



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

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WEDDING CUSTOMARY

Marriage 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.”

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between two people in the presence of God. In the Episcopal Church it is required that at least one of the parties be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested by at least two witnesses; and that the marriage conform to the laws of the State and the canons of the Episcopal Church.

A priest or a bishop normally presides at the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage because such ministers alone have the function of pronouncing the nuptial blessing, and of celebrating the Holy Eucharist. When both a bishop and a priest are present and officiating, the bishop should pronounce the blessing and preside at the Eucharist. A deacon or an assisting priest may deliver the charge, ask for the Declaration of Consent, read the Gospel, and perform other assisting functions at the Eucharist. Where it is permitted by civil law that deacons may perform marriages, and no priest or bishop is available, a deacon may use the service which follows, omitting the nuptial blessing which follows The Prayers. It is desirable that the Lessons from the Old Testament and the Epistles be read by lay persons.

In the opening exhortation, at the symbol of N.N., the full names of the persons to be married are declared. Subsequently, only their Christian names are used.

If Banns are to be published, the following form is used: *I publish the Banns of Marriage between N. N. of _____ and N. N. of _____. If any of you know just cause why they may not be joined together in Holy Matrimony, you are bidden to declare it. This is the first [or second, or third] time of asking.*

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage may be used with any authorized liturgy for the Holy Eucharist. This service then replaces the Ministry of the Word, and the Eucharist begins with the Offertory. After the Declaration of Consent, if there is to be a giving in marriage or presentation, the Celebrant asks: “*Who gives [presents] this [person] to be married to this [person]?*” Or the following: “*Who presents these people to be married to each other?*” To either question, the appropriate answer is: “*I do.*” If more than one person responds, they do so together.

For the Ministry of the Word it is fitting that the couple to be married remain where they may conveniently hear the reading of Scripture. They may approach the Altar either for the exchange of vows or for the Blessing of the Marriage. It is appropriate that all remain standing until the conclusion of the Collect. Seating may be provided for the wedding party so that all may be seated for the Lessons and the homily. The Apostles’ Creed may be recited after the Lessons, or after the homily, if there is one.

When desired, some other suitable symbol of the vows may be used in place of the ring.

At the Offertory, it is desirable that the bread and wine be presented to the ministers by the newly married persons. They may then remain before the Lord’s Table and receive Holy Communion before other members of the congregation. *Book of Common Prayer 1979*

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Weddings at Redeemer are sacred and sacramental services. Therefore, all ceremonies will be conducted in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer and the Canons of the Episcopal Church. *The Rector of the Parish, by Canon law, has full responsibility of determining the appropriateness of all arrangements.*

Who may be married at The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer?

Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between two people that is entered into in and supported by the presence of God and the community of faith. The sacrament of Holy Matrimony is the liturgical expression of that relationship.

Marriages solemnized in the Church continue to be nurtured within the community of the Church as a lifelong process. Those who come to the church seeking God's blessing on their relationship should do so with a clear intention of maintaining an active participation in the life of the Church. It should be considered normative that marriage take place in the church where the couple intends to worship.

The Episcopal Church requires that at least one of the parties be a baptized Christian, the ceremony be attested to by at least two witnesses, and that the marriage conforms to laws of the state of Maryland and the canons of this Church. Couples will be required to sign a Declaration of Intention stating that they

- desire to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church;
- do solemnly declare that they hold marriage to be a lifelong union;
- believe that their union in heart, body, and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy; help and comfort in prosperity and adversity; and, God willing, for the procreation/raising of children and their nurture and in the knowledge and love of God.

Before setting a date

The couple must call Redeemer to request an appointment with the Rev'd Cricket Park, Rector, or another clergy person employed by the parish. The couple meets with the rector, or other person appointed, to discuss feasibility, availability of date, wedding policy, review the Church's financial policies, and to sign the Declaration of Intent. A date cannot be set without a meeting with a church clergy person. Weddings are not usually performed during Christmas week, Lent, Holy Week, Easter Day, Strawberry Festival week or on All Saints Day. Weddings can begin no later than 7:00 p.m.

Premarital counseling

Premarital counseling is required by the Episcopal Church. There is a minimum of three sessions required and additional sessions may be recommended. Normally, premarital counseling is conducted by the officiating priest. All sessions should be completed at least two months from the wedding date. Counseling at Redeemer is done using the *Prepare/Enrich* program. Fees associated with this program are the responsibility of the couple. No announcement of the wedding should be made, or invitations mailed until after at least two of these sessions are completed.

If the bride and/or groom are living out-of-town, the couple may wish to make arrangements for counseling to be done by an Episcopal priest near them. This should be done as early as possible, and with the consent of the officiating priest. An evaluation from the priest conducting the counseling must be forwarded to the officiating priest at least two months prior to the wedding date. Failure to participate in premarital counseling will result in the postponement or cancellation of the wedding date.

Re-marriage

Canon law requires clergy to obtain consent from the bishop before solemnizing the marriage of anyone who has been divorced. At least one year from the date of the final decree of divorce is the norm for re-marriage. The couple must have given the priest photocopies of their divorce decree(s) no later than 60 days before the wedding date.

Sanctuary/Nave & Parish Hall Usage

All users of the Redeemer's facilities agree by their signatures on the accompanying forms to leave the Nave, Parish Hall, and any other rooms used (bathrooms, classroom for changing, etc.) and its surroundings in a clean and undamaged condition. If any use of church property results in any damage to the building contents or surroundings that require repair, cleaning or replacement amounting to costs in excess of \$150, the user agrees to assume financial responsibility for those costs. If any costs are incurred as a result of misuse are less than \$150, the amount will be deducted from the \$150 security deposit. Some specific rules and regulations for responsible and prudent use, as well as general information, are outlined below:

1. Building Capacities: The Nave/Sanctuary capacity is 250. No more than 250 persons, including children, may be in the Nave/Sanctuary at any time. Additional seating may be set up in the Narthex. The Parish Hall capacity is 125. No more than 150 persons, including children, may be in the Parish Hall at any time.
2. Pipe Organ: The pipe organ in Redeemer's Nave is an extremely valuable musical instrument. Use of the organ is subject to the approval of the Director of Music. Under no circumstances may anyone touch the organ pipes, casework, or console as the dirt and oil on human hands can cause severe damage. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children do not touch the organ pipes, casework, or console.
3. Grand Piano: Use of the piano is subject to the approval of Redeemer's Director of Music. No one other than the approved guest musician(s) may open, touch or play the piano.
4. Thermostats/Heat/AC: Users should arrange beforehand with the Parish Office to set the thermostat for comfortable temperature during the scheduled use. Users and/or guests, etc. are not permitted to touch the thermostats.
5. Decorations: No decorations shall be attached to walls, floors, ceiling, or windows with permanent fasteners such as tacks, nails, staples, duct tape, etc.
6. Art: Pictures, photographs, etc. that are part of the Nave or Parish Hall collection and hang permanently in the Nave or Parish Hall shall not be removed by the user.
7. Clean Up: The person in charge of the event and the Event Sexton (if one is present) will do the following before leaving:
 - Return all furniture to its original position
 - Remove any/all decorations placed by the user
 - Pick up or sweep up all trash/debris from the Nave (including between all pews and in the narthex), main hall, landings, stairs, foyer, kitchen and rest rooms.
 - In the kitchen, remove any left-overs from the refrigerator, wipe up any spills, clean the floor, put out the trash and any recycling. Wipe down the counters and sink. Wash and put away any utensils, etc.

- Pick up or sweep up all trash/debris from the Parish Hall, landings, stairs, foyer, kitchen and rest rooms. Clean up any spills on the Hall floor.
- In the bathrooms, pick up all paper debris and wipe the sink and mirrors with paper towels. Empty waste baskets and replace the plastic liners.
- Close and latch all windows, including those in the rest rooms.
- Turn off all water faucets (kitchen and rest rooms).
- Check everywhere, including window sills, for personal property.
- Turn off all lights, including those in the rest rooms.
- Lock the Nave and parish hall doors with the key provided.

8. No Smoking: Redeemer is a smoke-free property. *Cigarette, cigar and pipe smoking are not allowed in the Nave or anywhere on the church building or grounds.*

Additional Policies and Procedures

Marriage License: It is required that the parties wishing to marry comply with all the laws of Maryland. Such compliance is indicated to the officiating priest by the presentation of a marriage license. The license is issued by the Montgomery County Courthouse. The license should be brought to the Church office at the wedding rehearsal. **The priest cannot officiate without the license.** The priest will return the license to the courthouse/Vital Statistics office after the wedding.

Dates/Times: Dates and times for weddings are on a first-come, first served basis. Weddings are usually scheduled on a Saturday; however, other dates may be chosen in coordination with the church calendar. If there is more than one wedding on a given date, there must be a minimum of four hours separating the ceremonies.

Vendors: All florists, photographers, videographers, caterers, bridal consultants and other vendors associated with the wedding must discuss services with the clergy assigned to the wedding. Photography/videography must be done with available light (no flash photography). Videography must be done from no more than two stationary positions. Time allowed for photography before and after the service depends on the number of weddings scheduled for the day and should be scheduled with the coordinator. If you wish a picture taken with the priest, please do that as the first pose as a courtesy to her/his schedule. Outside bridal consultants are not permitted to direct the rehearsal or the wedding. Vendors may not arrive more than two hours before the service.

Rehearsal: The purpose of the wedding rehearsal is to familiarize the wedding party with the service so that they will be at ease during the wedding itself. The bride and groom will participate fully in the rehearsal. The officiating clergy, with assistance from the Altar Guild, will be responsible for the actual conduct of the rehearsal. The rehearsal should last about one hour. They are normally scheduled for the day before the wedding. No rehearsal will be scheduled to begin after 6:30 p.m. The entire service, including the ushering in of relatives and the procession, will be rehearsed. **It is important for all members to attend and for everyone to be on time.**

The Wedding: The ceremony will be conducted by a priest of Redeemer, unless approved of by the rector. Upon request, the priest may invite an Episcopal priest from another parish, or a person from another denomination to preside/assist in the ceremony. The liturgy for church members is from the Book of Common Prayer and usually includes Holy Eucharist. When the Eucharist is celebrated, all will be invited

to share in the reception of the sacrament. Lessons from the Old Testament and Epistle can be, and are encouraged to be, read by family members of the couple getting married.

- Music: The bride and groom must contact Redeemer's Organist/Choirmaster for consultation at least six weeks before the wedding. The Organist/Choirmaster will play at all weddings with music. Musicians in addition to the Organist/Choirmaster are welcome. However, they and the music selections must be approved by the Organist/Choirmaster. Music that does not have as its chief end the praise of God is best left for the reception. The Organist/Choirmaster has first right of refusal with regard to music selections.
- Decorations: A wedding is a worship service and we seek to worship God with beauty and simplicity. If two or more weddings are scheduled for the same day, it is recommended that the flowers be coordinated so that unnecessary expense may be avoided. Please be aware that floral arrangements will be placed on the floor in front of the altar. As in all church decorating, everything should be arranged to direct attention to the altar. **Wedding flowers become the property of the church and will be used for worship services the following Sunday, unless otherwise arranged for with the rector.** The Sunday bulletin will acknowledge that the flowers are given in thanksgiving for the marriage. After services, they will be taken to members of the congregation who are ill or unable to leave their homes. The liturgical color for a wedding is white, the color of celebration. Altar candles and torches are the only candles. Extra candelabra or unity candles are highly discouraged. Aisle runners are discouraged. Aisle candles pose a fire hazard and are not permitted.
- Furniture: There should be no attempt made to move furniture to accommodate displays. Pew bows, if they are used, are to be secured with a band of elastic or floral tape. Any rented items are the responsibility of the bride and groom. Arrangements must be made in advance for removal and pickup.
- Guest Book. A guest book may be displayed and signed in the narthex before the service. After the service, the guest book should be taken to the reception site.
- Traffic. If the size of the wedding requires a traffic officer, one can be obtained by calling the local Police Department. The cost of the officer is the responsibility of the wedding parties.
- Rice, etc. Rice, birdseed, balloons, flower petals or confetti are not to be used on church property. They are difficult to clean up and dangerous to wildlife. You may use bubbles.
- Dressing room. A room will be provided for the bride and her attendants two hours before the service.
- Bulletins. If you wish to have a bulletin for your wedding, please check with the rector with regard to content. The printing of the bulletins and their delivery to the church are the responsibility of the wedding parties.

Reception: Redeemer's Parish Hall is available for receptions and should be scheduled at the same time the wedding date is scheduled. Consumption of alcohol is permitted only in accordance with diocesan policy. Hard liquor is not permitted. Non-alcoholic beverages in equal quantity and prominence must be provided where alcohol is served. Arrangements for catering, place settings, tables, linens, decorations, and so forth, are the responsibility of the wedding parties. *Using the Parish Hall for the reception assumes that the wedding parties agree to bear all responsibility for liability concerning their guests and hold harmless The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer and its employees and volunteers from any liability for injury or death due to negligence.*

WEDDING INFORMATION SHEET

Today's Date: _____

Wedding Date: _____

Wedding entered on Calendar: _____

Estimated Number Attending: _____

Individual #1

Full Name _____ DOB _____

Address (Street, City, State, Zip) _____

Home Phone _____ Mobile/Cell _____

E-mail _____

Marital Status _____

Home Parish _____

Parent's Full Names

Individual #2

Full Name _____ DOB _____

Address (Street, City, State, Zip) _____

Home Phone _____ Mobile/Cell _____

E-mail _____

Marital Status _____

Home Parish _____

Parent's Full Names:

Is the Eucharist a part of your ceremony? Yes ___ No ___

How many attendants will there be? Bride: _____ Groom: _____

Additional Information

Florist: _____

Contact/Phone: _____

Photographer: _____

Contact/Phone: _____

Videographer: _____

Contact/Phone: _____

Caterer: _____

Contact/Phone: _____

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

We, _____ and _____

desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

We believe that the union of husband and wife in heart, body, and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation/raising of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto.

Individual #1

Individual #2

Priest: _____

Date: _____

FEES/DONATIONS

All fees are to be paid no later than when the marriage license is brought to the church (rehearsal).

Premarital Counseling: \$35 (payable to *Prepare/Enrich*)

Use of Sanctuary: Members: There is no fee for members of Redeemer.
Nonmembers: \$950 with \$476 deposit at time of booking, balance at rehearsal.

Use of Parish Hall: Members: \$450 with \$225 deposit at time of booking, balance at rehearsal.
Nonmembers: \$650 with \$325 deposit at time of booking, balance at rehearsal.
Note: Receptions in the Parish Hall may be cancelled up to two weeks (14 days) before the scheduled date with a refund of 75% of the fee.

Organist/Choirmaster: \$400 (paid separately)

Choir fees: To be negotiated

Music for Rehearsal: To be negotiated

Clergy Discretionary

Fund gift: \$400-600

Event Sexton/Staff: \$35/hour

Cleaning Fee: \$130 (subject to actual event/timing/etc.)

Total Fees: \$ _____ (Usage \$ _____ Cleaning \$ _____ Staff \$ _____)

Security Deposit \$150 (to be paid when contract signed) Date Received: _____

Usage Deposit: \$ _____ (due when contract signed) Date Received: _____

Balance Due: \$ _____ on: _____ Date Received: _____

Customary Received on: _____

Celebrant/Officiant: _____

We acknowledge that we have received a copy of the Church of the Redeemer wedding customary and understand our responsibilities in using the facilities, and associated fees, of the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer.

_____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____