



**ST. CHRISTOPHER'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**
EMBRACING GOD'S EXPANSIVE LOVE

Wedding Guide Book

St. Christopher's Wedding Guidebook

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Introduction & Welcome

Congratulations and best wishes on your engagement. Christian marriage in the Episcopal tradition is sacred and sacramental. Two people enter into a covenant with each other; a covenant blessed by God. During the ceremony you will pledge to love, comfort, honor and be faithful to each other for a lifetime. May God bless you both as your plans for your wedding continue to take shape.

Faithfully yours,
The Rev. Cara Spaccarelli, Rector

Getting Started

A call to the parish is the first step. Ask for the parish administrator. The administrator will check to see if the date on which you wish to be married is available, and if so, will pass your contact information and request to one of the clergy. In most cases, three to six months from the time of the first meeting is necessary to complete the pre-marital counseling and other arrangements for the wedding. Time tends to accelerate as your wedding day approaches, so the earlier you can begin making your plans, the better.

Your Marriage Preparation Team

- ❖ **Officiating Priest:** Clergy of St. Christopher's officiate at all weddings. Any arrangements concerning the participation of other Episcopal clergy or of other faith communities must be made through the Rector and will be in conformance with the Canons and policies of the Episcopal Church. Former clergy of St. Christopher's should only be considered if you have an ongoing relationship with that priest that you have maintained. Remember they are retired or have another congregation, and performing weddings is a work-related request for them.
- ❖ **Music Director:** As you begin to put together the liturgy of your wedding you will meet with Mr. Robert Richter, our Director of Music and Organist. He can be a great deal of assistance in picking music that you will like and is appropriate to the occasion.
- ❖ **Wedding Assistant:** A few months prior to your wedding, you will be contacted by the wedding assistant who will assist you at the church on the day of your wedding.

Requirements

The Episcopal Church requires that at least one person of the couple seeking marriage be a baptized Christian.

We do not require church membership. There are different charges for members and non-members.

The Episcopal Church requires premarital counseling of all couples married by Episcopal clergy. Much time and effort will be focused on your wedding ceremony and reception. It is important also to develop a sound foundation for your ongoing marital relationship. The clergy can provide this counseling or recommend therapists/programs in the area that can do so as well. Four sessions are required. It is wise to plan these sessions so that they conclude no later than 30 days prior to the ceremony.

Additional meetings will take place for the discussion of the meaning of the wedding ceremony and for decisions on the choices of readings and prayers to be used in your service.

For divorced persons, proof of divorce is required. If either person has been divorced more than once, additional premarital counseling through a therapist may be required.

Documents Required

The couple is responsible for completion of these documents.

- ❖ Wedding Bulletin Information Worksheet (to be completed with clergy)
- ❖ Marriage License in the State of Indiana – obtainable at the Clerk’s Office in an Indiana county where one of you resides, or for non-residents in the Indiana county where the marriage will be solemnized
- ❖ Documentation of any divorce decrees

Facilities and Time

- ❖ St. Christopher's main worship space [the Nave] seats 400 guests, but "looks full" with 150.
- ❖ Other rooms available during your wedding are: Parlor and changing room (appropriate for Brides and Bridesmaids), Conference Room (for Grooms and Groomsmen), Library and Narthex.
- ❖ St. Christopher's has facilities (the Parish Hall) for a rehearsal dinner or a wedding reception. This space accommodates up to 200 people and has its own kitchen. The couple should meet with the Wedding Assistant to discuss use of the Parish Hall.
- ❖ The Church requests that no weddings begin before 10:00 a.m. and none scheduled later than 5:00 p.m.
- ❖ Please note that weddings are generally not held in Lent (the 40-day season that precedes Easter) and are not scheduled for Sundays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Holy Week (the Saturday before Palm Sunday through Easter Day), and the weekend of Diocesan Convention usually held in October.

Wedding Policies and Practices at St. Christopher's

Regarding Ushers

- ❖ Ushers should arrive dressed and ready at the Church no later than one (1) hour prior to the service.
- ❖ When seating guests, they should fill the Church from front to back in the center sections. For weddings larger than 150, additional instructions will be provided.
- ❖ It is not necessary to seat the guests on any particular side of the Church based on their relationship to the couple.

Flowers & Decorations

- ❖ All flowers and decorations will be the sole responsibility of the couple by arrangement with a florist of their choice. It is the duty of the couple to ensure that the florist understands the wedding policies of this parish.
- ❖ Floral arrangements may be placed on the table of the narthex, the front ledge of the Reredos, and on two flower stands that could flank the altar. Flowers may also be placed in the library and upstairs parlor. No artificial flowers are permitted. Nothing may be attached to the church entry doors.
- ❖ Aisles or pew candles are permitted. St. Christopher's can provide twelve aisle candles. There is a fee for their use.
- ❖ No rice, confetti, or bird seed may be thrown on the church grounds; however, the tossing of flower petals or blowing of bubbles after the ceremony may be permitted outside the church's front doors, with advance notice given to the officiating priest. None of the above-mentioned items may be used inside the church.
- ❖ Aisle runners are not permitted at weddings in this parish. They often bunch or tear, and also become a hazard to others who might trip on them and fall.
- ❖ Decorating time may be scheduled by arrangement with the St. Christopher's Wedding Assistant.
- ❖ Any flowers that you provide for the worship space typically remain in the Church for Sunday services in thanksgiving for your wedding. An acknowledgement of your wedding is listed in that Sunday's service bulletin.
- ❖ The florist will coordinate with St. Christopher's Wedding Assistant when planning for and placing all flowers for the service.

Your Service Bulletin

- ❖ Because of the participative nature of the Celebration and Blessing of Marriage in the Episcopal Church, your service bulletin is a very important part of your wedding preparation process. The service bulletin contains information that guides those in attendance at your wedding and helps them actively participate as a community.
- ❖ The couple can choose to have a simple bulletin that references the Book of Common Prayer for following along or a more thorough bulletin with all the prayers, readings, and congregational responses.

- ❖ The printing of the bulletin is to be discussed with the clergy. Bulletins in the style of our typical Sunday bulletin can be done by the church office. Bulletins on fancy paper, cardstock, or anything outside our normal offerings must be handled by the couple. The material in the bulletin must be approved by the officiating priest before printing and **a copy will be left with the Officiant.**

Photography & Videography

- ❖ Still Photography: We work to maintain a joyful and sacred atmosphere in the wedding service. Professional photographers understand this, and they will agree to minimize distractions and respect the sacred nature of the building and liturgy. Flash photography is not allowed at any time during the service. Flash photography may be used before and after the service only. Please invite your photographer to the rehearsal so that he or she is familiar with the space.
- ❖ Photos by Professionals: Professional photos are usually taken starting two hours before the service begins. If you choose to take photos after the ceremony, you should plan to complete these forty-five minutes following the ceremony. Photos may be taken anywhere in the worship space and on St. Christopher's grounds.
- ❖ Videography: Videotaping of your wedding is permitted from the balcony. Special lighting may not be used, and the videographer should remain at a stationary tripod in the gallery. You may wish to invite your videographer to your rehearsal so that he or she may be better prepared on the day of the service.
- ❖ The officiating priest will give directions to the photographer about where they can and can't go during the ceremony as to not interrupt the service.
- ❖ **It is the duty of the couple to ensure that the photographer/ videographer is made aware of the church policies.**

Music

The St. Christopher's Director of Music and Organist will work closely with you and serve as a valuable resource as you select your music to ensure that these selections are appropriate and fitting for your wedding. Because a wedding is a service of worship, the liturgical guidelines for music are subject to the same standards as music for any other worship service.

- ❖ If music is desired, the couple must meet with the Parish Organist, prior to the wedding ceremony (and in no less than 60 days before the wedding), to establish the music for the ceremony.
- ❖ The Parish Organist will participate in every wedding that takes place in this parish where music is part of the ceremony. In special circumstances, another organist may be used, but only with express permission of the Parish Organist and the Rector.
- ❖ All musical selections must be approved by the Parish Organist and the officiating priest well in advance of the wedding date. Pre-recorded music is not used at this parish, except under special circumstance. It is advised that secular music, with the exception of classical music, not be used.
- ❖ Vocalists and instrumentalists may be used, subject to approval by and arrangement with the Parish Organist and the Rector.
- ❖ Depending on the couple, the actual liturgy may have very little music. Music can enhance the joyous theme, and there are many ways to include it, such as a soloist, instrumentalist only, or congregational hymn.
- ❖ Hymns: Appropriate hymns (sung or played) can be found in *The Hymnal 1982*. The following suggested hymns mark the joy and celebration of this service: 350-353, 376, 390, 410, 467, 482, 487, 488, 516, 517, 518, 522, 523, 576, 577, 606, 657, 645, 646, 664.

The Rehearsal

- ❖ There will be a rehearsal for the wedding, typically held the day before the ceremony.
- ❖ The purpose of a rehearsal is to help you and your party be more comfortable with your roles in the liturgy.
- ❖ Rehearsals will **start on time**. Readers and those leading the prayers are to be present at the rehearsal. Attentive participation in the rehearsal helps

every person, regardless of his or her role, become more familiar and comfortable with the worship space and the liturgy itself – thereby helping everyone to be more fully present to you and to God on the day of your wedding.

- ❖ Please arrange the rehearsal time with the officiating priest. The music staff will already have reviewed the music with you and will not be present at the rehearsal. Your photographer/videographer is encouraged to attend the rehearsal.

The Day of the Service

- ❖ In addition to the one-hour rehearsal, the standard wedding fee includes use of St. Christopher's for a maximum of four hours on the day of the service. This includes time for photography. The couple may arrive two (2) hours prior to the service, the service may last an hour, and forty-five minutes afterward for pictures is the standard.
- ❖ Dressing room facilities are provided at St. Christopher's but are limited. The available facilities will be reviewed with the couple during the pre-marital preparation meetings. Any food brought in by members of the wedding party must be arranged with the Wedding Assistant. All items brought in to these areas must be removed and rooms left as they were found. Trash may be discarded in trash bags which St. Christopher's maintenance will remove.
- ❖ The wedding party may greet guests in the Narthex after the wedding. However, if photographs are going to be taken after the service it is recommended that the couple receive their guests at the reception.
- ❖ While a wedding coordinator or planner may be used for other aspects of the event, they are unnecessary for the wedding ceremony itself, as the officiating priest will be the sole person directing the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. It is the duty of the couple to ensure that any wedding planners used understand that their assistance stops at the church doors.
- ❖ No member of the Wedding Party may arrive under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances nor consume such substances prior to the ceremony.
- ❖ Please note that the St. Christopher's Campus is a Tobacco Free Zone.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.
1 Corinthians 12:4-8a

ST. CHRISTOPHER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH WEDDING FEES

Wedding Fee:

Members* \$700
Covers the stipends for the parish organist,
cleaning service, wedding assistant.

Non-Members \$1000
Covers the above stipends and a facility use cost

**Members must be active participants in the life of the congregation within the last two years.*

Honorarium for Priest:

Members* None Required
This is at the discretion of the couple.
Honoraria are placed in the Discretionary Fund
which is used for charitable purposes.

Non-Members
Pre-marital counseling, rehearsal, and ceremony \$500
Rehearsal and Ceremony Only \$250

Aisle Candles \$150

For use of 12 Aisle Candles, set up and removal.
They are set in 6 pairs of two along the center aisle.

Reception/Rehearsal Dinner:

Members* \$500
For use of the Parish Hall, kitchen, tables,
chairs (indoors), cleaning, and wedding assistant.

Non-members \$750

Deposits (to be returned if not used)
Excessive Cleaning and Damage Deposit \$250

This refundable deposit will be collected
in addition to any other fees

Snow Removal: (During winter season, Oct-Mar) \$150

Collected and refunded if not needed

Payment of Fees

ALL fees are billed by St. Christopher's Episcopal Church.
Payment is due 60 days prior to the wedding.

Weddings canceled 30 days before the wedding will receive
50% return of payment.

Additional Fees at Couple's Expense:

- ❖ Flowers/Decorations
- ❖ Photographer/Videographer
- ❖ Musicians (other than the Parish Organist)
- ❖ Childcare
- ❖ Candelabras
- ❖ Catering (including dishes, flatware, tablecloths, and napkins)
- ❖ Rental of anything, including:
 - Tent, Chairs and Tables