

ST. BARNABAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

JUNE 2018

WEDDING POLICIES



So you want to be married!

What wonderful news! We are always delighted to celebrate a wedding at St. Barnabas. Joining two lives and two families is always a holy event. At St. Barnabas we want to do everything possible to support you as you prepare for married life and on the day of your wedding.

Please read through this little booklet carefully. It will tell you everything you need to know about planning for your wedding at St. Barnabas.

God's keeping to you and your fiancé(e),

Mother Natalie Van Kirk

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING AT ST. BARNABAS

WEDDINGS IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

In the Episcopal Church a marriage usually takes place within the context of Holy Eucharist and may take the place of the regular Sunday service. It is required that at least one of the parties be a baptized Christian. At St. Barnabas at least one of the parties should have been a member of the parish for at least one year prior to the marriage. (Membership in the Episcopal Church requires regular attendance at worship and regular giving to the parish.) Exceptions to this requirement can be made at the discretion of the Rector. In general, exceptions will only be considered for children and family members of current members of the parish.



All marriages must be attested by at least two witnesses, and the marriage must conform to the laws of the State of Illinois and the Canons of the Episcopal Church.

The liturgy for the wedding must conform to the Book of Common Prayer (page 423), or to the trial rites for *The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage* (see page 12), and *The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2* (see page 22) approved by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2015.

The couple wishing to be married at St. Barnabas should meet with the Rector as early as possible to discuss the plans for their wedding. Any guest priests or ministers must be approved by the Rector and formally invited by the Rector to participate in the ceremony.

In the Episcopal Church, all liturgical events come under the authority of the Rector. No wedding may be scheduled without the Rector's consent.

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING AND OTHER CONCERNS

Marriage is a life-long commitment and at St. Barnabas we make every effort to make sure that couples start their marriage on sound footing.

We take pre-marital counseling very seriously. Study after study has

shown that couples who engage in pre-marital counseling have more successful and lasting marriages.

All couples wishing to be married at St. Barnabas must prepare for marriage with pre-marital counseling. Both parties must be present for these sessions. Premarital counseling cannot be arranged via an internet chat medium or some other distance arrangement.

Initial sessions will be conducted with the Rector. At the Rector's discretion, the couple may be referred to a counselor who specializes in work with couples. Couples should expect to spend anywhere from twelve to sixteen hours in pre-marital counseling.

If one or both partners has been married previously, copies of the divorce decree(s) must be given to the Rector so that an Application for Marital Judgment may be prepared. As the Diocesan guidelines say:

If a divorced person wants to marry again and his or her former spouse is still living, this form must be completed. If the person's former spouse died (while they were married or after they were divorced) this form does not need to be completed as death terminates the marriage. When a person has more than one former spouse, this form need only be completed for a judgment as to the last marriage. You should, however, explore together the relational dynamics of the other marriages in your pre-marital counseling sessions. The member of the clergy should see the divorce decree for each former marriage. The Church counsels continued concern for all former spouses and all children of those marriages.

Please see pages 28 through 30 at the back of this booklet for the Canons of the Episcopal Church regarding marriage.



DETAILS, DETAILS, DETAILS

Planning for the wedding ceremony

In the Episcopal Church the clergy are required to use the liturgy as it is found in the Book of Common Prayer (page 422 ff.) or one of the trial rites for *The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage*, and *The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2* approved by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2015. These last two rites were developed to meet the needs of same-sex couples who were already in covenanted relationships (*Witnessing and Blessing*) or coming to marriage from a relationship which was not previously covenanted (*Celebration and Blessing*).

The scripture readings for your wedding will be taken from the options listed on page 426 of the Book of Common Prayer or listed in the alternate services. It is customary for there to be a reading from the Old Testament, a Psalm, the New Testament, and the Gospel. Couples are encouraged to read through all of the options and select those most appropriate to them. Changes or substitutions to the readings must be approved by the Rector.

Please remember that your wedding is first and foremost a Christian service of worship in a church. The attire and deportment of the wedding party should be compatible with this reality.

When may our marriage be planned?

All wedding dates should be discussed with the Rector prior to adding them to the calendar. In general any day of the year is an acceptable wedding date except the days of Advent, which begins four Sundays prior to Christmas, and Lent, which begins on Ash Wednesday and extends until Easter. If there is a compelling reason why a wedding must be scheduled during these times the Rector may make an exception.

Also, weddings may not be scheduled for the following days: Palm Sunday, Easter, Christmas Day, Ascension Day, Pentecost, and All Saints Day.

All weddings must be planned at least 60 days prior to the event. Marriage banns will be announced at St. Barnabas for the four Sundays

prior to the wedding and published in our newsletter.

Who will participate in your wedding ceremony?

Ordinarily the altar party at a wedding will consist of a priest, a deacon, and up to five acolytes. If prior arrangements are made with the Rector for a guest preacher, that person will also be included in the altar party. If there are family members or close friends of the couple who are *trained* acolytes in the Episcopal Church, they may participate as acolytes in the wedding party, so long as they attend the rehearsal prior to the wedding.

There may be up to three lay readers for the ceremony: Old Testament lesson, New Testament lesson, and Prayers of the People. These readers should be selected well in advance of the wedding so that they may be provided with copies of the readings and have time to rehearse.

A note about wedding parties: The octagonal nature of the sanctuary (the area inside the rail) at St. Barnabas and the narrowness of the aisle surrounding the chancel rail make it difficult to accommodate large wedding parties. Please be mindful of the space available as you plan for your wedding.

It is traditional that members of the wedding party serve as ushers for the wedding and seat the mothers of the couple. We will work with those designated for these roles to help them feel comfortable.

Planning for Holy Eucharist

As noted above, a marriage usually takes place within the context of Holy Eucharist. At St. Barnabas, all baptized Christians are invited to the Feast of the Lord. As part of the planning for the wedding, the couple should discuss their expectations concerning Holy Eucharist with the Rector.

At least **ten** days prior to your wedding please contact Bonnie Pollworth, DiRector of the Altar Guild, and let her know how many people are invited to the wedding and how many you are expecting to participate in Holy Eucharist. You may reach Bonnie at altarguild@saint-barnabas.net or 630-469-1394.

Please note that wine will be used for Holy Communion. If necessary, mustom (a dealcoholized) wine will be provided. We customarily have gluten free communion wafers on hand for those who need them.

May a family member or friend who is a clergy person officiate at our wedding?

We are happy to work with clergy who are ordained in other denominations and find ways to incorporate them into your wedding service. As noted above, any guest clergy must be approved by the Rector and formally invited by the Rector to participate.

Clergy who are ordained in denominations with which the Episcopal church is in communion (Churches in the Anglican Communion, ELCA, Moravian church, Mar Toma, and the Old Catholic Church) may administer your vows or assist in the celebration of Holy Communion. Clergy from other denominations may preach, say prayers, and offer blessings for the newly married couple.

At St. Barnabas it is typical that the Rector, or another priest on the staff, and a Deacon, will be present and participate in the wedding. Please discuss your hopes and plans in this regard with the Rector.

Who may receive Holy Communion?

At St. Barnabas, all baptized Christians, children, and adults are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Those who do not wish to receive Communion are encouraged to come forward for a blessing.

If members of the wedding party do not wish to receive Communion they should still come forward for a blessing. This is a sign of unity and support for the couple being married. We will go over the procedure for Holy Communion and blessings at your rehearsal.

If your wedding ceremony includes Holy Eucharist, and we certainly encourage you to do so, then all of the congregation will be invited to participate in receiving Holy Communion. No one must come forward, but all will be invited.

Planning for Music

Our DiRector of Music is Cathy Kuna. Couples should plan on meeting with Cathy early in the process of planning their wedding, even if they

are planning on using outside musicians for their ceremony.

A wedding is a religious ceremony. At St. Barnabas we discourage use of secular music as a prelude, postlude, or during the service. Such music is best reserved for the reception. The music director and Rector will review all music proposed for the ceremony.

Cathy is an invaluable guide to appropriate music selections for your wedding. She may be contacted at music@saint-barnabas.net or 630-469-1394.

If you are planning on asking outside musicians to participate in your wedding ceremony, please make arrangements for them to rehearse together *prior* to the day of the rehearsal or the wedding itself. This includes any vocal soloists you may want to have in the service.

Flowers and decoration of the church

St. Barnabas is a mid-century modern building and austere in its design. As such, there are limited places for flower arrangements.

- Flowers may be placed on the pavement in front of the altar. This arrangement may not exceed the height of the altar or obscure it.
- Additional flower arrangements may be placed in front of the lectern and on the candle stands beside the altar.
- Other arrangements may be placed in the Narthex if desired.

You may use the florist of your choice. If the office is not open the day before your wedding, please make arrangements with the Parish Administrator to have someone available to meet the florist when the flowers are delivered.

Photographers and videographers

Because a wedding is a worship service, there are limited opportunities for photography and videography during the ceremony itself. Photographers and videographers may set up one or two stations in the church from which to take photos or shoot videos during the ceremony. These stations may not block an aisle or obscure the view of congregants. No flash or supplemental lighting may be used during the service. Under no

circumstances are photographers or videographers permitted to move around during the service.

Please arrange with your photographer or videographer to arrive at least one hour before the service so that he or she may meet with the priest before the ceremony to review possible positions for cameras.

Please advise those attending your wedding ceremony that they may not use flash photography or move from their seats to photograph your wedding. This is best handled with a note in the service bulletin prepared for the wedding.

The wedding party will be asked to leave their phones locked in the parish office during the ceremony. It is not appropriate for members of the wedding party to photograph or video during the service.

Anyone wishing to live stream the marriage ceremony must observe the same rules as the photographers and videographers. Body cameras worn by members of the wedding party are not allowed.

Photography sessions preceding or following the wedding should be limited to 30 minutes.

All other technology you propose to use for your wedding must be approved by the Rector.

How much time is allowed for our wedding?

The facilities fee covers your use of the Church and Narthex for four hours on the day of your wedding. If you are having your reception at St. Barnabas, the total fee will include eight hours of building use.

It is important that your wedding start on time. All members of the wedding party, including parents, should be present at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the service.

The rehearsal for your wedding

A rehearsal is essential for a well-planned wedding. Ordinarily, the rehearsal is held the evening before the wedding. *Everyone* who is participating in the wedding service, including the musicians, must be present for the rehearsal. The rehearsal will be conducted by the Rector or

the priest officiating at the marriage.

It is advisable to allow one and one half hours for your wedding rehearsal. All rehearsals will start on time. Please advise your wedding party of this important requirement.

We have a wedding planner.

That's wonderful! Wedding planners are a huge help in tracking all of the details of the wedding. We will be glad to work with you planner on any details regarding the wedding, flowers, bulletin, rehearsal, etc. Please do bear in mind, however, that the wedding ceremony and the rehearsal are the responsibility of the priest who is celebrating the marriage.

What about the wedding bulletin?

We can prepare your bulletin for your wedding. The cost is included in the fee for the wedding. If you have special artwork that you would like to be on the front of your bulletin, please see that it is sent to the Parish Administrator at least two weeks prior to the date of your wedding.

The couple is responsible for seeing that any copyright permissions on artwork are met. There will be an additional cost for the use of color in printed bulletins.

Should you choose to have an outside service print your wedding bulletin, please submit your proofs to the Parish Administrator so that they can be checked prior to printing.

What are the fees for my wedding?

The total cost for a wedding, not including the honorarium for the presiding priest, is \$875. This includes the following fees:

| | |
|-------|--------------------------|
| \$75 | Bulletin preparation |
| \$100 | Janitorial services |
| \$350 | Space—Church and Narthex |
| \$250 | Music DiRector |
| \$100 | Deacon |

The honorarium for the presiding priest is not fixed. However, we ask that you take into consideration the number of hours spent in pre-marital counseling, as well as the hours spent making arrangements with the couple and at the rehearsal and wedding itself. Generally, honoraria fall in the range of \$350 to \$500.

May we have our reception at St. Barnabas?

Of course! We would be delighted to host your reception.

The Narthex (just outside the church proper) and the undercroft (the downstairs level) are available for hosting receptions. For weddings with fewer than 80 guests we suggest the Narthex. The undercroft is capable of hosting 200 to 250 guests depending upon the arrangements. St. Barnabas can provide tables and chairs for 120 guests.

We have a small professional kitchen which your caterer may use. Arrangements must be made ahead of time with regard to cleaning up following the reception. Ordinarily, we expect a caterer to be responsible for dishes, flatware, glassware and cleaning up. It is possible to make arrangements to use St. Barnabas' china and flatware. Please speak to the Parish Administrator about this possibility at least 30 days prior to your wedding. Arrangements for linens should be made with your caterer or rental company.

Fees for use of the building and other services are on the forms in the center of this booklet.

One final note

St. Barnabas makes every effort to be environmentally friendly. We hope you will cooperate with our parish policy in this regard. As part of our environmental policy we do not allow the use of rice, confetti, balloons, butterflies, or flower petals when the couple appear outside of the church.



The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage

The Word of God

Gathering

The couple joins the assembly.

A hymn of praise, psalm, or anthem may be sung, or instrumental music may be played.

The Presider says the following, the People standing

Presider: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People: Blessed be God, now and for ever. Amen.

In place of the above may be said

Presider: Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People: Glory to God for ever and ever.

From Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost

Presider: Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People: The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

In place of the above may be said

Presider: Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Then may be said

Presider: Beloved, let us love one another,

People: For love is of God.

Presider: Whoever does not love does not know God,

People: For God is love.

Presider: Since God so loves us,

People: Let us love one another.

The Presider may address the assembly in these words

Dear friends in Christ [or Dearly beloved], in the name of God and the Church
we have come together today with _____ and

_____, to witness the vows they make, committing themselves to one another in marriage [according to the laws of the state or civil jurisdiction of _____]. Forsaking all others, they will bind themselves to one another in a covenant of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, remaining true to one another in heart, body, and mind, as long as they both shall live. The lifelong commitment of marriage is not to be entered into lightly or thoughtlessly, but responsibly and with reverence. Let us pray, then, that God will give them the strength to remain steadfast in what they vow this day. Let us also pray for the generosity to support them in the commitment they undertake and for the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

Or this, for those who have previously made a lifelong commitment to one another

Dear friends in Christ [or Dearly beloved], in the name of God and the Church we have come together today with _____ and _____ to witness the sacred vows they make this day as they are married [according to the laws of the state or civil jurisdiction of _____], and reaffirm their commitment to one another. Forsaking all others, they will renew their covenant of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, remaining true to one another in heart, body, and mind, as long as they both shall live. Let us pray, then, that God will give them the strength to remain steadfast in what they vow this day. Let us also pray for the generosity to support them in the commitment they undertake, and for the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

The Collect of the Day

Presider: The Lord be with you. or God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

The Presider says one of the following Collects

God of abundance: assist by your grace _____ and _____, whose covenant of love and fidelity we witness this day. Grant them your protection, that with firm resolve they may honor and keep the vows they make; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

or this

Almighty and everliving God: look tenderly upon _____ and _____,

who stand before you in the company of your Church. Let their life together bring them great joy. Grant them so to love selflessly and live humbly, that they may be to one another and to the world a witness and a sign of your never-failing love and care; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, to the ages of ages. *Amen.*

or this

O God, faithful and true, whose steadfast love endures for ever: we give you thanks for sustaining _____ and _____ in the life they share and for bringing them to this day. Nurture them and fill them with joy in their life together, continuing the good work you have begun in them; and grant us, with them, a dwelling place eternal in the heavens where all your people will share the joy of perfect love, and where you, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, live and reign, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

or this, for those who bring children

Holy Trinity, one God, three Persons perfect in unity and equal in majesty: Draw together with bonds of love and affection _____ and _____, who with their families seek to live in harmony and forbearance all their days, that their joining together will be to us a reflection of that perfect communion which is your very essence and life, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who live and reign in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

The Lessons

The people sit.

Then one or more of the following passages of Scripture is read.

If the Holy Communion is to be celebrated, a passage from the Gospels always concludes the Readings.

When the blessing is celebrated in the context of the Sunday Eucharist, the Readings of the Sunday are used, except with the permission of the Bishop.

Ruth 1:16-17 1

Samuel 18:1b, 3, 20:16-17, 42a; 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

1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:13

2 Corinthians 5:17-20

Galatians 5:14, 22-26

Ephesians 3:14-21

Colossians 3:12-17

1 John 3:18-24

1 John 4:7-16, 21

When a biblical passage other than one from the Gospels is to be read, the Reader announces it with these words

Reader: A Reading from _____.

After the Reading, the Reader may say

The Word of the Lord.

or

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

or

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.

People: Thanks be to God.

Between the Readings, a psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said.

Appropriate Psalms are

Psalms 65

Psalms 67

Psalms 85:7-13

Psalms 98

Psalms 100

Psalms 126

Psalms 127

Psalms 133

Psalms 148

Psalms 149:1-5

Appropriate passages from the Gospels are

Matthew 5:1-16

Mark 12:28-34

Luke 6:32-38

John 15:9-17

John 17:1-2, 18-26

All standing, the Deacon or Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to

_____.

or

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to _____.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

The Witnessing of the Vows and the Blessing of the Covenant

The couple comes before the assembly.

If there is to be a presentation, the presenters stand with the couple, and the Presider says to them

Presider: Who presents _____ and _____ as they seek the blessing of God and the Church on their love and life together?

Presenters: We do.

Presider: Will you love, respect, and pray for _____ and _____, and do all in your power to stand with them in the life they will share?

Presenters: We will.

The Presider then addresses the couple, saying

_____ and _____, you have come before God and the Church to exchange [and renew] solemn vows with one another and to ask God's blessing.

The Presider addresses one member of the couple, saying

Presider: _____, do you freely and unreservedly offer yourself to _____?

Answer: I do.

Presider: Will you [continue to] live together in faithfulness and holiness of life as long as you both shall live?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

The Presider addresses the other member of the couple, saying

Presider: _____, do you freely and unreservedly offer yourself to _____?

Answer: I do.

Presider: Will you [continue to] live together in faithfulness and holiness of life as long as you both shall live?

Answer: I will, with God's help.

The assembly stands, the couple faces the People, and the Presider addresses them, saying

Presider: Will all of you gathered to witness these vows do all in your power to uphold and honor this couple in the covenant they make?

People: We will.

Presider: Will you pray for them, especially in times of trouble, and celebrate with them in times of joy?

People: We will.

The Prayers

The Presider then introduces the prayers

Presider: Then let us pray for _____ and _____ in their life together and for the concerns of this community.

A Deacon or another leader bids prayers for the couple.

Prayers for the Church and for the world, for the concerns of the local community, for those who suffer or face trouble, and for the departed are also appropriate.

If the rite takes place in the principal Sunday worship of the congregation, the rubric concerning the Prayers of the People on page 359 of the Book of Common Prayer is followed.

Adaptations or insertions may be made to the form that follows.

Leader: For _____ and _____, seeking your blessing and the blessing of your holy people; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For a spirit of loving-kindness to shelter them all their days; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For friends to support them and communities to enfold them; Loving

God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For peace in their home and love in their family; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For the grace and wisdom to care for the children you entrust to them [or may entrust to them]; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For the honesty to acknowledge when they hurt each other, and the humility to seek each other's forgiveness and yours; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For the outpouring of your love through their work and witness; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For the strength to keep the vows each of us has made; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

The leader may add one or more of the following biddings

Leader: For all who have been reborn and made new in the waters of Baptism; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For those who lead and serve in communities of faith; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For those who seek justice, peace, and concord among nations; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For those who are sick or suffering, homeless or poor; Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For victims of violence and those who inflict it; Loving God, or Lord, in

your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

Leader: For communion with all who have died [especially those whom we remember this day: _____];

Loving God, or Lord, in your mercy,

People: Hear our prayer.

The Presider concludes the Prayers with the following or another appropriate Collect

Giver of every gift, source of all goodness, hear the prayers we bring before you for _____ and

_____, who seek your blessing this day.

Strengthen them as they share in the saving work of Jesus, and bring about for them and for all you have created the fullness of life he promised, who now lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

If the Eucharist is to follow, the Lord's Prayer is omitted here.

Leader: As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

People and Leader: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. *Amen.*

or this

Leader: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Leader: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our

daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Marriage

The people sit. The couple stands, facing the Presider.

Presider: _____ and _____, I invite you now, illumined by the Word of God and strengthened by the prayer of this community, to make your covenant before God and the Church.

Each member of the couple, in turn, takes the hand of the other and says

In the name of God, I, _____, give myself to you, _____, and take you to myself. I will support and care for you by the grace of God: in times of sickness, in times of health. I will hold and cherish you in the love of Christ: in times of plenty, in times of want. I will honor and love you with the Spirit's help: in times of anguish, in times of joy, forsaking all others, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

or this

In the name of God, I, _____, give myself to you, _____, and take you to myself. I will support and care for you: in times of sickness, in times of health. I will hold and cherish you: in times of plenty, in times of want. I will honor and love you: in times of anguish, in times of joy, forsaking all others, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

If rings are to be exchanged, they are brought before the Presider, who prays using the following words

Let us pray.

Bless, O God, these rings as signs of the enduring covenant
_____ and _____

have made with each other, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The two people place the rings on the fingers of one another, first the one, then the other, saying

_____, I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the name of God. or in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

If the two have previously given and worn rings as a symbol of their commitment, the rings may be blessed on the hands of the couple, the Presider saying

Let us pray.

By the rings which they have worn, faithful God,
_____ and _____

have shown to one another and the world their love and faithfulness. Bless now these rings, that from this day forward they may be signs of the vows

_____ and _____
have exchanged in your presence and in the communion of your Church, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Pronouncement

The Presider joins the right hands of the couple and says

Now that _____ and _____
have exchanged vows of love and fidelity in the presence of God and the Church,
I pronounce that they are married [according to the laws of the state or civil
jurisdiction of _____] and bound to one another as
long as they both shall live. *Amen.*

Blessing of the Couple

As the couple stands or kneels, the Presider invokes God's blessing upon them, saying

Let us pray. Most gracious God, we praise you for the tender mercy and unfailing care revealed to us in Jesus the Christ and for the great joy and comfort bestowed upon us in the gift of human love. We give you thanks for _____ and _____,
and the covenant of faithfulness they have made. Pour out the abundance of your Holy Spirit upon them. Keep them in your steadfast love; protect them from all danger; fill them with your wisdom and peace; lead them in holy service to each other and the world.

The Presider continues with one of the following

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you, and mercifully grant you rich and boundless grace, that you may please God in body and soul. God make you a sign of the loving-kindness and steadfast fidelity manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior, and bring you at last to the delight of the heavenly banquet, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

or this

God, the holy and undivided Trinity, bless, preserve, and keep you, and mercifully grant you rich and boundless grace, that you may please God in body and soul. God make you a sign of the loving-kindness and steadfast fidelity manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior, and bring you at last to the delight of the heavenly banquet, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Peace

The Presider bids the Peace.

Presider: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People : And also with you.

In place of the above may be said

Presider: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: And also with you.

The liturgy continues with the Holy Communion.

When the Eucharist is not celebrated, the Presider blesses the people.

The Deacon, or in the absence of a Deacon, the Priest, dismisses them.

At the Eucharist The liturgy continues with the Offertory, at which the couple may present the offerings of bread and wine.

The following proper preface may be said

Because in the giving of two people to each other in faithful love you reveal the joy and abundant life you share with your Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The following postcommunion prayer may be said

God our strength and joy, we thank you for the communion of our life together, for the example of holy love that you give us in

_____ and _____,

and for the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that it may renew our hope and nourish us for the work you set before us to witness to the presence of Christ in the world, through the power of your Spirit, and to the glory of your Name. *Amen*

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The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2

At the time appointed, the persons to be married, with their witnesses, assemble in the church or some other appropriate place.

During their entrance, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung, or instrumental music may be played.

Then the Celebrant, facing the people and the persons to be married, addresses the congregation and says

Dearly beloved: We have come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the joining together of _____ and _____ in Holy Matrimony. The joining of two people in a life of mutual fidelity signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, and so it is worthy of being honored among all people.

The union of two people 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 gift 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.

Into this holy union _____ and _____
_____ now come to be joined. If any of you can show just cause why they may not lawfully be married, speak now; or else for ever hold your peace.

Then the Celebrant says to the persons to be married

I require and charge you both, here in the presence of God, that if either of you know any reason why you may not be united in marriage lawfully, and in accordance with God's Word, you do now confess it.

The Declaration of Consent

The Celebrant says to one member of the couple, then to the other

_____, will you have this woman/man/ person to be your wife/husband/spouse; to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love her/him, comfort her/him, honor and keep her/him, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her/him as long as you both shall live?

Answer: I will.

The Celebrant then addresses the congregation, saying:

Will all of you witnessing these promises do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their marriage?

People: We will.

If there is to be a presentation or a giving in marriage, it takes place at this time.

A hymn, psalm, or anthem may follow.

The Ministry of the Word

The Celebrant then says to the people

The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

O gracious and everliving God, you have created humankind in your image: Look mercifully upon _____ and _____ who come to you seeking your blessing, and assist them with your grace, that with true fidelity and steadfast love they may honor and keep the promises and vows they make; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Then one or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture is read. Other readings from Scripture suitable for the occasion may be used. If there is to be a Communion, a passage from the Gospel always concludes the Readings.

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

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)

1 Corinthians 13:1–13 (Love is patient and kind)

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

Ephesians 5:1–2 (Walk in love, as Christ loved us)

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

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

Between the Readings, a psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said.

Appropriate psalms are

Psalm 67

Psalm 127

Psalm 128

When a passage from the Gospel is to be read, all stand, and the Deacon or Minister appointed says

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to _____.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Matthew 5:1–10 (The Beatitudes)

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)

After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

A homily or other response to the Readings may follow.

The Marriage

Each member of the couple, in turn, takes the right hand of the other and says

In the Name of God, I, _____, take you, _____, to be my *wife/husband/spouse*, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.

The Priest may ask God's blessing on rings as follows

Bless, O Lord, these rings to be signs of the vows by which _____ and _____ have bound themselves to each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The giver places the ring on the ring finger of the other's hand and says

_____, I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit [or in the Name of God].

Then the Celebrant joins the right hands of the couple and says

Now that _____ and _____ have given themselves to each other by solemn vows, with the joining of hands and the giving and receiving of rings, I pronounce that they are wed to one another, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder.

People: Amen.

The Prayers

All standing, the Celebrant says:

Let us pray together in the words our Savior taught us.

People and Celebrant: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Or

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

If Communion is to follow, the Lord's Prayer may be omitted here.

The Deacon or other person appointed reads the following prayers, to which the People respond, saying, Amen.

If there is not to be a Communion, one or more of the prayers may be omitted.

Leader: Let us pray.

Eternal God, creator and preserver of all life, author of salvation, and giver of all grace: Look with favor upon the world you have made, and for which your Son gave his life, and especially upon _____ and _____ whom you make one flesh in Holy Matrimony. Amen. Give them wisdom and devotion in the ordering of their common life, that each may be to the other a strength in need, a counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy. *Amen.*

Grant that their wills may be so knit together in your will, and their spirits in your Spirit, that they may grow in love and peace with you and one another all the days of their life. *Amen.*

Give them grace, when they hurt each other, to recognize and acknowledge their fault, and to seek each other's forgiveness and yours. *Amen.*

Make their life together a sign of Christ's love to this sinful and broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair. *Amen.*

Bestow on them, if it is your will, the gift and heritage of children, and the grace to bring them up to know you, to love you, and to serve you. *Amen.*

Give them such fulfillment of their mutual affection that they may reach out in love and concern for others. *Amen.*

Grant that all married persons who have witnessed these vows may find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed. *Amen.*

Grant that the bonds of our common humanity, by which all your children are united one to another, and the living to the dead, may be so transformed by your grace, that your will may be done on earth as it is in heaven; where, O Father, with your Son and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign in perfect unity, now and

for ever. *Amen.*

The Blessing of the Marriage

The People remain standing.

The couple kneel, and the Priest says one of the following prayers

Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us, to be born of a human mother, and to make the way of the cross to be the way of life. We thank you, also, for consecrating the union of two people in his Name. By the power of your Holy Spirit, pour out the abundance of your blessing upon _____ and _____

_____ Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their life and in their death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that table where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

or this

O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church: Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The couple still kneeling, the Priest adds this blessing

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that you may faithfully live together in this life, and in the **age to come have life everlasting. Amen.**

The Peace

The Celebrant may say to the People

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

The newly married couple then greet each other, after which greetings may be exchanged throughout the congregation. When Communion is not to follow, the wedding party leaves the church. A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung, or instrumental music may be played.

At the Eucharist

The liturgy continues with the Offertory, at which the newly married couple may present the offerings of bread and wine.

Preface of the Season

At the Communion, it is appropriate that the newly married couple receive Communion first, after the ministers.

In place of the usual postcommunion prayer, the following is said

O God, the giver of all that is true and lovely and gracious: We give you thanks for binding us together in these holy mysteries of the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Grant that by your Holy Spirit, _____ and _____, now joined in Holy Matrimony, may become one in heart and soul, live in fidelity and peace, and obtain those eternal joys prepared for all who love you; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

As the wedding party leaves the church, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung, or instrumental music may be played.

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**CANONS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH REGARDING MARRIAGE****CANON 18: Of the Celebration and Blessing of Marriage**

Sec. 1. Every Member of the Clergy of this Church shall conform to the laws of the State governing the creation of the civil status of marriage, and also these canons concerning the solemnization of marriage. Members of the Clergy may solemnize a marriage using any of the liturgical forms authorized by this Church.

Sec. 2. The couple shall notify the Member of the Clergy of their intent to marry at least thirty days prior to the solemnization; provided that if one of the parties is a member of the Congregation of the Member of the Clergy, or both parties can furnish satisfactory evidence of the need for shortening the time, this requirement can be waived for weighty cause; in which case the Member of the Clergy shall immediately report this action in writing to the Bishop.

Sec. 3. Prior to the solemnization, the Member of the Clergy shall determine:

- (a) that both parties have the right to marry according to the laws of the State and consent to do so freely, without fraud, coercion, mistake as to the identity of either, or mental reservation; and
- (b) that at least one of the parties is baptized; and
- (c) that both parties have been instructed by the Member of the Clergy, or a person known by the Member of the Clergy to be competent and responsible, in the nature, purpose, and meaning, as well as the rights, duties and responsibilities of marriage.

Sec. 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 the support of our community.**

Sec. 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 the 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).

Sec. 6. A bishop or priest may pronounce a blessing upon a civil marriage using any of the liturgical forms authorized by this Church.

Sec. 7. It shall be within the discretion of any Member of the Clergy of this Church to decline to solemnize or bless any marriage.

CANON 19: Of Regulations Respecting Holy Matrimony:

Concerning Preservation of Marriage, Dissolution of Marriage, and Remarriage

Sec. 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.

Sec. 2 (a) Any member of this Church whose marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a civil court may apply to the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which such person is legally or canonically resident for a judgment as to his or her marital status in the eyes of the Church. Such judgment may be a recognition of the nullity, or of the termination of the said marriage; provided that no such judgment shall be construed as affecting in any way the legitimacy of children or the civil validity of the former relationship. (b) Every judgment rendered under this Section shall be in writing and shall be made a matter of permanent record in the Archives of the Diocese.

Sec. 3. No Member of the Clergy of this Church shall solemnize the marriage of any person who has been the husband or wife of any other person then living, nor shall any member of this Church enter into a marriage when either of the contracting parties has been the husband or the wife of any other person then living, except as hereinafter provided:

- (a) The Member of the Clergy shall be satisfied by appropriate evidence that the prior marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a final judgment or decree of a civil court of competent jurisdiction.
- (b) The Member of the Clergy shall have instructed the parties that continuing concern must be shown for the well-being of the former spouse, and of any children of the prior marriage.
- (c) The Member of the Clergy shall consult with and obtain the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese wherein the Member of the Clergy is canonically resident or the Bishop of the Diocese in which the Member of the Clergy is licensed to officiate prior to, and shall report to that Bishop, the solemnization of any marriage under this Section.
- (d) If the proposed marriage is to be solemnized in a jurisdiction other than the one in which the consent has been given, the consent shall be affirmed by the Bishop of that jurisdiction.

Sec. 4. All provisions of Canon I.18 shall, in all cases, apply.

QUESTIONS & NOTES

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