



**THE
CELEBRATION AND BLESSING
OF A MARRIAGE
AT
ST. COLUMB'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

INTRODUCTION

The celebration and blessing of a marriage is a sacred occasion. Far more than a social occasion, a Christian wedding is first and foremost a worship service. St. Columb's Episcopal Church takes seriously the responsibility of upholding those who enter the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. The following guidelines are designed to help you plan your wedding in accordance with the canons (rules) of the Episcopal Church and the customs of this parish. No arrangements involving the church facilities, clergy or musicians are to be announced until you have received the rector's approval.

Marriage in the Episcopal Church

Canonical requirements specify:

- ❖ At least one member of the couple must be a baptized Christian.
- ❖ At least two witnesses must be present.
- ❖ The couple must have been prepared for Holy Matrimony by completing a suitable premarital program.
- ❖ The couple must comply with appropriate state laws.

If either of the parties to be married has been previously married, the priest must obtain the bishop's written consent in order to proceed with wedding plans. This process may require up to 60 days. A certified copy of the divorce decree is required for the church file. The decree must have been final for 12 months before a wedding can take place.

If requested, Banns of Marriage may be published up to three weeks before the ceremony. Prayers of thanksgiving for the couple will be offered by the congregation during the week following the ceremony.

Any visiting or guest clergy must be invited and approved by the Rector/Priest-in-Charge under the guidelines of the Canons of the Episcopal Church.

Premarital Program

Premarital program may vary somewhat according to the needs of the couple and the methods of the priest. At the first meeting with the bride and groom, a plan for this program will be worked out. Normally, one-hour sessions are required.

Planning a Wedding at St. Columb's

Once the foregoing requirements have been met, the bride should contact the St. Columb's wedding coordinator who is charged with the responsibility of assisting the clergy in the arrangements for a wedding. The participation of private wedding consultants for a St. Columb's wedding is not permitted.

Scheduling the Wedding

- ❖ Because the season of Lent is solemn and penitential in nature, the church does not permit weddings to be scheduled during this time. Weddings during the season of Advent are discouraged. Consult the church calendar, as the specific dates of Lent and Advent vary from year to year. Weddings are not permitted on Easter or the 10 days following. No weddings will be permitted on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.
- ❖ The time of the wedding may be as early as 11 a.m. but no later than 6 p.m.
- ❖ There may be no more than one wedding scheduled on any day.

Music

- ❖ Review the music guidelines provided.

Marriage License

A marriage license should be obtained from the Country Courthouse no more than 30 days prior to the service. The marriage license must be presented to the Priest or Wedding coordinator before the wedding rehearsal begins.

Wedding Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal is usually held the day before the wedding. The hour and date should be scheduled with the officiating Priest well in advance to avoid schedule conflicts. The time should be set between 4 and 6 p.m. All members of the wedding party are expected to attend the rehearsal and arrive 15 minutes prior to the rehearsal. The rehearsal will last no longer than one hour. The practice of the Episcopal Church does not allow a stand-in-bride for the rehearsal. The Priest, assisted by the Parish Wedding Coordinator or Parish Director will conduct the rehearsal.

Wedding Date

The church will be open two hours before the ceremony. The bride, mother of the bride and brides-maids may arrive during this time. The Wedding Coordinator will be present to provide assistance.

Wedding Size

- ❖ Ushers should be selected to expedite the seating of the wedding guests. One usher should be selected for each 50 guests.
- ❖ There shall be a maximum of 6 attendants for the bride and 6 attendants for the groom. Due to limited space in the Nave there are no exceptions.
- ❖ Participation of children in the wedding service is discouraged. The minimum age for any exception is age four.

The Celebration and Blessing of the Marriage

- ❖ If the bride and her attendants wish to dress at the church, a room will be provided. The groom and his attendants are to arrive at the church already dressed. The bride should arrange for someone (not in the wedding party) to collect all personal belongings from the dressing rooms after the wedding.
- ❖ Alcohol is not permitted on church property (including the parking lot) during wedding rehearsals and weddings. The Clergy and Wedding Coordinator reserve the right to exclude from the wedding any persons who appear to be intoxicated.
- ❖ All ushers should arrive one hour before the service to receive instructions.
- ❖ St. Columb's will provide the acolytes for the wedding. Only those who are trained and serve as acolytes at St. Columb's may be used for a wedding.
- ❖ A guest register may be placed on a table in the Narthex. The register will be given to the person appointed by the bride to take to the reception.
- ❖ The parents of the bride and groom will be seated shortly before the service begins.

- ❖ The wedding coordinator will supervise the process of the bridal party. A full procession from the rear of the church could include a thurifer, a crucifer, 2 torch bearers, a choir, if applicable, LEM (if a Eucharist), clergy officiate, groom, best man, groomsmen, bridesmaids, bride. The bride's mother stands as the procession begins indicating to the wedding guests that they are also to stand.
- ❖ St. Columb's will provide wedding programs. The information for the program should be provided to the church office three weeks before the wedding.

WEDDINGS – ORDER OF PROCESSION

PROCESSION (IN)

Crucifer & Acolytes

(Choir)

Altar Servers

Celebrant

Groomsmen X 2

Groom Best Man

Bridesmaids X 1

Maid (Matron) of Honor

Bride & Father

PROCESSION (OUT)

Crucifer & Acolytes

Bride & Groom

Wedding Party X 2

(Choir)

Altar Servers

Celebrant

FLORAL AND DECORATION GUIDELINES

- ❖ The architecture and interior design of the church are intended to focus attention upon the altar as the symbol of God's presence in this place. The church is a sacred space in which the bride and groom exchange their vows before God and His church. In keeping with the elegant simplicity of setting, elaborate decorations must be avoided.
- ❖ You may choose a private florist to provide the flowers for your wedding. All private florists must be approved in **advance** by the parish wedding coordinator and the guidelines must be signed by the florist and returned to the church well in advance of the wedding. The wedding coordinator will explain the liturgical options available. Floral designs should be similar to those used for Sunday worship services. If you are uncertain about the suitability of your floral design, please speak with the wedding coordinator whose approval will be needed in any event. Flowers used on the altar for the wedding are used as a part of Sunday worship services and will remain in the church after the wedding. Some major feast days have a color restriction. The wedding coordinator will advise you if any occur at the date of your wedding. Permission from the rector is required if you feel that such restrictions cannot be accommodated within the planned decorations. **(No artificial flowers may be used).**
- ❖ Maximum size of altar arrangements must not exceed 36 inches in height and width should in proportion to the pedestals in place.
- ❖ The altar will be draped with white hangings. None of these items may be moved or changed in any way.
- ❖ Small floral arrangements or bows may be attached to the ends of the pews at your expense. These are usually available from your florist.
- ❖ Candles are provided by the church. For safety reasons, no other candles may be used. St. Columb's offers aisle candles for your use (a total of 16, 8 on each side). Small decorations are allowed on each if so desired at your expense.
- ❖ The "Unity Candle" is not part of the wedding liturgy in the Episcopal Church.
- ❖ St. Columb's does not use aisle cloths in wedding services.
- ❖ Rice, confetti or rose petals are not to be thrown on the church premises. Birdseed may be used outside. For easy clean up purposes, this should be distributed in a large bowl, rather than individually wrapped packets.
- ❖ Please instruct your florist to deliver the wedding flowers to the church two hours before the wedding. All flowers to be used by the wedding party must be placed in the foyer of the parish hall.
- ❖ Your florist must remove all containers no later than the Wednesday morning following the wedding. If containers are left after that time they will be considered a donation to the church.

I have read the floral and decoration guidelines and agree to abide by the rules of St. Columb's Episcopal Church.

Signature of the bride: _____

Signature of the florist: _____

Date: _____

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

Photographers should take as many photographs as possible before the ceremony. Please select these before the wedding day and allow ample time to be completely finished 50 minutes before the time of the wedding. All members of the wedding party, immediate family, photographer and photographic equipment need to be out of the church 50 minutes before the time of the wedding. All photographs which are taken after the ceremony must be finished in 30 minutes.

No photographs may be taken by anyone in the church during the wedding ceremony. Please inform family and friends of this custom.

Photographer may take pictures of the bride and groom from the narthex door as they process out of the nave. These pictures must be made without flash.

St. Columb's does not allow videotaping of weddings, either by professional videographers or by members of the congregation. A closed circuit video is running at all times. Upon request we will provide the couple with 2 DVD's of their ceremony.

Please do not rearrange altar flowers, wedding kneeler or aisle candles for photographic or any other purpose.

Early access for the photographer to the church must be coordinated with the wedding coordinator. Two hours prior to the wedding is ample time for the photographer to set up.

I have read the wedding photography guidelines and agree to abide by the rules of St. Columb's Episcopal Church.

Signature of bride: _____

Signature of photographer: _____

Date: _____

Please return to the wedding coordinator as soon as possible.

MUSIC GUIDELINES

We are pleased that you wish to be married at St. Columb's Episcopal Church. Please carefully read these policies concerning wedding music at St. Columb's.

- ❖ The parish organist is always the organist at a wedding. Please refrain from inviting other musicians, whether vocalist or instrumentalist, to perform in the wedding. Should a friend or family member offer to perform, you may suggest that they do so at the rehearsal dinner or reception.
- ❖ We encourage the participation of the entire congregation in singing hymns since your wedding is a service of worship. Vocal solos are discouraged, but should a soloist be required, the organist will select a soloist from a list of local professional musicians.
- ❖ Additional instruments, such as strings or brass, may be used with the organ. The organist will provide a listing of professional musicians who have agreed to render wedding services at St. Columb's should these services be required. Should you wish these additional instruments, you must make arrangements with each musician contracted. All music to be performed must be approved by the organist-choirmaster **in advance**.
- ❖ If you wish to have the St. Columb's choir sing at your wedding, please so notify the organist/choirmaster.

The canons and rubrics of the church govern the selection of music for special services such as weddings, as well as those of Sundays and holy days. Neither popular music nor secular operas are appropriate.

Signature of bride: _____

Date: _____

Please return to the organist-choirmaster as soon as possible.

GUIDELINES FOR WEDDING MUSIC

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring	J.S. Bach
Trumpet Voluntary	Jeremiah Clarke
Trumpet Tune	Henry Purcell
Canon in D	Pachelbel
Psalm 19	Benedetto Marcello
Air from "Water Music Suite"	G.F. Handel
March in D	G.F. Handel
March (from Occasional Orations)	G.F. Handel
Te Deum	Charpentier
Trumpet Voluntary D	J. Stanley

Hymns (may be sung by congregation/choir or played by organ alone)

No. 312	Strengthen For Service, Lord
No. 339	Deck Thyself, My Soul, With Gladness
No. 350	O God of Love, to Thee We Bow
No. 351	May the Grace of Christ Our Savior
No. 352	O God, to Those Who Here Profess Their Vows
No. 353	Your Love, O God, Has Called Us Here
No. 365	Come, thou almighty King
No. 376	Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
No. 377, 378	All People That On Earth Do Dwell
No. 390	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
No. 396, 397	Now Thank We All Our God
No. 398	I sing the almighty power of God
No. 400	All creatures of our God and King
No. 401	The God of Abraham praise
No. 408	Sing praise to God who reigns above
No. 416	For the beauty of the earth
No. 410	Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
No. 421	All glory be to God on high
No. 423	Immortal, invisible, God only wise
No. 432	O praise ye the Lord! Ye heavens adore him
No. 492	Sing, ye faithful, sing with gladness
No. 516	Come Down, O Love Divine
No. 518	Christ is Made the Sure Foundation
No. 593	Lord, Make Us Servants of Your Peace
No. 635	If thou but trust in God to guide thee
No. 645, 646	The King of Love My Shepherd Is
No. 657	Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

From the list above, select music for (1) the processional; (2) the recessional; and (3) any hymns to be sung by the congregation. Hymns may be used for pro/recessionals. The organist will select music played before the service begins but will use suggestions from the bride.

ST. COLUMB'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH ALCOHOL GUIDELINES

The Use of Alcoholic Beverages at Church Functions and on Church Property

The Episcopal Church has never taken a stance endorsing the prohibition of the use of beverages containing alcohol among her members. To the contrary, the church has recognized that scripture sanctions alcoholic beverages as a gift from God, and that the Lord himself dignified the use and serving of alcoholic beverages in his first miracle at the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11) and in the institution of the Holy Eucharist. Responsible use of the “wind that maketh glad the heart of man” (Psalm 104:15) is, in fact, one of the elements of the freedom for those who are in Christ.

However, the Episcopal Church also recognized that where there is a potential for good, there is also a potential for evil. Alcoholism is an illness which has reached epidemic proportions in our own society and culture; and for that reason it is imperative that the members of the church use the same prudence regarding the use and serving of alcoholic beverages that they would in handling any other potentially dangerous drug. Although the social use of alcoholic beverages may be permitted for those who use responsibly, the church has a further responsibility for those people who, for one reason or another, choose to abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages.

Therefore, the following guidelines are given for the serving and use of alcoholic beverages at church functions or on church property within the parish of St. Columb's Episcopal Church:

- ❖ Any beverage which contains alcohol should always be clearly identified as such; this also applies to any food (such as fruit compotes, desserts, etc.) where the alcohol has not been violated (i.e., “cooked out”).
- ❖ Whenever alcohol is served in any form, non-alcoholic alternatives should also be offered. Non-alcoholic beverages should be served with the same attractiveness and accessibility as those containing alcohol so that people who choose not to drink alcoholic beverages need not feel any embarrassment, discomfort or inconvenience in exercising their preference. Champagne, wine and canned or bottled beer are the only alcoholic beverages allowed.
- ❖ Although beverages and other foods containing alcohol may be offered, together with non-alcoholic alternatives, they should never be promoted in such a way as to imply that partaking of them is any kind of social requirement.
- ❖ Alcoholic beverages cannot be sold without a license; this is a violation of Mississippi State law.
- ❖ All other applicable federal, state and local ordinances, including those governing the serving of alcoholic beverages to minors, must be observed.

- ❖ The group of people sponsoring an event should be either a church organization or a group of members of the church. Departure from these guidelines should be cleared through the appropriate authority. The group or organization sponsoring the activity or event at which alcoholic beverages are served must have permission from the rector.
- ❖ Care must be taken to insure that responsible persons are in control of the serving of alcoholic beverages. The group or organization sponsoring the activity or event at which alcoholic beverages are served must assume responsibility for providing alternative transportation for anyone whose driving might be impaired. Alcohol is not permitted on church property (including the parking lot) during wedding rehearsals and weddings. The clergy, wardens and wedding coordinator reserve the right to exclude from the wedding or wedding-related event any persons who appear to be intoxicated.
- ❖ At no time shall persons under the age of 21 years be allowed to possess, use or serve alcoholic beverages of any kind on church property or at church functions other than during celebration of the Eucharist.
- ❖ It is the duty of the priest in charge of the congregation and the wardens and vestry to assume the responsibility for the dissemination and observance of these guidelines.
- ❖ Invitations to affairs held at church functions, or on church property, at which alcoholic beverages are to be offered should be issued only to the congregation, parish/mission organizations, their guests and friends, and never the general public.

I have read the alcohol guidelines and agree to the rules of St. Columb’s Episcopal Church.

Signature of bride: _____

Signature of groom: _____

Date: _____

Please return to the wedding coordinator as soon as possible.

Wedding Fees and Deadlines:

Fees for the sexton, acolytes, clergy and organist should be made payable to them personally; fees for use of the church, flowers, altar guild and programs should be made payable to St. Columb's. All fees should be forwarded to the parish administrator for disbursement three weeks prior to the wedding.

Deposit

A non-refundable deposit of \$100 for the church is due at the time of reservation and will be applied toward the total fee.

	Active members of St. Columb's	Non-members of St. Columb's
Church only	No charge	\$250.00
Clergy	\$300.00	\$300.00
Organist	\$300.00	\$300.00
Flowers	\$250.00	\$200.00
Altar Guild	\$100.00	\$100.00
Sexton (Church)	\$150.00	\$150.00
Sexton (Reception)	\$200.00	\$200.00
Acolyte	\$20.00 each	\$20.00 each
Reception in Parish Hall	\$200.00	\$500.00
Rehearsal Dinner	\$200.00	\$300.00

Printed programs: \$50.00 per hundred for standard wedding program with St. Columb's cover. Fee will increase in proportion to increase in size of program.

Active members are defined as those who have contributed time, talent, and financial support to the life of the parish during the past 12 months.

If the choir is used, a donation to St. Columb's Choir Fund of no less than \$200 is applicable.

Contact Persons:

Wedding Coordinator, Gaye Townsend	601-940-1145	gayetownsend@bellsouth.net
Choir Director, Dr. Mark Nabholz	601-853-0205	music@stcolumbs.org
Organist, Patsy Simpson	601-954-8028	pasty.simpson@comcast.net
Administrator, Laurie Smith	601 853-0205	stcolumb@stcolumbs.org
Sexton, Sammie Butler	601-853-0205	

Bride's Checklist:

- Contact the parish wedding coordinator.
- Read the wedding guidelines thoroughly.
- Set the date on the church calendar as early as possible.
- Pay \$100 deposit within three weeks to administrator.
- Contact the priest to arrange for premarital counseling.
- Fill out the Holy Matrimony form and information sheet for the printed program and return to administrator three weeks before wedding.
- Talk with the organist-choirmaster to select music at least four weeks before the wedding.
- Notify photographer of St. Columb's policy and return signed agreement to wedding coordinator three weeks before the wedding.
- Choose the lessons and readers.
- Provide information for the printed program to clergy and wedding coordinator for approval four weeks before the wedding.
- Pay all fees to administrator three weeks in advance of the wedding.
- Complete wedding worksheet and return to wedding coordinator one week before the wedding.
- Obtain marriage license and present to clergy prior to the rehearsal.
- Confirm rehearsal time with priest and wedding coordinator.
- Be prepared to sign Declaration of Intention at the rehearsal.

BRIDE'S WORKSHEET

Bride's name: _____

Date and time of wedding: _____

Clergy: _____

Seating of the Family (for planning purposes)

Mother of the Bride: _____

Escorted by: _____

Others: _____

Maternal Grandmother of the Bride: _____

Escorted by: _____

Paternal Grandmother of the Bride: _____

Escorted by: _____

Others: _____

Mother of the Groom: _____

Escorted by: _____

Others: _____

Maternal Grandmother of the Groom: _____

Escorted by: _____

Paternal Grandmother of the Groom: _____

Escorted by: _____

Number of rows to reserve for family seating (8 people per row):

Bride: _____ Groom: _____

Maid/Matron of Honor: _____

Bridesmaids (limit 6)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Best man: _____

Groomsmen (limit 6):

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Ring bearer: _____ Flower girl: _____

Ushers (1 per 50 guests):

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

HOLY MATRIMONY INFORMATION FORM

Bride's full name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone#: _____

Work phone#: _____

Email address: _____

Occupation: _____

Maiden/Widow/Divorced: _____

Number of this marriage: _____

Age: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Place of birth: City: _____

Baptized: _____ in what denomination: _____

Confirmed: _____ in what denomination: _____

Father's full name: _____ Address: _____

Mother's full name: _____ Address: _____

Groom's full name: _____

Address _____

Home phone#: _____ Work phone#: _____

Email: _____

Occupation: _____ Maiden/Widow/Divorced: _____

Number of this marriage: _____ Age: _____ Date of birth: _____

Place of birth: City: _____

Baptized: _____ in what denomination: _____

Confirmed: _____ in what denomination: _____

Father's full name: _____ Address: _____

Mother's full name: _____ Address: _____

Date of ceremony: _____ Time: _____

Check appropriate boxes:

Place of ceremony: Church Chapel Residence other: _____

Organist Holy Communion Rehearsal Flower Guild Choir

Permanent address after marriage: _____

Official: _____

INFORMATION FOR WEDDING PROGRAM

Bride's full name: _____
Goes by: _____
Groom's full name: _____
Goes by: _____
First Reading: _____ Psalm: _____
Second Reading: _____ Gospel: _____

Music: CONSULT WITH ORGANIST/CHOIRMASTER

Maid/Matron of Honor: _____
Best man: _____
Ring bear: _____ Flower Girl: _____
Bridesmaids (limit 6)

Groomsmen (limit 6):

Readers:

Chalice Bearers:

Ushers:

Acolytes:

Number of leaflets to be printed: _____

RETURN TO ADMINISTRATOR

THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE

One or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture is read. If there is a Eucharist, a passage from the Gospel always concludes the readings. (Other readings from holy scripture may be used with priest's permission.)

Genesis 1:26-28 (Male and female he created them)

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24 (A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)

Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7 (Many waters cannot quench love)

Tobit 8:5-8 (New English Bible) (That she and I may grow old together)

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Love is patient and kind)

Ephesians 3:14-19 (The Father from whom every family is named)

Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33 (Walk in love, as Christ loved us)

Colossians 3:12-17 (Love which binds everything together in harmony)

1 John 4:7-16 (Let us love one another for love is of God)

Between the Readings, a Psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said.

Appropriate Psalms are 67, 127, and 128.

Gospel Readings:

Matthew 5:1-10 (The Beatitudes)

Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the light...Let your light so shine)

Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock)

Mark 10:6-9, 13-16 (They are no longer two but one)

John 15:9-12 (Love one another as I have loved you)