



The Church of The Ascension

Rockville Centre, New York

WEDDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Holy Matrimony is, first and foremost, a Sacrament of the Church. It is an event which is both solemn and joyous for families and friends; it is also, however, an occasion for making Jesus Christ present within the Community of Faith. All arrangements must be made with this in mind.

MARRIAGE AND THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Marriage is undertaken in the context of the Christian community; vows are taken before God, and Christ's presence is invoked to bless and sanctify the union of two persons. The wedding is a *symbol* of one's Christian life, an event which points to a couple's commitment to living life in the Church. In other words, the Church is more highly invested in your *marriage* than in your *wedding*.

We expect that any couple wishing to be married in this church will be **regular in attendance** for at least **three months before a wedding date is selected**. In this way, the couple has time to become part of the Christian family, and to appreciate and understand the Anglican approach to worship and sacrament.

In certain cases, this requirement may be waived by the rector; however, this is the clear exception, not the established rule.

REMARRIAGE AFTER DIVORCE IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Episcopal Church holds that marriage is a lifelong bond between two people, and 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."

The Church also recognizes that there are times when marriages do not succeed. This is always an occasion for profound sadness, and requires humility of both parties as each acknowledges responsibility.

Nevertheless, the Church teaches that there is no moral superiority gained by forcing two people to stay together when the sacramental, Christ-manifesting nature of the marriage is gone. Bitterness, anger, and resentment are roadblocks to living out the Christian faith, both as families and as individuals.

The Episcopal Church does, therefore, permit remarriage after divorce, under the following conditions:

- No priest of the Church *must* solemnize such a marriage; it is left to the priest's discretion and godly judgment.
- Permission must be obtained, in writing, of the bishop of the diocese. This requires a minimum of thirty days
- The priest must have evidence of a final decree of divorce or nullity.
- The priest must be assured that children of a former marriage [and former spouse, where applicable] are being supported in a manner consistent with the Christian faith.
- Although canon law no longer requires a period of one year between a final decree of divorce or nullity and a remarriage, the rector may, at his own discretion, require a certain period before remarriage.



THE WEDDING LICENSE

At your wedding, the priest fulfills two roles: the Church's witness, and an officer of the State of New York. The wedding license must be brought to the rehearsal, or given to the officiant at an earlier date, if possible. During the service the wedding license and the canonical church register will be signed by the betrothed couple and their witnesses.

No priest is permitted to perform a wedding without having the license present. Since they are good for ninety days, it is best to get your license as soon as possible. There is a twenty-four hour waiting period between the issuing of the license and the solemnizing of matrimony.

MUSIC AT YOUR WEDDING

Music at the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony must be of a religious nature and appropriate to the occasion. Secular, "popular" songs, no matter how pretty or special in the life of the betrothed couple, are not permitted, and are best saved for the reception.

All music for weddings is under the direction of the Organist and Choirmaster, Mr. Kenneth Dyer, who plays for all weddings at The Church of The Ascension. You must schedule a time to meet with Ken to discuss the musical options. Ken will also arrange for a soloist if one is desired. Any requests for outside musicians must be made through the Organist/Choirmaster well in advance of your wedding.

Should one wish for another organist (or other instrumentalist) to play in lieu of Mr. Dyer, he still must be paid his professional fees as noted below.

VISITING CLERGY

When requested by the couple, it is possible to have clergy from other denominations participate in the Nuptial Liturgy. Where desired and appropriate, the rector *may* invite another member of the clergy to assist with the liturgy. All such invitations come from the rector, rather than from the betrothed couple.

FLOWERS

"Flowers" and "wedding" seem to go naturally together. In most cases, however, *less is best*. The use of flowers in the church is confined to [1] two vases on the High Altar, and, if requested, [2] two additional standing vases or baskets at the choir steps. One may also place a spray on the pulpit and another on the lectern. Flowers and/or ribbons at the end of pews are permitted.

PLEASE NOTE: All flowers for use within the church must come from the church florist: THE ART FLOWER AND GIFT SHOP, 41 NORTH VILLAGE AVENUE, ROCKVILLE CENTRE. [Tel. No. 516-766-2461] The owner, Keith Linsalata and chief designer Debbie Whitfield will be happy to meet with you, and are very knowledgeable about this church, its dimensions, and its liturgy.

Other flowers, such as bouquets, corsages, boutonnieres, may be supplied by a florist of your choice.

Baskets which "arrive" from other florists for use in the church must, regrettably, be refused.

If you have a flower girl as part of the bridal party, she may carry a miniature bouquet or small basket of flowers. No "scattering" of rose petals, please.

The use of a white "runner" is not permitted, for reasons of safety.

Likewise, there is to be no tossing of rice, birdseed, or flower petals on the steps of the church.



PHOTOGRAPHY

A photographic and/or video recounting of the special day is probably desired. However, the sacredness of the occasion must not be marred by bursting flashbulbs and huge, multi-layered tripods of video equipment.

The photographer must be informed that no flash pictures are permitted during the ceremony. When the ceremony is over, s/he may “re-pose” as many shots as s/he wishes. The photographer must arrive at the church at least 30 minutes early to learn where s/he is permitted to stand.

Videotaping is only permitted with a shoulder camera which requires no lighting. Again, the videographer must arrive at the church 30 minutes before the ceremony is to begin.

REHEARSAL

A rehearsal may be scheduled at a time convenient to the rector, the organist and the couple. The rehearsal does *not* have to take place the day before the wedding; in fact, it is often better to schedule the rehearsal for two days prior to the wedding at 6:00 or 6:30 pm, to allow the couple and their attendants some additional “breathing space”.

FEES AND STIPENDS

For **pledging** members of the parish:

- A check made payable to the Church of the Ascension for the use of the church **\$225**
- If using Pew Torches, add **\$70** to above check.
- Cash for Ken Dyer as organist **\$200** or as organist/soloist **\$250**
- Cash to a soloist **\$100**
- Cash to the sexton **\$50/hour**
- No clergy fee is expected for **pledging members** of the parish.

For **non-members**, or **non-pledging members**:

- A check made payable to the Church of the Ascension for the use of the church **\$325** (fee includes **\$50** for the Altar Guild of the church)
- If using Pew Torches, add **\$70** to above check.
- Cash for the clergy **\$200**
- Cash for Ken Dyer as organist **\$200** or as organist/soloist **\$250**
- Cash to the soloist **\$100**
- Cash to the sexton **\$50/hour**

The schedule for the church is important not only for your wedding, but for other events which may be scheduled that day. It is essential that your wedding start on time. Any wedding which begins more than 30 minutes after the agreed time will incur a \$200 additional fee made payable to The Church of The Ascension. A check in that amount should be delivered at the time of the rehearsal and will be returned on the day of the wedding if the service begins within 30 minutes of the appointed hour. Your careful planning and care will make this additional payment unnecessary.

All fees are to be paid at the time of the rehearsal. Cash fees are to be placed in separate envelopes.

None of the above fees include use of the Church Parish Hall or kitchen, which must be arranged separately.

