

## **INTRODUCTION**

The rector and staff of Christ Episcopal Church are happy to assist you in every possible way toward making your wedding a sacred, dignified and memorable ceremony that is offered as a service for active family members of Christ Church.

The Rector of Christ Church is in charge of every rehearsal and wedding ceremony. Ordained ministers from other churches are welcome to participate in the wedding ceremony provided permission has been obtained from the rector. Visiting clergy act under the resident clergy leadership.

The Vestry has adopted the following policies and regulations for weddings to be held at Christ Church. Please read them carefully and participate in upholding the standards and policies of Christ Church.

## **CHURCH INFORMATION**

Christ Church, Episcopal  
118 S. Bois d' Arc, Tyler, TX 75702  
903/597-9854

### **Office Hours:**

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Rev. David Luckenbach, Rector  
Mr. Jeffrey Ford, Organist/Choirmaster  
Melissa Phillips, Parish Secretary  
Mr. Ledell Reed, Sexton  
Mrs. Marilyn Lockett, Flower Chairman, 903-561-8785  
Mardi Byrd 903-595-1601  
Altar Guild Wedding Coordinator

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## **THE SOLEMNIZATION OF HOLY MATRIMONY**

Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and woman in the presence of God. It is a relationship that is reflective of God's relationship with God's people. It is a relationship that is lived out in trust and forgiveness.

In the Episcopal Church it is required that at least one of the parties must be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested by at least two (2) witnesses; and that the marriage conform to the laws of the State of Texas and the Canons of the Episcopal Church.

A rector of this Church will not solemnize any marriage unless the following conditions are complied with:

1. The rector shall have ascertained that both parties understand that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of a man and woman, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will, and with intent it being a lifelong commitment.

2. The rector shall have instructed both parties as to the nature, meaning and purpose of Holy Matrimony, or have ascertained that they both have received such instruction from persons known by him/her to be competent and responsible.

3. Non-Episcopalians must receive instructions in the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Anglican faith by attending Discovery Classes or other format at the discretion of the rector.

A rector of this Church will not solemnize any marriage unless the following procedures are complied with:

1. The intention of the parties to contract marriage shall have been signified to the rector at least thirty days (30) before the service of solemnization. A minimum of four (4) hours of counseling is usually required with the rector.

2. No announced dates will be given prior to the initial conference with the rector.

Clergy of the Episcopal Church must abide by the Canons of the Episcopal Church and The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas concerning remarriage of any divorced persons in the Church. The Canons allow a pastoral influence and are not intended to be rigid. However, the Bishop's approval must be secured before any announcement or invitations are made public. The guidelines of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas encourage a year's time from the official divorce before marriage is considered. This passage of time allows for the necessary grief or estrangement adjustment. The Bishop must be allowed thirty (30) days in which to make a pastoral decision. If, after counseling, the Rector favors the proposed marriage of divorced persons, his confidential recommendation is sent to the Bishop for consideration.

It shall be within the discretion of the rector of this church to decline to solemnize any marriage.

When the rector officiates at a wedding, the rector, or clergy invited by him/her, acts as an officer of the State of Texas. The license, application being made in the office of the County Clerk, is valid for thirty (30) days from the time of application. There is also a seventy-two (72) hour waiting period that must be observed from time of application to time of marriage. Under no circumstances can the service commence without a license. Therefore,

bring the marriage license to the rehearsal. Following the wedding it is the rector's responsibility to return it to the County Clerk for recording.

The Parish Register must be filled out and signed by parties, witnesses, and the officiating clergy.

Finally, since 1946 the Episcopal Church has required both parties to subscribe their signatures to a statement called "A Declaration of Intent" in order that the bride, groom and church understand clearly a common position about Christian marriage.

The statement is as follows:

"We \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ believe marriage to be a lifelong union for the mutual support and companionship of both parties; the procreation, if it be, of children, and the physical and spiritual upbringing of such children to the benefit and safeguarding of society; and do engage and pledge ourselves thereto."

### **SCHEDULING THE WEDDING**

There must be a minimum of three months between reserving the church and the ceremony.

Weddings will not be scheduled on weekends prior to Thanksgiving, the month of December and the month of May. By tradition, weddings are not scheduled during the Lenten season, a time of penitential observance. Exceptions to this tradition must be cleared upon consultation with the rector as to special circumstances

Weddings will not be scheduled on weekends or staff holidays as designated by the Vestry of Christ Church. There will be no weddings on Sunday.

The seating capacity of the Nave is 275. The Chapel capacity is 50.

### **HOLY EUCHARIST**

The word "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving". Celebrating Holy Eucharist is a very meaningful way for Christians to mark the beginning of their married life together. It provides the focus of the wedding ceremony on giving thanks to God for the gift of love and the relationship. This sacrament can be offered either at the rehearsal or the wedding. It will be available for all baptized Christians that desire to receive communion. If communion will be served at the wedding, a chalice bearer will be necessary. Names of chalice bearers will be available upon request. If you have someone special you would like to serve, you must clear that person with the rector.

### **WEDDING MUSIC**

The music of the Church is by Canon, under the discretion of the rector; but he/she is allowed to, and does, depend greatly upon the organist of the Church to determine the music that is appropriate. Since Holy Matrimony is a sacred service, popular music and sentimental lyrics are not appropriate.

The bride's family is responsible for consultation with the organist about appropriate music to complement the celebration of marriage vows. Request an appointment with the organist as soon as possible.

The music, like the ceremony, should, above all, be an act of worship of God. There is much music of a light, sentimental character and of operatic or other secular associations which may be used at the wedding reception, but which, when used in the church proper, contradicts the mood and meaning of the service. In church, the music should be serious and dignified, in order to accord with the strength and depth of feeling and purpose of the persons being married and of the prayers of the church for them. Yet, a wedding is a festival which the music, though serious, should mark with grace, joy, and tenderness (from *Music for Church Weddings*).

In the Anglican tradition, much of today's music is unsuitable for the majesty of worship that compliments the sacredness of the occasion. Such music should not be included in the repertoire of wedding music. For example, incidental music from 'Midsummer Night's Dream' by Felix Mendelssohn. Popular music that has no bearing on the sacramental nature of marriage would therefore be inappropriate.

#### PRELUDE MUSIC

It is customary that the organist plays a 30 minute recital as a prelude to the service. Organ literature is available for this purpose. Music corresponding to the liturgical season is recommended.

#### PROCESSIONAL MUSIC

Processional music does not need to be in march style, but should have a feeling of movement and a mood of dignity and joy. Wagner's "*BRIDAL CHORUS*" from *Lehngren* is not appropriate because of its sentimentality, origins, and trivial character. Much music of greater worth and appropriateness is available. The use of hymns is encouraged as processional music. Examples would include: "*PRAISE, MY SOUL, THE KING OF HEAVEN*", (#410), and "*A MIGHTY FORTRESS*" (#687).

#### VOCAL SOLOS

Although there is no place for a vocal solo in the Form of Solemnization of Holy Matrimony, a solo may be sung preceding the processional. The selection of vocal music for church use is often difficult, and should be selected carefully. Only music of the highest quality is appropriate.

If soloists and/or instrumentalists are desired, the Organist/Choirmaster will make those arrangements. The Organist/Choirmaster must approve any soloist. An additional fee will be required in addition to the varying fees for the individual artists.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** The organist of Christ Church is understood to be available for all weddings that are scheduled for the Church. If unavailable, a suitable substitute will be provided. Guest organists are welcome to play for weddings using the following procedures:

1. Inform the Rector of the request.
2. Have the guest organist contact the Organist/Choirmaster regarding practice

with the organ.

3. All music to be used must be approved by the Resident Organist/Choirmaster.
4. The normal fee will be paid to the Resident Organist/Choirmaster.

### **PHOTOGRAPHER**

Christ Church wants you to have photographic memories of the wedding. First and foremost, a wedding ceremony is a sacrament of the church, and it is the duty of the Altar Guild to maintain that atmosphere. Therefore, the following guidelines have been set. It is requested that you also share this information with friends or family who will be taking pictures. Flashes and roaming photographers are a distraction during the ceremony.

1. The church will open 2 ½ hours prior to the ceremony. Additional time must be arranged with the Sexton. Contact the parish administrator 4 weeks prior to the wedding to establish the time.
2. There will only be **TWO** pictures allowed **DURING** the ceremony:
  - a. Of the bride and her escort as they enter from the Bell Tower
  - b. Of the bride and groom as they process down the aisle after the ceremony.
3. Stationary video cameras (without lights) are allowed. One can be set up in the back Underneath the Last Supper stain glass window.
4. Photographs taken in the nave **prior** to service should be **completed ½ hour prior to the start of the ceremony.**
5. Photographs taken after the ceremony must be **completed within 30 minutes** after the service. In consideration of the clergy's schedule, it is requested that pictures that will include the clergy be taken first.
6. No one is allowed behind the altar rail at any time.
7. Pictures may be taken in any part of the church before and after the ceremony.
8. Pictures prior to the wedding date may be taken. Contact the parish secretary to set a time during normal office hours.
9. It is suggested that these guidelines be copied and given to the photographer. Deviation from the above may jeopardize any future work at Christ Church.

In the interest of time and to arrive at the reception with minimum delay, couples may meet in the nave privately (after dressing and prior to pictures being taken of the wedding party) for personal time and prayer. This is in keeping with tradition of the groom not seeing the bride until their wedding. All pictures can then be taken prior to the ceremony. This eases the anxiety of the ceremony and allows the wedding party to go to the reception immediately following the ceremony.

### **FLOWERS**

1. The florist must be approved by the Altar Guild Wedding Coordinator.
2. Please notify the flower chairman as listed on the cover page if you want the altar flowers to be left for the following Sunday service as soon as possible. Altar flowers are scheduled months ahead.

3. Bridal flowers should be delivered at the time the church is opened for the wedding party.
3. If the wedding is on a Saturday, delivery of altar flowers and decorating must be between 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. There is no refrigeration available for longer storage. Other times must be coordinated through the church office. The church closes at 4 p.m. on Fridays.
4. The maximum height is 39” and maximum width is 2’ for altar flowers (they cannot be taller than the cross).
5. A member of the Altar Guild is responsible for placing the flowers on the altar.
6. The florist or one of your representatives must remove any flowers used throughout the nave immediately after the wedding service.
7. The church has two different styles of vases from which to choose. No vases are to be removed from the church property. Florists may pick up vase liners the week of the ceremony. If the reception is to be held in the Parish Hall, the altar flowers can be transferred to the Parish Hall in the vases.
8. The use of artificial or dried flowers or artificial greenery is not allowed.
9. The flower chairman must approve altar flowers if they are not done professionally.
10. Corsages/boutonnieres are not necessary for the clergy, organist, and soloist or other musicians.
11. The florist and bridal family are responsible for any damages done to the altar, pews, carpet or furniture.
12. Flower petals, real or artificial, are not allowed to be dropped in the aisle.
13. No tacks, pins, nails, staples, paste or tape of any kind may be used to attach decorations to the pews.
14. Decorations must be in place one (1) hour prior to the service. The church is open from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday.
15. If decorations are determined to be inappropriate, the Altar Guild reserves the right to alter them so they are in keeping with the standards of worship at Christ Church.
16. There will be no changes that will alter the original architectural design of the church or the altar area.
17. Seating of guests will be from the side aisles. The central aisle is used only for the seating of special guests and the processional of the wedding party. Therefore, we request you have the florist tie a ribbon or other type of closure to be placed on the back pews across the center aisle.
18. A “runner” is not permitted due to the possibility of tripping by the wedding party.
19. The church provides a lovely white needlepoint kneeler for the blessing of the marriage.
20. Unity Candles are not part of the Anglican liturgy and therefore are not allowed.
21. It is suggested that these be copied and given to the florist.  
Deviation from the above may jeopardize any future work at Christ Church

## RECEPTION IN THE PARISH HALL

If the reception is to be held at the Church, arrangements must be made with the Parish Secretary. Reservations for the Parish Hall must be made at the earliest possible time. A “set-up” sheet for the Parish Hall **must be filled out at least two weeks prior to the reception.** Request the form from the Parish Secretary.

Request PRIVATE EVENTS GUIDELINES from the Parish Secretary for complete details.

## THE ALTAR GUILD

The wedding ceremony is a sacrament of the church and it is the responsibility of the Altar Guild to maintain that atmosphere.

The representatives of the Altar Guild prepare the altar for the wedding service and assist the Rector during the rehearsal and the wedding. Therefore a wedding consultant is not necessary at either the rehearsal or the wedding.

There will be a questionnaire to be filled out by the bride and groom to assist the Altar Guild. These forms will be sent to the bride a month or so prior to the wedding. Please complete and mail the form to the Altar Guild Wedding co-coordinator (as listed on the front page) no later than **two (2) weeks** prior to the ceremony.

The Bride and/or her representative must meet with a representative of the altar guild at least 2 weeks before the ceremony. Please contact the altar rep to schedule a time.

## REHEARSAL

The rehearsal should be scheduled the evening preceding the wedding. All participants in the ceremony must attend the rehearsal including grandparents that will be seated by an usher.

The wedding party should arrive **15 minutes** prior to the scheduled time. It is imperative that **all members of the wedding party be prompt.**

All rehearsals will start at 5:30 p.m. The rehearsal will take approximately one & one-half hours. Everyone will be expected to leave within 30 minutes following the rehearsal.

The bride will be a full and active participant in the rehearsal.

**The marriage license must be given to the rector at the rehearsal.** The license will be signed and returned to the appropriate county office (they should have given you the proper envelope) the week following the wedding. Certified copies of the license can be obtained only from the county office from which the license was obtained. The original license will be returned to the couple by the county office approximately four (4) to six (6) weeks after the wedding date.

## **FAMILY SEATING**

The families may reserve as many family pews as desired. Generally, the parents are in the front pew, grandparents in the second, family members and special friends in the other pews. Please inform those that are to be seated within the reserved section and for them to tell the usher.

Those that are to be escorted to the reserved pews (generally only the parents and grandparents) should be in the back of the nave 15 minutes prior to the service. Those to be escorted must attend the rehearsal.

The center aisle will be roped off during guest seating. Only family and the wedding party will be seated from the center aisle.

## **LIABILITY**

Christ Church is not responsible for any personal items brought to the church for use in the wedding and/or the reception; nor shall the Church be liable for such items if lost, stolen, or damaged. Every reasonable effort will be made to assist the wedding party in protecting such property.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. The groom and his attendants should arrive at the church in their wedding attire. There is no dressing area available.
2. Due to the solemnity of the ceremony, attendants to the couple shall be 5 years or older.
3. Tyler City Ordinance prohibits smoking in any part of Christ Church property.
4. Church policy prohibits the use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, weapons or firearms.
5. The minister reserves the right to either cancel the rehearsal or wedding ceremony when any member of the wedding party is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
6. The use of rice, birdseed or confetti is prohibited on church property.
7. Due to fire hazard, candles will only be allowed on the altar.
8. There is a form that must be completed and returned to the church office within two weeks.

## **THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE**

(Page 423 of the Book of Common Prayer)

Prelude  
 Seating of Grandparents  
 Seating of Groom's Parents  
 Seating of Mother of Bride  
 Optional: Solo, anthem or hymn  
 Procession of Attendants

Procession of Bride and her escort  
 The Greeting  
 The Declaration of Consent  
 The Ministry of the Word  
 Scripture Lessons  
 Homily  
 The Exchange of Wedding Vows  
 The Exchange of Rings  
 The Declaration of Marriage  
 Prayers  
 The Blessing of the Marriage  
 Procession Out

Christ Church does not have the capability of providing wedding programs. If you are providing a program, consult with the organist where music will be inserted.

### **WEDDING SCRIPTURES**

Old Testament—Choose one

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

New Testament—Choose one

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Love is patient and kind)  
 Ephesians 3:14-19 (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)

A Psalm, hymn or anthem may be sung or said. Appropriate Psalms are 67, 127 and 128.

Gospel—Choose one

Matthew 5:1-10 (The Beatitudes)  
 Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the light---Let your light go 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 on another as I have loved you)

### SCHEDULE OF WEDDING FEES:

Nave	No Charge
Chapel	No Charge
Guild Hall	No Charge
Rector	Honorarium at your discretion. Suggested: \$100.00 to \$500.00 No cash. Check made payable to "Christ Episcopal Church On memo line: "Discretionary Fund"
Organist	\$250.00 (consultations, rehearsal & wedding) Check made payable to "Mr. Jeffrey Ford"
Sexton	\$175.00 (Rehearsal & wedding) \$ 25.00 each additional hour Check made payable to "Mr. Ledell Reed" The fees for custodial assistance customarily belong to the bride's family. The Sexton will open the church 2 ½ hours prior to the time of the service. If more time is desired there will be an additional fee as stated above.

Check is made payable to the individual and delivered to the parish administrator **two (2) weeks** prior to the wedding.

#### OTHER POSSIBLE FEES:

Request a copy of the Private Event Guidelines from the Parish secretary should you choose to have a reception in the parish hall as there are fees included.

There is an additional fee if a soloist or instrumentalist is used.

If the church needs to be available in addition to scheduled office hours, there will be an additional fee. There will be no fee if the sexton is on the premise for other church duties. This time needs to be scheduled with the parish secretary.

Weddings to be held more than 90 miles from Tyler must have the rector's approval. Travel expenses of mileage and lodging (if necessary) will be reimbursed to the church.