

**YOUR WEDDING CEREMONY**  
**AT**  
**ALL SAINTS EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE NORTH SHORE**



46 CHERRY STREET  
DANVERS, MASSACHUSETTS 01923  
**978-774-1150**

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*God of tenderness and strength, you have brought our paths together and led us to this day; go with us now as we travel through good times, through trouble, or through change. Bless our home, our partings and our meetings. Make us worthy of each other's best, and tender with each other's dreams, trusting in your love. In Jesus' name. Amen.*



# Wedding Customary

## All Saints Episcopal Church of the North Shore, Danvers, Massachusetts

A wedding is one of life's great moments, a time for good wishes, feasting and joy. It is also an invitation for a couple to share life together in the spirit of Jesus Christ. It is based upon a public and life-long covenant between two people - celebrated in the presence of God and before a priest and congregation. Because marriage is a commitment "not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly," we ask that you read through this booklet carefully and then talk to us about your upcoming marriage. We welcome those who are interested in exploring the spiritual aspects of their marriage relationship, as this will guide and determine the role of the parish church and the priest in planning, scheduling, and celebrating a Christian marriage. The following guidelines are provided to every couple inquiring about a wedding at All Saints Episcopal Church. It is our hope that these guidelines will offer couples an initial understanding of what marriage and a wedding ceremony in an Episcopal Church entails, as well as an understanding of All Saints' particular procedures and policies.

According to the Canons of the Episcopal Church, a marriage ceremony is permitted when:

1. At least one of the persons being married is a baptized Christian.
2. A minimum of 90 days' notice, dated from the first meeting with one of the clergy, is given. Reserving a date six months or more in advance is highly recommended.
3. Marriage ceremonies may be taken from the 1979 Book of Common Prayer or from other approved Anglican liturgies.
4. If one or both parties has been previously married, divorce is not in itself a barrier to remarriage, but the Episcopal Church requires certain steps to be followed in order to be remarried in the Church. A first step is to obtain permission to solemnize the wedding from the Bishop, with a minimum of 60 days' notice. No arrangements can be made until any divorce is absolute and the person is legally free to marry. A copy of the Decree of Divorce Absolute is necessary. (Thirty days after the order is entered [usually the date of the hearing], a Judgment Divorce Nisi is issued. The Judgment Divorce Nisi becomes an absolute Judgment of Divorce after 90 days.).
5. Marriage is both a legal and a spiritual union. The priest acts as an agent of the state and signs the marriage license. In the marriage ceremony, the priest pronounces God's blessing upon the couple's love and life together. It is the Church's hope that Christian marriage begins and matures within the context of a Christian community; and, indeed, one reason it exists is for the benefit of the Christian community.
6. Couples requesting a marriage ceremony in the Episcopal Church who are not members are encouraged to attend worship services before and during the time of preparation of the marriage ceremony, as you discern your own role in the Christian Community.
7. The Church Music Director will play the music at every wedding at All Saints. She is proficient on both organ and piano. If other musicians are desired, please discuss this with the Church Music Director.

## WEDDING PREPARATION TIMELINE

- At least 6 months in advance, make an appointment with the priest to discuss a potential wedding at All Saints or another location. With clergy agreement, set the wedding date and time. Please complete the Wedding Information Sheet and sign the Statement of Intent. Except in unusual circumstances, weddings will not be scheduled between Ash Wednesday and Easter, due to parish responsibilities during that time of year.
- According to the Church's Canon Law, each couple is required to schedule a series of premarital counseling sessions with the officiating priest. All services conducted by the Clergy are normally held in the Church. Six to twelve months before the marriage ceremony, make appointments (4-6) for marriage preparation with the priest at All Saints, or another Episcopal priest or pre-marital counselor located where the couple live or work. Pre-marital sessions are concluded one month before the marriage ceremony.
- If one or both persons has been married and divorced, the priest must obtain permission of the Diocesan Bishop in order to officiate at the marriage ceremony. The priest writes a letter to the Bishop requesting permission to bless the marriage after meeting with the couple for pre-marital counseling. The Bishop requests a minimum of 60 days to respond.
- Meet with the church Music Director to select music appropriate for a marriage service. The following are considered inappropriate for church wedding processions in the Episcopal Church:
  - Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin ("Here Comes the Bride"), R. Wagner
  - Wedding March (Midsummer Nights Dream), Mendelssohn.

This is because the entrance procession is a liturgical action that includes the bride, groom, the rest of the wedding party, and liturgical ministers. Therefore, "Here Comes the Bride", by its very title limits the full meaning of the procession. The over-used marches of Wagner and Mendelssohn in their original context promote a view that is inconsistent with the Christian understanding of marriage and have become commercialized and trivialized. It is respectfully suggested that "Here Comes the Bride" be more appropriately used at the wedding reception.

Solos are optional and must be approved by the Organist and Rector. Show tunes and love songs are not appropriate at a wedding in the Episcopal church. The singer should be competent and well-prepared.

### Congregational Hymns

The Book of Common Prayer provides for hymns to be sung by the congregation during the marriage ceremony. If a reasonable number of wedding guests are churchgoers and familiar with the hymnal, congregational singing can be an effective means of celebration this important event and is to be encouraged. Some appropriate hymns are:

- Joyful, joyful we adore Thee, 376
  - Love divine, all loves excelling, 657
  - Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, 390
  - From all that dwell below the skies, 380
  - Now thank we all our God, 397
- One month prior to the wedding, plan a consultation with the Parish Administrator regarding the bulletin. The church office can make copies of a simple bulletin, provided by the couple for a nominal fee. More

elaborate bulletins are the responsibility of the couple, or can be made by our Administrator for a significant fee.

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- A rehearsal helps make the participants more comfortable, and ensures that the ceremony will proceed smoothly and with dignity. The rehearsal normally takes place the evening before the wedding. The bridal party may arrive up to one hour prior to the ceremony for the purpose of last-minute preparations, pre-wedding photographs, etc. The Bride's Room and/or Parish Hall will be made available for the bride, her attendants, and her immediate family. Please bring marriage license, bulletins, and all fees to the Church the day of the rehearsal. *(Nerves and excitement on the wedding day can lead to forgetfulness on the wedding day!!)*

## HONORARIA

It should be noted that these honoraria do not pay the full cost of such services, which are subsidized by the parishioners of All Saints Church.

1. The Organist - \$300-This includes time for his/her work, involving a conference to select practice, rehearsal, and the ceremony itself. Solo Anthem rehearsals will be an additional fee of \$50. Other Soloists may be secured through the Music Director and will charge their own fee. If you require an accompaniment, speak to the Music Director to make arrangements.
2. The Church and Sexton - \$75 - This is the charge for the Sexton (custodian) who is responsible for arranging furniture, as well as cleaning before and after the rehearsal and wedding. If you are holding a candlelight service, an additional charge of \$25 is attributed to the sexton, and the use of the undercroft requires another \$75 for the sexton.
3. In circumstances where a couple is not a member of this parish community, we require a fee of \$300 for the use of the church. There is no church fee for members.
4. Parish Administrator -\$50-\$100 - If desired, the Parish Administrator may produce your Wedding Service Bulletins, after discussing your individual ceremony requirements with you. This fee will cover these services (meeting/discussion, selection, design, copying, and folding), and the cost of printing. Please be sure to submit all ceremony information to the Parish Administrator no later than 2 weeks prior to the date of your ceremony. For on-going communication concerning details for the bulletin and proofing of the final copy, you can use the office email address [allstoffice@gmail.com](mailto:allstoffice@gmail.com), or call the church.(978-774-1150)
5. Parish Hall Rental - \$175- for non-members, and free of charge for parishioners, although donations are encouraged and appreciated.
6. Altar Flowers, Etc. - Flowers and decorations are coordinated through the Director(s) of the Altar Guild. Flowers may be ordered directly from your chosen florist If desired, a carpet runner may be purchased from your florist.
7. Officiant/Celebrant - If the bride or groom is a parishioner who is a contributing member of the congregation, no honorarium is expected for the priest (although the couple may make an offering to the parish, which will be given to the Rector's Discretionary Fund for the care of those in need). If neither the bride nor the groom is a supporting member of All Saints Church, an honorarium of \$750 made out to Marya DeCarlen with the Rector's discretionary fund in the memo line is expected.

8. Photography - The Episcopal Church believes that the wedding ceremony is a very sacred service, and it is hard to maintain that sanctity if a photographer or your family/friends are moving around taking pictures. Thus, pictures may be taken as the wedding party enters and leaves the church. Please, no flash photography is allowed during the service. The priest will make this announcement at the beginning of the service, and encourage your family and friends to take pictures on your way down the aisle. Your priest will be more than happy to re-stage any photo after the service.

### FINAL CHECKLIST FOR THE COUPLE

1. Secure Wedding Date and Time.
2. Reserve Rehearsal Date and Time.
3. Obtain Marriage License from the Town Clerk about a month before the wedding.
4. Set up 4-5 appointments to meet with the Priest for pre-marital counseling sessions.
5. Meet with Organist to discuss processional and recessional marches, any soloists, pieces to be played, special music requests, etc., allowing plenty of time before the wedding date.
6. Consult Altar Guild Director(s) regarding the altar flowers you wish to purchase through the Guild, and whether you want to use the candelabra for a candlelight service. In addition, you may wish to discuss any special decorations you had in mind.
7. If desired, arrange a time to meet or discuss with the Parish Administrator the selection of bulletin covers and to set up your service bulletin.
8. Select Scriptures to be read during the service from the Liturgy booklet provided.
9. Choose and contact Readers. Remember, the readers must be able to be heard and understood. Be sure to give them the Scriptures well in advance so they can practice and be comfortable with their delivery.
10. Keep Other Clergy posted on arrangements being made, especially those in which he/she may be involved (i.e. Rehearsal).
11. Bring Marriage License and Honoraria (per attached list of all applicable, required fees) to the rehearsal, or deliver them to the Parish Office during the week prior to the wedding date.
12. We strive to maintain a joyful, yet worshipful, atmosphere in the wedding service. Good professional photographers understand this, and they will agree to minimize distractions and respect the sacred nature of the building and the liturgy.

**Those who are in charge of securing the building will be ready to leave 45 minutes after the wedding service is over.**