

THE BLESSING AND CELEBRATION
OF A MARRIAGE



RESURRECTION
E P I S C O P A L C H U R C H

A Wedding Customary

Resurrection Episcopal Church

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Welcome to Resurrection Episcopal Church!

Wedding Customary

In the Episcopal Church, marriage is celebrated within the context of the Church's life of prayer, worship, and witness; the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer and the Canons of the Church set the foundational norms for the solemnization of Holy Matrimony. A wedding is one of life's great moments, a time for good wishes, feasting and joy. It is also an invitation for a couple to share life together in the spirit of Jesus Christ. It is based upon a public and life-long covenant between a woman and man, celebrated in the presence of God and before a priest and congregation.

Because marriage is a commitment "not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly," we ask that you read through this document carefully and then talk with us about your coming marriage.

A Step-by-step guide to getting married at Resurrection

1. Read the material in this document.
2. Contact the church office (727-586-6968).
3. The Priest will then contact you to set up an appointment. If all agree to continue forward after that meeting, the date for your wedding will be placed on Resurrection's calendar.
4. You will schedule required pre-marital counseling sessions with the Priest (usually three meetings).
5. You will contact the congregational coordinator to choose altar flowers. This person serves as the liaison between the church and our florist.
6. You will schedule an appointment with the music director to plan the music.
7. You will meet with the Priest to finalize the wedding ceremony (Please inform the Officiating clergy if you wish to have the Eucharist celebrated at your wedding.)

What does the Episcopal Church require?

At least one of the parties to the marriage must be a baptized Christian, and the wedding ceremony must be attested by at least two witnesses (normally the best man and maid of honor). You will meet at least three times with the Priest during the course of your preparation.

Do I need to be a member?

As weddings at Resurrection are normally celebrated for the Resurrection family, this church is available primarily to members and their extended families, and those who seek to become a part of the Resurrection community. Members and Friends of Resurrection may on occasion sponsor the wedding of a non-member.

At least one of the persons to be married must have been baptized, though not necessarily in the Episcopal Church.

In the event of a non-member, we do ask, after you have selected Resurrection as the place of your wedding, worship regularly with us on Sundays. We believe marriage is not just a ceremony in our building, it is part of the community of believers and seekers here. We hope that at some point you would consider becoming members of Resurrection. Your individual spiritual journeys (and your marriage journey) will be enriched by belonging to a faith community.

We will also consider a wedding here if you are a member at another church which is out-of-town. We understand that sometimes family arrangements make it easier to be married in the family's church rather than the church one is regularly attending. In this case, you may usually make arrangements for the clergy person in that church to do the pre-marital counseling. In any case, there are different fees for non-members.

What if I am divorced?

In the Episcopal Church, we observe the following procedure if you are seeking to be remarried. Clergy, in consultation with the couple, are asked to determine: that there is evidence that the prior marriage has been dissolved by a final judgment or decree of a civil court of competent jurisdiction; and that continuing concern is being shown for the wellbeing of the former spouse, and of any children. Permission from the Bishop of Southwest Florida is also required.

What does the State of Florida require?

You must obtain a marriage license (which requires proof of identification: birth certificate, passport, driver's license, baptismal certificate). Bring this marriage license with you to the rehearsal.

How soon can the wedding be put on the calendar?

The date will be chosen after your initial meeting with the Priest. Weddings must be scheduled at least 90 days in advance. Rehearsals normally take place at 4 or 5pm the day before the wedding. The rehearsal typically lasts 45 minutes to an hour. Please remember to bring your marriage license, along with your wedding programs and any other decorations, to the rehearsal.

Are there times when weddings cannot take place?

Weddings are generally celebrated on Saturdays. Weddings are not performed during Holy Week (the week before Easter), because of the sacred nature of that time. Weddings are not normally scheduled during Lent. If you are not sure of the date of Easter in a given year, the Priest will be glad to let you know.

Who plans the service?

The Priest works with the bride and groom. All weddings at Resurrection are according to the Prayer Book liturgy of The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage (page 423 of The Book of Common Prayer). *No additions or deletions are permitted.*

Clergy of other parishes or traditions may assist in the service, but the invitation comes from, and after consultation with, the Priest. We encourage the participation of friends and family in the reading of the lessons. There are options as to which three selections from Scripture will be read at your service.

Please click on this link of recommended Scripture for your ceremony:
<https://www.lectionarypage.net/YearABC/SpecServ/Marriage.html>

While the service may have as many as 4 readings, we require that one reading be from one of the Gospels. All Old Testament, New Testament, Psalm and Gospel readings need to be approved by the officiating clergy.

We will be happy to provide a simple program for the wedding at no extra cost to you. However, most couples prefer to create their own programs.

Our experience is that these next two areas tend to cause needless misunderstandings and conflicts. Please read these sections carefully.

What about music?

The parish organist will work with you (or assign another musician) to discuss options and to begin planning. Our organist will be creative and flexible when helping you choose the best music for your wedding. Bring your ideas and preferences to her.

Because of the sacred nature of the Marriage Rite, music outside of the sacred repertoire (popular songs, show tunes, etc.) is best included in your reception. The Resurrection organist must be consulted and give consent if other musicians are to be invited. The music of the service is ultimately at the discretion of the Priest, in consultation with the organist.

What about photography or video?

We strive to maintain a joyful yet worshipful atmosphere in the wedding service. Good professional photographers understand this, and they will agree to minimize distractions and respect the sacred nature of the building and the liturgy.

Please let your photographers know they **MUST** meet (or call) with Mo. Sandy in advance of the service.

Photographers can take pictures from the back of the church **ONLY** before, during and after the ceremony. To preserve the sacramental nature of the marriage ceremony, photographers may not walk up and down the aisles during the service and they may not use flash photography at any time. Videographers can be used, but are limited to one stationary camera at the back of the church.

To preserve the sacramental nature of this liturgy and to ensure your professional photographer can take flawless pictures; we ask that no guests or relatives take pictures during the service. (Guests will lean into the aisle or raise their phones above the heads of those in front of them to take pictures...impeding your photographer's ability to do their job).

To preserve the dignity of the occasion, a family member may wish to make this policy known at the rehearsal to avoid any interruption in the ceremony.

Who does the flowers and decorations?

Flowers may be ordered from the florist of your choice. All flower arrangements must be made in consultation with our Altar Guild.

When ordering flowers please remember the following guidelines:

- The two chapel altar vases are each 13" high and arrangements may not exceed 24" in height (no higher than the top of the Ambry).
- The flowers on the altar are left in place for the following Sunday's services, in thanksgiving for the wedding.
- There are to be no ribbons or bows on the altar flowers. Only flowers are to be on the altar – no statues, pictures, mementos, etc.
- All decorations (outside of altar flowers) must be removed after the wedding.
- All flowers (including those carried by the wedding party) are paid for by the wedding party.
- No aisle cloth or runner is allowed. This prevents the possibility of any tripping as the wedding party processes down the aisle.

Please Note: We do not throw flower petals, rice, confetti, bird seed or any other similar substance within or outside of the church building.

Final decisions about decorations and their placement are at the discretion of the Priest.

Does the Episcopal Church use a unity candle?

No. There is no ceremony of a Unity Candle in the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage in the Episcopal Church. It is suggested that this ceremony might take place at the reception.

Fees

When we meet with couples planning weddings, we often find that careful lists have been made of the costs: reception site, food, and drinks; florists and photographers; clothing and limousines. Where is the church on that list? We would ask: what value do you put on this item? The basic set fees for weddings are:

Resurrection Church (members)	\$ 500
Resurrection Church (non-members)	\$ 1,500
Clergy.....	\$ 750
Organist.....	\$ 400

Fees are due at or before the rehearsal.

A Prayer for Couples

God of tenderness and strength, you have brought our paths together and led us to this day; go with us now as we travel through good times, through trouble, or through change. Bless our home, our partings and our meetings. Make us worthy of each other's best, and tender with each other's dreams, trusting in your love. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Contact Persons at Resurrection

Vicar: The Rev. Sandra Rogers (727) 586-6958
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