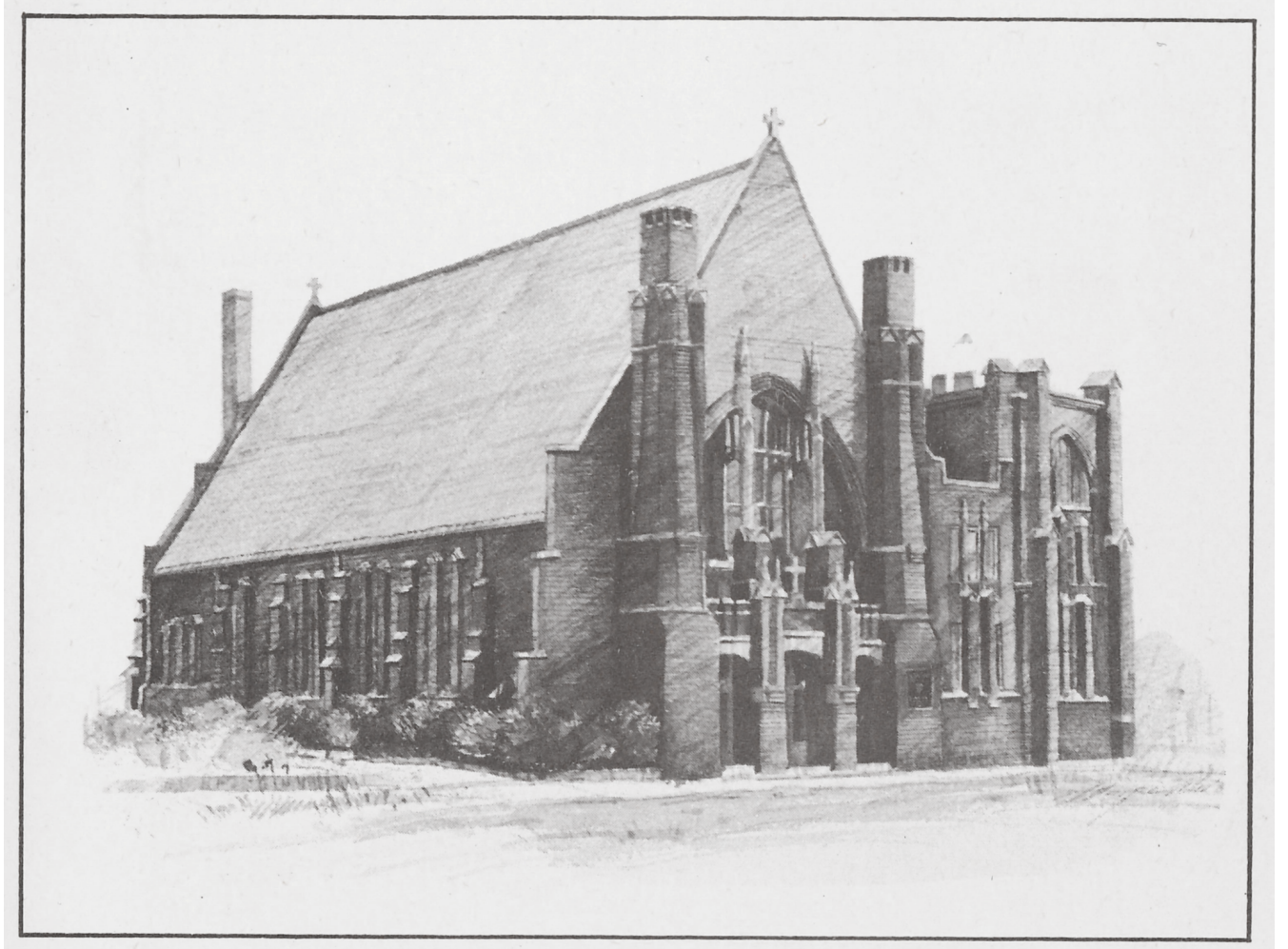


Weddings

at



CHRIST CHURCH

EPISCOPAL | CHATTANOOGA

663 Douglas Street

Chattanooga, Tennessee 37403

(423) 266-2463

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Weddings at Christ Church

We are pleased that you are interested in celebrating your wedding at Christ Church Episcopal and we're eager to give you the information and help you need.

According to the Book of Common Prayer,

Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will, and with intent that it be life-long.

Holy Matrimony is a sacramental rite of the Episcopal Church. As the rite for the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage says,

It signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Churchtherefore 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 GodMarriage is intended by God for the mutual joy of the couple . . . , for the help and comfort they give one another in prosperity and adversity and, when it is God's will, for the gift of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

Our staff is eager to assist you in having a joyful experience leading up to and culminating in your wedding. However, we truly believe that the *marriage* is more important than the *wedding*. For that reason, we will ask you to carefully consider your marriage through counseling and to live your married life in the community of faith. We think it is important to be welcoming, and we believe it is equally important to share with you our expectations

Let us start by letting you know who may marry here. Parishioners, their children, grandchildren and—under certain conditions—non-members may be married at Christ Church. We expect everyone to engage in our marriage preparation program, use the rites of the Episcopal Church, and have our priest officiate at the service. Under certain conditions, clergy from outside the parish may be invited by the Priest at Christ Church to participate.

Where to Begin?

After reading this information packet, if you wish to celebrate your wedding here, contact the church office at (423) 266-4263, or office@christchurchchattanooga.org to schedule an initial meeting for a more detailed exploration of the process. At this meeting, you will discuss dates, times, and other details. The office staff will share your contact information with our wedding coordinator who will follow up with you. In this packet is an information form to be completed by the couple. Complete it and forward to the church email above to begin the process for confirming your wedding at Christ Church.

Celebrating a Marriage

The Episcopal Church requirements include the following:

- At least one member of the couple must be a baptized Christian.
- The couple must sign a Declaration of Intent, which is a solemn vow regarding your beliefs about marriage, the text of which is found at the end of this booklet.
- There must be at least two witnesses to the marriage in addition to the officiant.

If one or both persons to be married has/have been divorced, the couple must follow diocesan policy for remarriage. All forms must be completed and submitted to the bishop at least 30 days before the marriage. The priest must obtain the diocesan bishop's approval for the marriage. Until this process is complete, you should consider all other plans for the wedding as tentative.

When a person has been divorced two or more times, the diocese requires that additional professional consultation be done to assist the couple in beginning their new marriage on a firm foundation and to assist clergy in pre- marital counseling.

Christ Church customary practices require the following:

- The couple will contact clergy performing the service at least 3 months prior to the service and have all forms filed with the diocese and Christ Church.
- The couple will need to have several meetings with the clergy who will perform the ceremony. The primary focus is to discuss the dynamics of your relationship, your spiritual lives, and why Holy Matrimony is important for you.
- The ceremony will be the one in The Book of Common Prayer, pages 423 to 432) or other marriage liturgies approved by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church (See [The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage](#) and [The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2](#)). These beautiful liturgies have been crafted over time with great care. You will have the option to have Holy Communion as part of the service.
- We ask that you worship here or in a faith community where you live, on a regular basis, before and after the wedding. By choosing to have your ceremony in the church, we assume that you intend to live out your marriage in the church. If either of you is not an Episcopalian, we invite you to attend inquirers classes to learn more about us.
- Each couple is required to complete pre-marital preparation as determined by clergy at Christ Church.
- The state of Tennessee requires a marriage license. Your marriage license needs to be given to the church office at least one week before the wedding

Who May Preside At a Wedding?

Christ Church clergy officiate at all weddings.. We are delighted, however, to have other clergy participate in the service. If you believe you should be allowed an exception, please consult with the clergy as soon as possible. .

When Weddings May Be Scheduled

Diocesan policy does not allow weddings to be scheduled during Lent or Advent. Lent is a penitential season, so celebrations are inappropriate. Advent is a time when preparation for Christmas dominates the time and energy of parish, staff, and clergy.

The Ceremony

Liturgies for weddings are approved and provided by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. In your conversation with officiating clergy, you will be asked to choose the scriptures and readings you would like to use. These items are listed at the end of this booklet.

Many couples choose to have Holy Communion as part of the marriage ceremony. We believe that this is an appropriate and wonderful way to ground the sacrament of Holy Matrimony in the loving presence of God. If you choose to have Holy Communion as part of your service, our custom is to offer the sacrament to all who are present. It is not our custom to offer Communion only to the wedding party or a select few. Our clergy makes every effort to ensure that all guests feel welcome and at home during the service regardless of their religious affiliation. Those who would prefer not receive are welcome to join by coming forward for a blessing..

The Rehearsal

The rehearsal is an opportunity for the entire wedding party along with clergy, organist and wedding coordinator to rehearse the details of the service. The rehearsal is usually scheduled for 5:00 p.m. on the evening before the wedding and lasts about an hour. Please confirm your scheduled rehearsal time with the wedding coordinator prior to making rehearsal dinner arrangements.

The rehearsal is an essential part of the preparation. All participants are asked to be on time.

What About Music?

Our organist and choirmaster arranges for the music and plays the organ for all weddings at Christ Church. Only sacred music is used at the wedding service. The organist will meet with you to play selections from which you may choose. When time is limited or couples live some distance from the church, necessary arrangements may be made over the phone. We suggest that you contact the organist three months before your wedding.

We have many outstanding musicians who perform at services and weddings. If you desire other singers or instrumentalists in addition to the organ, discuss this with the organist as soon as you are certain of your interest. We will arrange for additional musician(s) and advise you of the cost. We prefer that you select from those who perform here regularly.

Payment for all musicians should be sent to the parish office at the same time as other fees.

Flowers and decorations

Flowers on the Altar and Narthex decorations must be fresh, not potted or artificial. They are to be approved by the wedding coordinator prior to contact with a florist. It is preferable to use only altar flowers, but other decorations may be used upon approval. Altar flowers used for Saturday weddings will be left in the church to be used at Sunday services. All other flowers and decorations must be removed immediately after the service or when the photographer finishes. It is acceptable to ask your florist to come back to remove the flowers. You are responsible for ordering and paying for all flowers.

There will be:

- No Pew attachments.
- No exterior church decorations.
- No cloth runners down the aisle.
- No "Unity" candles.
- No flower petals strewn in Nave or Narthex.
- No bird seed, rice, confetti or other thrown decorations.

Acolytes, Chalice Bearers, and Lectors

When the service includes the Holy Eucharist, it will be necessary to have acolytes and chalice bearers to assist. We will arrange these persons unless you have friends or family who are experienced in these roles. If so, we will be pleased to work with them.

One or two family members or friends should be chosen to read two Scripture readings during the service. Readers are required to be at the rehearsal to practice reading aloud in the actual space where the wedding will take place.

Ring Bearers and Flower Girls

Ring bearers, when used, do not actually carry the rings. The rings should be given to the Best Man and/or Maid or Matron of Honor prior to the ceremony, and they will give the rings to the clergy at the proper time during the service. Flower girls may carry flower petals but may not throw petals on the floor of the sanctuary.

Bulletins

If a bulletin is desired, it is the responsibility of the couple to arrange for it. A draft of the bulletin must be approved by the priest prior to printing at least three weeks before the wedding. Please include in the bulletin that:

- All cell phones must be silenced and may not be used for photos during the ceremony.
- Photographs/video during the service by guests are not permitted.

Photography and Videography

Please inform your photographer that with certain restrictions, video and photographs may be made from the choir gallery during the service. The Christ Church wedding coordinator will discuss these restrictions with you.

If you want a priest in photographs taken after the wedding, please do this immediately after the service, prior to additional family and wedding party pictures. Photographers/videographers must be dressed appropriately, preferably in a dark suit.

Photographs may be taken before and after the service in the church and/or Memorial Garden. They should be completed in 45 minutes.

Use of Alcohol by the Wedding Party

Absolutely no alcohol should be consumed on church property prior to the wedding. The consumption of alcoholic beverages by members of the wedding party prior to the rehearsal and prior to the ceremony is prohibited. The wedding is a sacred service in the presence of God and calls for our reverent attention.

Use of Facilities

The bride, bridesmaids, and ladies of the wedding party should come to the church dressed. They may wait in the Lady Chapel directly off the Nave for the ceremony to begin. There is a bathroom nearby they may use. They should arrive through the front door one hour before the service.

Groomsmen, ushers, and other gentlemen of the wedding party should come dressed and may wait in Fox Hall until the ceremony. They may use the men's restroom near Fox Hall. They should arrive through the back parish hall entrance one hour prior to the service.

A reception of reasonable size may be held in the parish hall. No liquor will be permitted although wine, champagne, or beer may be served. Diocesan policy requires that a non-alcoholic beverage must be made available when alcohol is served.

The church is off-limits for the reception.

The family will be held responsible for the conduct of their guests and for leaving church property as they found it. Christ Church is not responsible for any accident. The church is not responsible for breakage or damage to church property by the wedding party, guests, or bride's employees. Christ Church is not responsible for the loss of any property or valuables during the wedding or reception.

General Information

Those who assist with your wedding, including priest and spouse, do not expect to be invited to any of your festivities including rehearsal dinner and reception. It is acceptable to include them or not, but invitations should be extended to them if they are to be included.

Questions and Concerns

Now that you have read this booklet, you may have lingering questions or concerns. Jot these down and contact the church office or your wedding coordinator to discuss them.

Offerings and Fees

Having the church open and air-conditioned with extra staff available is expensive. If you have questions about our fees, you are encouraged to speak with the office staff or clergy.

A \$200 non-refundable deposit is due at the time you complete your wedding information sheet which reserves your wedding on the church calendar. For a complete list of fees, see the separate fee schedule. Scheduling of your wedding is at the discretion of the priest after premarital counseling is completed. All other fees are due sixty days prior to your wedding. The non-refundable deposit is applied to your final balance due. Your wedding date is only tentatively reserved until final approval by the priest and fees are paid in full. An honorarium for clergy is customary and the amount is at your discretion.

Summary of Fees

	Pledging Members	Others
Church	No Fee (donation)	\$200
Priest	No Fee (honorarium)	\$200 (Suggested)
Organist	\$200	\$200
Custodial (Church Only)	\$100	\$100
Custodial (Church + Hall)	\$200	\$200

ATTACHMENT A

Scripture Readings

Typically an Old Testament lesson and a New Testament lesson, selected from the list below, are read at appropriate places in the celebration.

Old Testament

Ruth 1:16-17

1 Samuel 18:1b, 3, 20:16-17,47a or 1 Samuel 18:1-4

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7

Micah: 4:1-4

Romans 12:9-18

Genesis 1:26-28 (*Male and female he created them*)

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24 (*A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh*)

Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7 (*Many waters cannot quench love*)

Tobit 8:5b-8 (*New English Bible*) (*That she and I may grow old together*)

New Testament

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (*Love is patient and kind*)

2 Corinthians 5:17-20

Galatians 5:14, 22-26

Ephesians 3:14-19 (*The Father from whom every family is named*)

Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33 (*Walk in love, as Christ loved us*)

Colossians 3:12-17 (*Love which binds everything together in harmony*)

1 Joh 3:18-24

1 John 4:7-16 (*Let us love one another for love is of God*)

A Psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said between the readings,

Appropriate Psalms are

Psalm 65 Psalm 67 Psalm 85:7-13 Psalm 98 Psalm100

Psalm 126 Psalm 127 Psalm 133 Psalm 148 Psalm 49:1-5

The Gospel reading may be one of the following and is read by the clergy.

Matthew 5:1-10 (*The Beatitudes*)

Mark 10:6-9, 13-16 (*They are no longer two but one*)

Mark 12: 28-34

Luke 6:32-38

Matthew 5:13-16 (*You are the light . . . Let your light so shine*)

Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (*Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock*)

John 15:9-12 (*Love one another as I have loved you*)

John 17:1-2, 18-26

ATTACHMENT B

WEDDING CHECKLIST

- Call Church Office. Make an appointment with Priest and wedding coordinator.
- Complete and mail or email the information sheet along with the non-refundable deposit to the Church.
- Provide contact information (email or postal mailing address) for your photographer/videographer to the church office not later than 3 weeks prior to the wedding date.
- No later than 6 months before your wedding, schedule your first appointment with the assigned presiding priest. At this time you will also be introduced to your wedding coordinator.
- Follow up with your wedding coordinator.
- 3 months prior to the service, contact the wedding coordinator regarding your flowers and decorations.
- 3 months prior to the service, contact the Music Director regarding music for your ceremony.
- Complete the pre-marital program outlined by the presiding priest.
- 60 days prior to the service, please provide final payment.
- 3 weeks prior to the ceremony, provide DRAFT of service bulletin to the presiding priest for approval.
- Notify your wedding party and others involved with the service of the date/time of the rehearsal. Review with them in advance the expectations of those at the rehearsal and the wedding.
- Bring your marriage license to the church office one week prior to the wedding.

Christ Church
663 Douglas Street
Chattanooga, TN 37403
office@christchurchchattanooga.org
(423) 266-4263

ATTACHMENT C

DATE OF WEDDING: _____

The Bride Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Name after marriage: _____

Address after marriage: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Birthdate: _____ Marital Status: __Single __Widowed __Divorced

Are you a member of Christ Church Episcopal? __Yes __No

If no, please provide name and relationship of your parent or grandparent who is a member:

If no, of what church are you a member?: _____

Date baptized?: _____ Date confirmed?: _____

Mother's full name: _____

Father's full name: _____

The Groom Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Name after marriage: _____

Address after marriage: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Birthdate: _____ Marital Status: __Single __Widowed __Divorced

Are you a member of Christ Church Episcopal? __Yes __No

If no, please provide name and relationship of your parent or grandparent who is a member:

If no, of what church are you a member?: _____

Date baptized?: _____ Date confirmed?: _____

Mother's full name: _____

Father's full name: _____

Date of Rehearsal: _____ Time: _____

Date of Wedding: _____ Time: _____

Organist: Karla Fowkes Other: _____

Florist: Gil and Curt Other: _____

Clergy, invited by the Rector: _____ Holy Communion? Yes No

Photographer and contact info: _____

Videographer: _____

Do you want to have your reception in Fox Hall? Yes No

If yes, name and number of caterer: _____

Name and number of outside event planner/coordinator, if any:

Deposit to hold date: \$ _____ *due at first meeting with clergy*

Wedding Fee (remainder): \$ _____ *due 60 days prior to wedding date*

Additional special requests: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Please see the separate fee schedule for weddings and receptions in the parish hall.

We understand and agree that:

- All appointments with staff are made by prior arrangement.
- No alcohol is allowed on church grounds or buildings except by special arrangement for receptions.
- The wedding party will be on'time for the rehearsal.
- Unless otherwise arranged, arrival time for the wedding party on the day of the wedding is not more than 2 hours before the time of the wedding.
- Photography after the wedding will be limited to 45 minutes.
- Any unplanned late arrivals to the rehearsal, early arrival on the wedding day, or a late departure from the Church will be charged at the rate of \$200 per hour or any part thereof.

Signatures:

Bride: _____ Date: _____

Groom: _____ Date: _____