

Your Wedding



*St John's Episcopal Church
159 Main Street
Sandwich, Massachusetts 02563
Telephone (508) 888-2828*

Holy Matrimony in the Episcopal Church is a Christian marriage, in which the couple enter into a life-long covenant of heart, body, and mind. They make their vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows.

[Book of Common Prayer p. 861]

Christian marriage is both a solemn and public covenant. In the Episcopal Church it is required that at least one of the parties be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested to by at least two witnesses; and that the marriage conform to the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the canons of St John's Church.

[Book of Common Prayer p. 22]

Canon law requires that the Rector be notified of a desired wedding at least 30 days in advance, although under certain extraordinary circumstances this requirement may be waived. The canons require that the couple meet with the Rector for premarital counseling and for planning the service.

Remarriage in the Episcopal Church

Under certain circumstances, members of the Church in good standing who have been divorced may be married, or have a civil marriage blessed, in the church. In such cases it is especially important that the couple meet with the Rector very early in the wedding planning process. The Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts is the final authority in these instances.

Persons desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Episcopal Church are required to sign the Declaration of Intention, which appears on the back of this leaflet.

Preparation

You both will be expected to meet with the Rector several times before the wedding. The meetings will provide an opportunity for planning, for conversation about religion and marriage, and to become better acquainted.

If this is a second marriage for either party, the final divorce decree will need to be presented early during the process, the prior marriage discussed, and an approval requested from the Bishop.

A marriage license is required. Both parties must file at a Town Hall or City Office together. The license is valid for 60 days and should be returned to the Church office three weeks prior to the wedding. The state of Massachusetts no longer requires a blood test.

A data sheet will be provided at the first meeting with the Rector. That sheet should be completed and returned to the Church office as soon as possible, but at least three weeks prior to the wedding.

The Marriage Service

The marriage service may be either; the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage by itself, or combined with the Holy Eucharist. The form of the service is always one of those authorized for use in the Episcopal Church.

Music

It is expected that music will be appropriate to Christian worship. All music used in the service must be chosen in consultation with the Rector and the Organist. Our Organist is Misao Koyama and she will help you choose music, and will locate soloists or instrumentalists if you wish. If there is any additional music other than the organ/piano, you will be responsible for those fees.

You should contact Misao as soon as possible to confirm the date and time.

Stjohnsmusic159@gmail.com (508) 862-8239



Flowers

All arrangements about flowers for the altar of the Church must be made with our Altar Guild through our Wedding Service Coordinator, Cheryl Hulslander. She can be reached at cahulsla@gmail.com or (508) 314-1627.

The data sheet has a place for you to give us specific information about the flower arrangements and special decorations you plan for the Church, as well as the name of the local florist who is arranging the flowers. We do not allow flowers or decorations beyond the areas specified by the Altar Guild. We can provide pew bows and aisle candles.

We cannot allow the use of aisle runners (they are slippery), rose petals or confetti, or the throwing of rice. Bird seed may be thrown outside the Church.

Altar bouquets are left in the Church for our Sunday service. If you want to take the flowers for your reception, you could provide 2 bouquets - one for the church and one for your reception.

Photographs

To preserve the dignity of the marriage service, please instruct all photographers to refrain from picture-taking during the ceremony (including the procession). Photographs may be taken at the Altar Rail following the service. If there is any question, the photographer should consult with the Rector before the service.

Rehearsal

Rehearsals are ordinarily held the evening before the service. The attendants should always be present at the rehearsal and may be members of any Denomination. Mothers need not be present at the rehearsal, although they are always welcome.

The Marriage License, if not previously provided, must be brought to the rehearsal and given to the Rector. All fees should be paid prior to the rehearsal.

Reception

We ask to receive a copy of the invitation as a way to verify your plans, but it is not expected that the Rector will attend unless, of course, a personal relationship has existed and/or you personally invite him or her. It is extremely meaningful to have a designated guest or family member offer grace at the meal. If you would like to have the Rector say the blessing at the reception, please be sure to ask.

Contributions

The Church provides its ministries by the contributions of its membership and others who use their facilities. Customary contributions for weddings are as follows:

	<u>Members</u>	<u>Non-Members</u>
Use of the Church <i>(Check payable to St John's Episcopal Church)</i>	\$500.00	\$750.00
Honorarium to the Priest conducting the service . . . <i>(Check payable to the Priest)</i>	\$300.00	\$450.00
Organist Fee <i>(Check payable to the Organist)</i>	\$200.00	\$300.00

Please feel free to discuss this at your first meeting. All fees must be paid three weeks before the wedding. The Wedding Service Coordinator will be available to give you the proper spellings of names. A deposit of \$200 to reserve the date is appreciated.

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 liturgical forms authorized by this Church.

We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their physical and spiritual nurture, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society.

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.

Signature

Signature

Dated ----- A.D. -----

