a man and a woman to this important commitment.

#### **B. MARRIAGE IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

The Episcopal Church adheres to the belief that Christian marriage, Holy Matrimony, is an unconditional and lifelong union of husband and wife. We believe that the bond and covenant of marriage was established by God in creation. Those who do not take the responsibility of this seriously should not seek to be married at All Saints'.

All marriages witnessed at All Saints' must conform to the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the guidelines established by the Diocese of East Carolina, as well as, the laws of the State of North Carolina.

At least one of the couple must be baptized and a regular attendee at worship in this parish or in some other Episcopal Church.

#### **C. PREMARITAL COUNSELING**

All couples seeking to have their marriage witnessed and blessed in this parish will participate in premarital counseling sessions with the rector or with an individual or agency deemed acceptable by the rector. At least one session will be devoted to planning the wedding liturgy.

#### **D. CLERGY PARTICIPATION**

The clergy of All Saints' will officiate at all weddings witnessed in this parish. Should the couple desire to have additional clergy assist in the service, they must make their desire known and an invitation will then be extended by the rector to that person.

#### **E. SCHEDULING WEDDINGS**

Weddings must be scheduled with the clergy and the church at least three months in advance of the desired date. No weddings may be scheduled during Lent, due to the penitential nature of the season.

#### **F. MUSIC**

Music used in weddings in the Episcopal Church is governed by the same standards as music for any worship service. It must be from biblical texts, The Book of Common Prayer, or texts congruent with either of these. Music will be discussed and planned with the parish musician, but the rector will be the final authority on any music requested. Since the Lord's Prayer is said by the congregation as a part of the wedding liturgy, and is not an appropriate selection for a soloist.

G. THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The Holy Eucharist is the most appropriate context for the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage. You are strongly encouraged to consider this as the liturgical context for your marriage service.

H. ORDER OF SERVICE

The marriage service comes from the Book of Common Prayer. It is appropriate and desirable for family/friends of the couple to serve as readers and/or intercessors during the service.

I. AUDIO/VISUAL RECORDING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

No photography requiring artificial light (flash) may be used during the ceremony, either by the professional photographer or by wedding guests. Photos may be posed before or after the service. Audio/Video recording may be done if it is set up unobtrusively. Professional photographers are asked to meet with the clergy prior to the service for clarification of their roles.

J. FLOWERS

The flowers at the altar will remain on the standards and be left at the church.

K. WEDDING COSTS

A deposit of \$100 is due at the time that the church is reserved for the ceremony and will be applied to the church donation fee.

**The following fees are due at least two weeks prior to the ceremony.**

**(Your fees will be due by \_\_\_\_\_.)**

- \$200: Donation to the church, minimum, commensurate with the size of the wedding and time involved in preparation. This fee may be waived on decision of the Rector.
- \$125: Janitorial fee
- Clergy: Whether the wedding takes place in the church or at an alternate site, it is expected that the couple show their appreciation by a donation to the Rector's Discretionary Fund which is used to help those in our own parish or community who may have a circumstance and need confidential help, at the Rector's discretion.  
*An appropriate gift is \$200 or more.*

**(One check may be written for the above three items.)**

- \$325: Organist fee for rehearsal and service. Any additional music costs will be the responsibility of the couple. (Check to be made out to the organist.)

L. MARRIAGE LICENSE

**Please provide this to the Rector at least two (2) days prior to the wedding.**

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