



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE
EPIPHANY

Wedding Policy

“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 of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Therefore, 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.”

The Book of Common Prayer, p. 423

The marriage of members of the Christian faith community is an occasion of great joy, and a matter of utmost importance and great consequence. Marriage is a wonderful gift from God, and at the same time one of the primary ways of serving Christ, and living out our commitments to God and each other. Therefore, preparation for marriage is vital, and part of our spiritual growth.

While getting married or the wedding is usually first and foremost on the minds of those who contact us, the Episcopal Church’s primary concern is not the ceremony but the marriage itself. The information regarding Getting Married at Epiphany is given here for the guidance of those who may be contemplating marriage or who wish to be of help to someone who is.

1. CONSULT WITH THE RECTOR, BEFORE MAKING PLANS

A couple wishing to be married at Epiphany should schedule an initial appointment with the Rector, preferably at least six months prior to an anticipated wedding. No marriage date or reception should be set

without consultation.

The canon laws of the Episcopal Church make this necessary.

Note too that you may be asked to complete some of the required pre-marital counseling prior to the Rector agreeing to officiate at your wedding.

Please also be aware that the canons require at least a thirty day notice before any marriage may be performed.

If either of the couple has been previously married and divorced, a minimum notice

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of at least sixty days is required, as permission to officiate must be secured by the Rector from the Bishop of Arizona.

In this case, no date may be considered firm, until such permission is secured.

2. WHO MAY BE MARRIED AT EPIPHANY?

Baptized: Normally, it is understood that both parties are Christian, having been

baptized in some branch of the Christian Church, with at least one being an active Communicant of the Episcopal Church.

Frequently, an un-baptized person will seek baptism to consolidate the religious orientation of the new family being launched. When this is not the case, the matter would need to be discussed with the Rector prior to a wedding date being set.

Members of Epiphany: The policy of Epiphany, adopted by the Vestry is that one or both parties must be active members of the parish in order to be married here. The couple may become active at Epiphany as they begin premarital counseling, the

expectation being that they will continue their participation in the life of the parish after they are married. All couples planning to be married at Epiphany are expected to attend services regularly.

But I'm Divorced: When one or both parties has a spouse by a previous marriage still living, the request for marriage in the Church has to be referred to the Bishop and their advisory council for permission to be married. The reason for this is the pastoral concern of the Church and necessitates a conference with the Rector to determine if this subsequent marriage is appropriate. The Rector will ask the couple to participate in pre-marital counseling prior to making a recommendation to the Bishop. No wedding date will be considered firm until the Bishop's permission has been granted.

3. OFFICIATING CLERGY

The policy of this parish is that the Rector (or an Episcopal priest designated by her) is the Officiant at any wedding. Other clergy may take part and assist in the service, at the discretion of the Rector, if desired by the couple. The official state marriage certificate is to be signed by the Officiant. The certificate presented to the couple will be signed by the Officiant, and may be signed by all of the clergy participating. As a courtesy to the clergy, if you would like the Rector (or others) to share your celebration at a rehearsal dinner or reception, please specifically invite them. And do be aware that their schedules may not allow them to participate.

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4. INSTRUCTION REQUIRED

Canon law of the Episcopal Church requires pre-marital instruction into the nature of Holy Matrimony and counseling

with either the Rector or someone designated by her for any couple wishing to be married. Couples may be referred to professional marriage counselors (designated by the Rector), who will conduct the pre-marital counseling on a fee basis. In extraordinary situations, such as where one of the couple lives out of state, arrangements for counseling by clergy of other congregations may be made.

5. SETTING THE DATE

The dates of the wedding and rehearsal may only be set in consultation with the Rector's personal calendar, and the central parish calendar.

No dates will be considered firm before an initial conversation with the Rector has been completed, and the couple has indicated an understanding and acceptance of the policy detailed in these pages.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE WEDDING / CEREMONY WEDDING MUSIC

Our Organist will oversee all music for the wedding. Well in advance of your wedding date you should contact him to discuss the music for your wedding. Soloists and instrumentalists will be permitted only if they are approved by our Organist. Bear in mind that music selected for purely sentimental reasons may not enhance the sacred nature of the marriage service. Most secular music should be reserved for the reception.

REHEARSAL

The date and hour of the rehearsal should be arranged well in advance of the wedding. One of the clergy will conduct the rehearsal which normally will last no more than one hour from the time it actually gets underway. The organist will not be present, unless requested (additional fee required – see list of fees).

The following people should attend the rehearsal, if possible: The bride and groom

Parents of the bride and groom Maid/Matron of honor

Bride's attendants, flower girl (if any)

Best man and all ushers, ring bearer (if any)

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Those who will be reading lessons, and leading the prayers

Any others who will be taking an active part in the wedding service

Please note: The Rector requests that close family members and friends also attend the rehearsal, as

this is a time of preparation and instruction into the nature and meaning of Holy Matrimony, as well as a rehearsal of logistics and movement of the service.

EUCCHARIST

When both bride and groom are active communicants of the Episcopal Church (or active in attendance in a church of another denomination), a Eucharist with the wedding is appropriate.

Communion is a sign of our unity with God and with each other. The Eucharist is not appropriate for

every situation. The Rector can discuss this with you.

A wedding with Eucharist usually takes about an hour – without a Eucharist, approximately 30 minutes, but time varies, depending upon number of Scripture readings, music, size of congregation, etc.) It is not customary to include the Eucharist at weddings away from the church e.g., a wedding chapel, home, a hall, etc.

Quietness and decorum should be observed both at the rehearsal and at the wedding itself. Principals are reminded that a priest is not allowed to officiate when undue consumption of alcohol is evident.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

Epiphany is a lovely place of worship with colorful windows and vestments. Experience has shown that in terms of flowers and decorations, often less is more. Moreover, wedding flowers and decorations should not be more elaborate than would be used for Christ's festal days! Flowers should arrive at the Church and be in place at least 1 1/2 hours before the service (earlier, if required for photography). Please give the name and phone number of your florist to the Rector.

CANDLES are normally those already in place at the altar. In addition, pew torches down the center aisle are available (there is a set-up charge of \$100 when the pew torches are used). Beyond this, additional candles are discouraged. (A "unity candle" does not fit easily into the Episcopal Church's wedding liturgy, and is particularly unsuitable if there is a Eucharist with your wedding, for both practical and theological reasons. The Rector will be glad to discuss this with you.)

AISLE RUNNERS are not needed as the Church aisle is carpeted. If you wish to use a runner, it should be white, of the fabric variety (not "paper"), and at least 100 feet in length. The runner should be laid at the base of the chancel steps, and may not run up into the chancel to the altar. The source is your florist, who will put the runner in place when they bring your flowers.

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RICE / CONFETTI / FLOWER PETALS / LIQUID BUBBLES / ETC.

These items may not be thrown or used in the church or on the church grounds. First and foremost, they present a safety hazard; second, they can possibly damage church furnishings and/or grounds. It is suggested

that each family make this known to the participants and guests. (Use of the above items is more appropriate at the reception).

USHERS/BRIDESMAIDS

It is suggested that you use an “even” number of attendants. It is customary to plan for one usher for each 50 guests; never plan for less than two ushers. Ushers will be given instructions at the rehearsal.

RECEIVING LINES

Receiving lines are most appropriately part of the wedding reception. Moreover, receiving lines at the church, combined with time for photography after the service, may lead to extensive delays in the wedding party arriving at the reception (unless the reception is to be held at the church).

BELL RINGING

If children are present, bell ringing is an option.

PHOTOGRAPHY / VIDEOGRAPHY

Questions regarding any of the information below should be directed to the Rector well in advance of the wedding date.

Please inform your photographer, videographer, family, and guests that no flash photography is permitted during the ceremony. Flash photos may be taken during the procession into the church, providing that the photographer stands behind the last row of the congregation. Your photographer and/or videographer may record and take pictures from the back of the church during the service, using available light. Have your ushers inform guests bringing cameras with them to the wedding not to take flash pictures during the ceremony.

No photographer or video person (professional or amateur) should be moving around in the aisles or up front during the ceremony. Have them check in with the Rector upon their arrival at the Church.

Please give your photographer/videographer all of the above information. Also, give the name and phone number of the

photographer/videographer to the Rector well in advance of the day of your wedding.

After the ceremony, only the bridal party may return to the chancel for posed photographs (these should be re-enactments of parts of the ceremony – not group pictures). Please limit this phase of your photography to 15 minutes maximum. Posed group pictures, if deemed necessary, should be taken indoors or outside before the wedding. This includes all “family” shots.

Videotaping: Note information above. Videotaping may be done with available light only – and from stationary positions approved by the clergy. Do not use any extra-large tripods, cable, mixers or

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sound equipment, as they may conflict with the church’s system.

FEES

All fees should be brought to the parish office with your license (cash or check).

Parish Organist \$250

(If an Organist is requested to attend the rehearsal, or must accompany a soloist or other instrumentalists, add an additional fee of \$200)

Priest Honorarium \$250

(Checks should be made payable to Epiphany. Please note “Rector’s Discretionary” on memo line.)

Pew Torches down center aisle \$100

Acolyte \$50 (If Eucharist and/or pew torches used)

MARRIAGE LICENSE INFORMATION

Note: After the wedding ceremony, the bride and groom sign the marriage license and two witnesses sign the Marriage Book. You may take one of the copies of the marriage license with you. The parish office will mail in the other two copies to the county clerk on the next business day.

A Marriage License may be obtained from the county of residence of either party. There is a three day waiting period after applying for the license, and the ceremony must take place within 33 days of date of application. Our advice is not to leave the license until the last minute. We cannot have a wedding without a valid license!

Either party may apply for license (full-sized certified copies of both applicant's birth certificates and a driver's license or photo ID of each applicant must be presented). The age of marriage is 18 without parental consent (age 16 with parental consent). The requirement for premarital counseling for individuals applying for a marriage license has been eliminated. Applicants will be provided with written educational material by the county clerk regarding prenatal care and the transmission and prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Please bring the license to the parish office no later than one week prior to the date of your wedding. (All appropriate fees are also normally brought to the office at that time.)

Information you must supply for license:

First, Middle, and Last Names of applicants Street address, city and state
Social Security number

Birthplace of each party and birth date

Father's First and Last Names and Birthplace (State only) Mother's First and Maiden Names and Birthplace (State only)

Whether or not married previously

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NOTE: If prospective bride and/or groom reside outside the State of Arizona, a marriage license from the State of Arizona is still required, and must be obtained from Coconino County.

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