



**ALL SAINTS' EPISCOPAL
CHURCH**

WEDDING CUSTOMARY

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ROLES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Rector: The Rev. Genevieve Razim, genevieve@allsaints-austin.org

Parish Administrator: Mona Myers, mona@allsaints-austin.org

Wedding Liaisons: Sandra Kelley and Ana Dison

Organist: Gregory Eaton, gregory@allsaints-austin.org

Sexton/Facilities Director: Marvin Jones, marvin@allsaints-austin.org

All Saints' Phone Number: 512-476-3589

All Saints' Mailing Address: 209 W. 27th St., Austin, Texas 78705

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

It is hoped that the following instructions will assist you in planning your wedding and acquaint you with the customs, traditions, and restrictions of the Episcopal Church regarding the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage at All Saints'.

A Christian marriage is a covenant relationship between two people, proclaimed in a public setting. By covenant relationship, we mean a relationship that is reflective of God's relationship with God's people. It is a relationship of grace. We neither earn nor deserve God's love. Likewise, we do not merit the love we need in a marriage. It is a relationship lived out in trust and forgiveness. Through marriage, God's grace can come to be known in real and visible ways. The relationship not only reminds us of God's grace, but it also draws us ever deeper into that grace. It is a redemptive relationship. We grow more and more into the person that God has created us to be. In the Episcopal Church we believe marriage to be a sacrament. "The sacraments are outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace" (Book of Common Prayer, p. 857).

A wedding is a liturgical expression of the sacrament of marriage. The couple are the ministers of the sacrament. The priest officiates and pronounces God's blessing on the relationship, but the couple are the ones who proclaim the covenant. It is in their lives that the sacrament is lived out.

A wedding at All Saints' is a religious event of festive proportions and specific intention, but it is, nonetheless, an Episcopal worship service. The central focus of the liturgy is thanksgiving for the love that God has poured into our lives. At All Saints', all weddings are in accordance with The Book of Common Prayer and the approved liturgies of the Episcopal Church. The liturgies provide for some choices and flexibility. Beyond that, things may be neither added nor deleted. Marriage vows may not be written or edited. Practices such as unity candles, while they may be customary in other churches, are not permitted at All Saints' weddings.

Church wedding customs vary in detail from place to place. The guiding principle to remember is that marriage is a sacramental rite in the Episcopal Church, a regular worship service of the church and, as such, will be conducted accordingly. The All Saints' has its own particular customs. Things that are permitted — or even common practice — in other churches may not be appropriate here. If there is any question as to the permissibility of anything, it is always best to check with the priest who is officiating at the wedding.

The canon law of the Church states that Holy Matrimony is a union “entered into within the community of faith.” It is expected that, under normal circumstances, those who marry at All Saints’ will nurture their marriage in the context of this worshiping community. A wedding is a pastoral sacrament, which rightfully takes place where it will be supported through pastoral relationships and community worship. For those who have no intention of regular involvement in any Church, it would be more appropriate to be married in a different setting.

MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

All Saints’ is available for weddings when either of the couple is a member of All Saints’, is the child of an All Saints’ member, member of the Austin Episcopal Student Center, or is a member of the Episcopal Church. The most definitive membership at All Saints’ consists of being confirmed or received by an Episcopal bishop and having your letter of membership here. If you were confirmed or received at All Saints’, your letter is automatically here. If you were confirmed or received at some other Episcopal Church, some steps need to be taken to transfer your letter to All Saints’. According to the Episcopal Canon I.18.3b, at least one of the parties must be baptized. Information concerning baptism, confirmation, or reception in the Episcopal Church is available through the Parish Administrator or the clergy.

If there is any question about membership or the possibility of All Saints’ as the place for your wedding, it is recommended that you email the Parish Administrator to determine availability and pencil the wedding on the calendar. Then discuss the possibility of the wedding taking place here with one of the All Saints’ clergy. Make an appointment with the clergy person as soon as possible, preferably within 30 days of penciling in the date. **It is important to note that no wedding plans are final, and there is no commitment from All Saints’, until the priest who will officiate at the wedding has given his or her concurrence.**

THE FIRST STEP

It is advisable to verify the availability of All Saints’ and to “pencil the date in” by emailing the Parish Administrator. The couple may have any priest on the All Saints’ staff officiate at their wedding. For those who have no preference, the Rector will designate a priest. No arrangements which involve the church, church facilities, or the priest who will perform the ceremony will be confirmed and, therefore, should not be announced until the presiding priest’s approval has been received.

The canon law of the church requires that a minimum of thirty days’ notice for a marriage be given; however, it is wise to contact the priest as far in advance as possible to guarantee that no scheduling conflicts develop. It may be difficult, if not impossible, to complete the necessary preparation in thirty days. Advance notice of several months is the rule rather than the exception.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

The Episcopal Church believes that adequate preparation is an important part of a marriage. According to canon law, an Episcopal priest is required to meet with the couple for counseling as part of that preparation.

The priest who will perform the ceremony will want to meet with the couple.

The number of counseling sessions with the priest will vary depending on the needs and desires of the couple.

The minimum requirement is three 1-hour sessions with a member of the clergy. In some cases, it may be recommended to the couple that marriage preparation include professional counseling in addition to the preparation by the priest. For example, in the blending of families, it is often helpful to seek and receive additional help. In such cases, the couple may incur counseling fees. It is essential that the couple both participate in all marriage preparation.

REMARRIAGE OF DIVORCED PERSONS

In the Episcopal Church it is necessary for any priest to apply for and receive the Bishop's consent prior to officiating at a marriage in which either or both of the parties has been divorced from a spouse who is still living. The couple does not need the Bishop's permission to get married; the priest must have the Bishop's permission to officiate at the service. The priest is required to submit a written request to the Bishop, including an account of the preparation of the couple for the new marriage.

In cases where a previous marriage (or marriages) is involved, it is frequently the case that more time is required for premarital counseling. Divorced persons will be asked to discuss the previous relationship and reason(s) for the divorce. It will be necessary to present copies of all relevant divorce decrees. Unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances, it is normative that there be at least a year between the date of the final divorce decree and the date of the proposed wedding. When there are special circumstances, it may be possible for a priest to receive consent to officiate at a third marriage, but that is by no means assured. The Bishop does not give consent for priests to officiate at weddings where one or both of the parties has been married and divorced three or more times

CONCERNING PRESERVATION OF MARRIAGE

Canon 1.19.1. When marital unity is imperiled by dissension, it shall be the duty, if possible, of either or both parties, before taking legal action, to lay the matter before a Member of the Clergy; it shall be the duty of such Member of the Clergy to act first to protect and promote the physical and emotional safety of those involved and only then, if it be possible, to labor that the parties may be reconciled.

THE CLERGY AND THE SERVICE

The Rector of All Saints' oversees all weddings at All Saints'. All plans for the wedding ceremony must be made in consultation with the Rector. Episcopal clergy from other churches within the Diocese of Texas (and from outside the Diocese with the permission of the Bishop of the Diocese of Texas) may be invited to assist at a wedding. Episcopal clergy from other churches who wish to perform the marriage ceremony must send a written request to the Rector of All Saints'. In cases of interfaith marriages, it is possible when practical to include a religious leader from another faith. It should be noted, however, that those arrangements may be complicated and require considerably more advanced notice. Not all religious leaders in other faiths are willing to participate in interfaith weddings. A clergy person from any other Christian denomination may be invited to assist, with the Rector's approval. When clergy other than the regular All Saints' clergy are to be invited, the Rector will issue an invitation.

While there is no hard and fast policy at All Saints' that prohibits its clergy from presiding at weddings in locations other than All Saints' (e.g. an outdoor garden), it should be noted that the

most appropriate place for a wedding is All Saints' Church or the Chapel of the Holy Spirit (commonly used by the Episcopal Student Center). There are practical considerations, such as Altar Guild and the ability to control the environment. Beyond the practical considerations, it is most appropriate to physically begin and proclaim the covenant of marriage in the place where it will be spiritually nurtured.

As in all worship services of the church, the presiding priest is charged with the final responsibility for determining the appropriateness of all arrangements and details. However, the Rector reserves the right to alter these decisions if she deems it necessary and will be the final decision maker regarding the conduct of weddings at All Saints'.

Those desiring to be married in All Saints' should understand that they are not free to delete, add to, or otherwise interpolate the marriage rite as it set forth in the liturgies of the Episcopal Church approved by the Bishop of Texas. Additions to or deletions from the rites are not permitted. Customs that may be normative in other churches, such as a Unity Candle, are not in the liturgies and are not permitted at the All Saints'. The procedures for each wedding service are under the direction and at the discretion of the officiating priest.

Eucharist

Eucharist (Holy Communion) is a meaningful way for Christians to mark the beginning of their married lives. The word "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving" and by setting the wedding in the context of the Eucharist there is a focus on giving thanks to God for the gift of love and for this relationship. Whether or not to have Eucharist at the wedding is a decision that should be made by the couple with the advice of the officiating priest. If Holy Communion is planned as a part of the ceremony, it will be available to all present who are baptized and desire to receive the sacrament. The Episcopal Church has open Communion and does not limit the Eucharist to the couple or to the wedding party. Our experience is that it is quite possible to invite wedding guests to the Holy Table in such a way that they do not feel embarrassed or coerced.

THE WEDDING LIAISON

The Wedding Liaison is charged with the responsibility of assisting the officiating priest with the wedding rehearsal and the wedding itself. The Wedding Liaison is present "on the ground" and assists in the smooth flow of the ceremony; therefore, an outside wedding consultant is not needed at either the rehearsal or the wedding. **Consultants may be on hand to assist before the wedding, but do not participate in the direction of the rehearsal or the wedding.**

All Saints' Wedding Liaison will contact the couple approximately four (4) weeks in advance of the wedding date to discuss and advise the couple on all matters of wedding procedure, especially as they pertain to the policies and customs of All Saints'.

DATE AND TIME OF THE WEDDING

At All Saints' we do not have weddings during the forty days of Lent (from Ash Wednesday through Easter Day), Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, or New Year's Eve or Day.

While social custom clearly prefers Saturday weddings, there are no theological or liturgical reasons to prefer one day to another. For practical reasons, Sunday weddings can be a hardship on both the Altar Guild and the priest and are generally not permitted.

Weddings may be scheduled for any time of the day that is convenient and not in conflict with existing commitments. Weddings may not begin later than 7:00 p.m.

If two weddings are scheduled for the same Saturday there must be a minimum of three hours between the starting times, provided there is no reception in Kinsolving Parish Hall following the first wedding. The first wedding placed on the Church calendar will have priority on choice of time.

WITNESSES

Canon 1.18.5. At least two witnesses shall be present at the solemnization, and together with the Member of the Clergy and the parties, sign the record of solemnization in the proper register; which record shall include the date and place of the solemnization, the names of the witnesses, the parties and their parents, the age of the parties, Church status, and residence(s).

MARRIAGE LICENSE

A marriage license is the instrument that conveys to the priest the authority of the state to officiate at the ceremony and to sign the license making the marriage official in the eyes of the state. A license is required for the priest to perform the marriage.

Arrangements for the marriage license should be made with the County Clerk in advance of the date for the ceremony. In the State of Texas, a marriage license must be procured no less than 72 hours (3 days) before the date of the wedding and the marriage must take place within 90 days from the date of issuance of the license. The marriage license should be given to the Wedding Liaison at the time of the rehearsal. It is the responsibility of the Wedding Liaison to complete the license and return it to the office of the County Clerk. The County Clerk will return the original license to the married couple.

COSTS

Fees are charged to cover the costs that the church incurs for a wedding. All fees for personnel are due at least two weeks before the wedding day.

- Organist: \$350
- Sexton: \$300
- Wedding Liaison: \$350
- Clergy honorarium of \$500 is customary and is given to the priest at the wedding rehearsal.

The following building fees are due at the time the wedding application is submitted.

Payment is required for the wedding to be confirmed on the church calendar.

Active communicants of All Saints' or members of their family; current and recently graduated (1 year) Episcopal Student Center members:

- Church: *none required*
- Chapel of the Holy Spirit: *none required*

Inactive communicants of All Saints' or members of their family:

- Church: \$2000
- Chapel of the Holy Spirit: \$600

For Episcopalians who are non-members of All Saints':

- Church: \$3000
- Chapel of the Holy Spirit \$1000

If any of the following are desired, please contact the Organist for information. The costs shown are typical, but may vary depending on the circumstances.

- All Saints' choir: \$1150
- Vocal Soloist, Trumpeter: \$200
- Harpist: \$300

If any of the following are desired, please contact the Wedding Liaison for information. The costs shown are typical, but may vary depending on the circumstances.

- Acolyte: \$30 honorarium
- All Saints' digital video recording: \$750

Payments can be made by check or credit card. Credit card payments include a 3% upcharge and are made by calling the Parish Administrator. Checks can be mailed to All Saints' ATTN: Wedding Liaison.

PARKING

In addition to our surface lot, All Saints' is fortunate to have a large, adjacent UT parking garage which can be used for a fee by wedding guests.

PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY AT ALL SAINTS'

The couple is to give the name, telephone, and email address of the photographer to the Weddings Liaison so that a copy of All Saints' policy can be shared with them. All Saints' requires that a photographer sign an agreement to abide by All Saints' policies before being allowed to photograph a wedding.

As a sacramental rite of the Church, the marriage service is not to be interrupted or disturbed by the distraction of videotaping or photographs being taken. It is the wedding party's responsibility to review these instructions with their photographer so that there will be no misunderstanding at the time of the wedding.

- Photographs may be taken in agreed upon locations on the grounds of All Saints'.
- Photographs taken prior to the ceremony must be concluded 45 minutes prior to the ceremony for all ushers and 30 minutes prior to the ceremony for all other participants.
- Photographs may be taken before and after the ceremony, just as the couple enters or leaves the bell porch. In no event is the photographer to enter the church nave for this photograph.
- The photographer should be instructed that flash equipment must never be used inside the All Saints' at any time after guests have begun to be seated for the ceremony or during the ceremony itself. Two flash photographs may be taken within the nave. For the first, the photographer may step into the aisle and take a single photograph of the bridal party when they begin the procession to the chancel. For the second, from the aisle at the back of the nave the photographer may take a single flash photograph as the couple walks down the aisle at the end of the ceremony.

- No other photography, flash or otherwise, is permitted during the marriage ceremony.
- Because wedding guests occasionally attempt to take flash photography during the marriage service, a sign will be posted at the church doors reminding guests that there are to be no photographs taken during the ceremony. Ushers will be asked to remind guests arriving with cameras that they are not to take photographs inside the All Saints' once the candles have been lit. Flash photography can be disruptive not only to the wedding party, but to guests as well. The couple, as well as the entire wedding party, can be helpful in encouraging friends and relatives not to take pictures.
- A limited number of flash photographs (not to exceed those that can be taken within a twenty-minute period) may be taken of the wedding party after the service inside the All Saints' or Chapel after the last guests have left the room. Photographs taken after the ceremony should be limited to the wedding party and families. The candles will be extinguished at the conclusion of the ceremony and will not remain lit during the photography period.
- The photographer may not go inside the altar rail at any time to take photographs. In general, the photographer should never be in front of any seated guests.
- The photographer is a guest of the All Saints' at the wedding ceremony and is expected to observe the rules adopted by the All Saints'. The photographer is encouraged to always keep equipment with them. All Saints' cannot be responsible for loss or damage.
- Digital video is exclusively provided by All Saints' Audio/Visual team utilizing the church built-in camera equipment.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

All Saints' Altar Guild is responsible for all floral decorations in All Saints'. Arrangements for all floral decorations should be made only after consultation with the Wedding Liaison. The altar and the altar cross is the focal point of the church. Nothing may be used which will obstruct the view of the altar cross or detract attention from it. The sanctuary is that portion of the church that is enclosed by the altar rail. No persons other than clergy, acolytes, or members of the altar guild ever go unescorted into the sanctuary. The flowers for the altar are to be delivered to the sacristy and a member of the altar guild will place them on the altar. No decoration other than altar flowers is permitted behind the altar rail. Flowers for the altar must be ordered from the florist used by All Saints' Church (*Charlotte's Fiesta Flowers, 512-453-7619*). Individual wedding party flowers can be ordered from any florist of your choosing, but must be delivered no later than 2 hours before the start of the service or early in the day. All Saints' has a large walk-in refrigerator for storage.

The couple is asked to give the name and phone number of their florist to the Weddings Liaison.

It should be emphasized that flowers are not required. Bows are not to be used on any arrangements at the altar or on the pews. Floral pew markers are permitted, but no artificial or dyed flowers or greenery may be used anywhere in All Saints'. Tacks, nails, or florist tape are not allowed to be used throughout the building. The use of rice, rose petals, seed or confetti is not permitted. It is good to remember that All Saints' is a beautiful building and that simplicity is the best approach to take in planning floral decorations. If floral decorations are determined to be inappropriate after they are delivered, the Altar Guild and Wedding Liaison reserves the right to alter them, so they are in keeping with the standards for worship at All Saints'. Plastic and artificial flowers are not acceptable for use within All Saints' or Chapel of the Holy Spirit.

Because of the city fire ordinance, lighted candles are not permitted in the nave of All Saints' or Chapel of the Holy Spirit. Altar candles in each location are furnished by the All Saints'. No greenery or other decoration is permitted on the candelabra.

A kneeling cushion is provided by All Saints' for all weddings, whether in the All Saints' or Chapel. Because of the danger of tripping, the use of a "runner" is not permitted. Guests are seated from the side aisles. The center aisle is reserved for the immediate families and for the wedding party itself. While a guest registry book may be appropriate for a reception, it is not appropriate at the time of the wedding itself.

All Saints' does not have an awning. Though not considered desirable or even particularly helpful, if an awning is desired — usually only if the weather is inclement — arrangements for its installation must be made with the appropriate rental agency. If an awning is used, the rental company must coordinate installation of the awning with the Wedding Liaison. It is important that arrangements be made to have it removed by 10:00 p.m. on Saturday evening for a Saturday wedding. Timing related to weddings on other days of the week needs to be discussed with the Weddings Liaison.

MUSIC

The Rector delegates the responsibility of all music at All Saints' to the All Saints' Organist who will play for all weddings at All Saints'. If All Saints' Organist is unable to play for the service, the organist will designate a substitute. If a soloist is desired, arrangements will be made by the All Saints' Organist.

Only music appropriate for an Episcopal worship service at All Saints' is to be used, whether instrumental, choral, or vocal. It is important to remember that a wedding is first and foremost a worship service. There is much wonderful music appropriate for a wedding reception that is not suitable for a worship service at the All Saints'. Music from movies, Broadway shows, or popular culture is not suitable. Mendelssohn's Wedding March and Wagner's Bridal Chorus are also not options. All Saints' Organist (in consultation with the Rector) will be the final judge as to the appropriateness of all music used.

Contact the All Saints' Organist to make an appointment to discuss wedding music.

PRINTED PROGRAM

All Saints' is unable to supply printed programs.

THE REHEARSAL

The time for the wedding rehearsal should be determined in consultation with the officiating priest. Rehearsals are normally scheduled for either 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. on the evening preceding the wedding. If there are two weddings scheduled for the same day, the wedding first on the church calendar will have the first choice of rehearsal times. No rehearsal will be scheduled to begin after 6:00 p.m.

The officiating priest always conducts the rehearsal. If an Episcopal priest other than one of All Saints' clergy is the officiant, a member of the All Saints' clergy staff will generally be present at the rehearsal. The Wedding Liaison will supply any further assistance.

Wedding consultants and/or florists are not needed at either the rehearsal or the wedding.

They are, of course, welcome to attend to the couple before the wedding. If a wedding consultant is utilized, they should understand that they will work under the direction of the All Saints' clergy and the Wedding Liaison.

It is required that the couple both be full and active participants in the rehearsal. A one of the purposes of the rehearsal is to give participants a "feel" for the wedding liturgy and the space in which it is conducted, the use of a stand-in for either one of the couple at the time of the rehearsal is not permitted.

As those people from the All Saints' who are assisting with the wedding rehearsal often have other plans for the same evening, it is expected that every effort will be made to start and end the rehearsal on time.

Photographs during the rehearsal may be taken only with the officiating clergy's approval. If permission has been granted, those taking the photos must remain in the nave. Under no circumstances may photos be taken from the chancel or from behind the altar rail.

Children involved with or attending the rehearsal are expected to be supervised to maintain the quiet and solemn dignity of the holy space.

THE WEDDING DAY

Dressing Areas

The Choir Room is the dressing area on the All Saints' premises available for the bridal party two hours before the wedding is scheduled to begin. Dresses or other clothing are usually delivered on the morning of the day of the wedding (at a time agreed upon by calling the Wedding Liaison), and one of the sextons will always be on the premises after the delivery.

Male participants are strongly encouraged to arrive dressed for the wedding and are to gather in the Masterson Library.

All Saints' cannot be responsible for purses or other valuables that are left in the dressing area. It is strongly suggested (and required in cases of multiple weddings) that someone clears the dressing area of all possessions prior to the ceremony.

Ushers

The Wedding Liaison will instruct ushers at the wedding rehearsal. Generally, ushers are expected to be in the back of the church on the bell porch 45 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony. They are expected to begin seating the guests as soon as they arrive. Special guests will be seated by the ushers five minutes before the wedding ceremony begins. The couple is asked to provide the Wedding Liaison with the names of the special guests, and if possible, where they are to sit.

Assembling the Wedding Party

The Wedding Liaison will assemble the wedding party and space them properly for the procession. Members of the bride and grooms families will gather in the Masterson Library 30 minutes prior to the ceremony. The Wedding Liaison will escort these members of the wedding party to All Saints' for special seating at the appropriate time. The bridal party will be escorted from the Choir Room to the church by the Wedding Liaison.

ALCOHOL AND BEVERAGE POLICY

No alcoholic beverages are allowed anywhere on All Saints' campus. No smoking, vaping, or tobacco use is allowed anywhere on the All Saints' campus.

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

Canon I.18.4

Prior to the solemnization, the parties shall sign the following Declaration of Intention:

We understand the teaching of the church that God's purpose for our marriage is for our mutual joy, for the help and comfort we will give to each other in prosperity and adversity, and, when it is God's will, for the gift and heritage of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of God. We also understand that our marriage is to be unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong; and we engage to make the utmost effort to accept these gifts and fulfill these duties, with the help of God and support of our community.

Please consult with the Rector to find the appropriate time to sign the Declaration of Intention.

A FINAL WORD

We hope that you will find this booklet helpful as you anticipate and plan this wonderful and sacred event in your life. We want you to know that we view your wedding day, in this community of faith, with the sanctity and care it deserves. We pray for God's blessing on your life together.

RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received and read All Saints' Wedding Customary and agree to conduct my wedding rehearsal and ceremony in accordance with the prescribed rules, policies and guidelines established and detailed within the customary. I will inform the appropriate contractors, family members, etc. affiliated with my wedding (including florists, photographers, etc.) that they are also bound by these rules, policies, and guidelines.

_____ Signature

_____ Printed

_____ Signature

_____ Printed

_____ Date

Please sign this acknowledgement and return it to the Weddings Liaison. No wedding at All Saints' will be confirmed until the signed Receipt and Acknowledgement and payment for all applicable fees have been received by the All Saints' Wedding Liaisons.