



The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

WEDDING REQUIREMENTS, POLICY & GUIDELINES

Grant O Lord that the bonds of our common humanity by which all your children are united one to another, and the living to the dead, may be so transformed by your grace, that your will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. The Book of Common Prayer [BCP], p. 430

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Requirements, Policy and Guidelines for a wedding at Epiphany. In this document, we'll answer many of your questions, to help you have the best preparation for your wedding day. In the first section you will find some requirements that you need to know before you get too far along in planning your big day. The second section answers policy questions about the service (liturgy), and some options for you to consider. The third section includes some guidelines, primarily for use of our building. The final section deals with fees and other costs. We are excited to share this day with you!

REQUIREMENTS

- The Rector has the final word on all decisions regarding all wedding liturgies.
- You must speak to a priest of this parish before a date may be confirmed for your marriage.
- One or the other of you must be an Episcopalian. In addition, you have to have been a member of this parish for at least six months. Membership includes being active at worship and service in the parish, as well as making an annual pledge to the church.
- We do not perform weddings in the season of Lent.
- If you are divorced, you must wait at least one year from the finalization of the divorce to remarry. You must be taking care of any children you have had in previous marriages or be ready to make an explanation of how your children are being cared for, including but not limited to timely payment of child support.
- You are required to have three sessions of pre-marital counseling beyond an initial interview with the priest that will be performing those sessions and/or the liturgy. The way in which you meet this requirement must be approved by the priest solemnizing the marriage.
- Be aware that the clergy may refuse to bless a marriage for pastoral reasons and are obliged to refuse to bless any marriage when any of the requirements are not met.
- Also know, there are costs associated with weddings at the church (see our fee sheet). If cost is a hardship, please don't let that dissuade you, we will figure out what seems right. We will not let cost keep you from celebrating your marriage at Epiphany.
- If a priest agrees to travel out of metro Atlanta you will reimburse for travel (at the priest's discretion) and all other expenses, and you will be required to pay an honorarium of at least \$500.
- Nothing is final in regard to dates until both the priest and parish administrator have signed off on said dates.

P O L I C I E S

Q: Can I get married on the date I want?

A: No. You must secure a date and time first by calling and making an appointment with a priest of the church. Nothing is final until you speak to the priest who will marry you.

Q: Can I get married at any time during the day?

A: No. The window of time for a wedding is 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Q: Can I plan whatever I want? Like unity candles? And Doves? And my uncle Seamus singing his love poetry for us as we walk down the aisle?

A: No. However much you might like your uncle Seamus, the priest has the final word on what and how a wedding liturgy will take shape. Having said that, we do want you to participate in the liturgical planning. Besides being fun, it will make it memorable and full of meaning. Your priest will help you with this.

Q: How do I arrange for music?

A: All music for the service is chosen in consultation with the Organist and Choirmaster. As soon as your wedding date is approved, please notify the Organist and Choirmaster to set up an appointment.

Q: Can family and friends participate?

A: Yes, by all means. Crucifers, acolytes, readers, litanists, preachers, celebrants, readers, vocalists, ushers, photographers, gift bearers are all roles that are very appropriate for family members as long as they have some experience and/or qualification in that particular area, and they are approved by the clergy.

Q: Can I have a wedding planner and can she/he run the wedding?

A: Yes and no. You can have a wedding planner. However, the priest runs the wedding and the rehearsal. Altar Guild members set up the church and facilitate the wedding, under the direction of the priest. Flower Guild members arrange the flowers, which are left as a gift to the community. Call the directors of the Altar Guild and the Flower Guild to make sure you are in good communication about what you want, and what can be done.

Q: Can I have my reception at the Church?

A: Yes. You need to book that at the time you secure your date with the priest and the parish administrator.

Q: Will my wedding be the only thing happening at the church on that day?

A: Probably not. We have a very active parish. However, nothing will interfere with your wedding in any way. Another event may be taking place before or after your wedding.

Q: What is the best way to get in touch with people?

A: By phone. Leave a voice message for those you need to speak to and follow it up with an email. If you are having a hard time contacting anyone, call your priest. All but the clergy, sexton, musician, and parish administrator are volunteers!

Q: When can the photographer take pictures?

A: Before or after the ceremony. No pictures during the service. Many couples in recent years have taken all their pictures beforehand so they can move on to their reception immediately following the wedding.

If you have more questions, which is likely, don't fret. You can have as much time with your priest as you need to plan and ask those questions. The first and most important thing you need to do is talk to a priest at the church!

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

The Guest Book

It is strongly suggested, for expediency's sake, that this be done at the reception.

Rice, Confetti, Bird Seed & Bubbles

Rice and confetti are not to be thrown at or on the wedding couple on church property. Birdseed and bubbles may be used ONLY out of doors.

Alcohol Policy

Consumption of alcohol is not permitted on church property except at the reception in the Church's Parish Hall, and in accordance with diocesan policy. Hard liquor is never permitted. Non-alcoholic beverages in equal quantity and prominence must be offered if alcohol is served.

CHURCH DONATIONS & FEES

It is expected that all fees will be paid when the marriage license is brought to the Church on the Sunday prior to the wedding. They must be paid prior to the rehearsal. All expenses may be paid in a single check to Epiphany.

Use of Church	\$ 150.00
Use of Parish Hall & Kitchen for Receptions	\$ 150.00
Music	
Organist consultation & music	\$ 300.00
Choir Fee	\$ 250.00
Music for the Rehearsal - if required	\$ 150.00
Flowers (Epiphany supplies the altar flowers).....	\$ 200.00
Cleaning Service Fee (Church only/no reception)	\$ 50.00
Cleaning Service Fee (Church only & Parish Hall)	\$ 150.00
Clergy Gift	\$ *

*As a sacrament of the church, marriage is offered by the priest without charge. In thanksgiving for their marriage, many couples make a gift to the priest.