

St. Edmund's Episcopal Church



A Guide to Weddings at St. Edmund's and in the Episcopal Church

1175 San Gabriel Blvd. San Marino, CA 91108
(626) 793-9167 www.SaintEdmunds.org

Congratulations on your engagement! Planning a wedding is an exciting and important task. This booklet has been developed to help those couples inquiring about a wedding at St. Edmund's Parish, and is designed to answer the questions most frequently asked. Marriage rites are not generally conducted outside of Church.

What is distinctive about a wedding at St. Edmund's Church

Marriage at St. Edmund's is intentionally Christian, consequently the following are very important:

- ◆ the solemn promises you will make before God and to one another,
- ◆ the commitment you make to each other to place Christ at the center of your relationship,
- ◆ the careful preparation you will undergo to help understand each other more fully and to deepen your mutual commitment to Christ and the Christian Community.

What are the requirements of the Episcopal Church and St. Edmund's Church?

We ask for six months notification prior to the marriage date.

The wedding service must conform to the authorized form used by the Episcopal Church. The Sacrament of Matrimony is administered using the prescribed form for "the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage," in the Book of Common Prayer. Any re-arrangement of the rite or re-wording of the vows is not permitted.

The canons of the Episcopal Church require that at least one of the two persons to be married be a baptized Christian.

If either party is divorced, the following requirements set forth in the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Los Angeles must be met:

- ◆ The divorce must be final for at least one year
- ◆ Obligations to the former spouse and children must have been responsibly met.

- ◆ One of the persons must have an ongoing pastoral relationship with an Episcopal Priest.
- ◆ The Priest must approve the marriage.

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Eight Steps to a Wedding at St. Edmund's

Step One

Arrange for a first meeting with the Wedding Coordinator

At this meeting you will discuss the information in this booklet and complete a Wedding Information Form with the guidance of the Wedding Coordinator. After this meeting a date is scheduled with the priest.

A non-refundable deposit of \$300 must be paid at this time to reserve the date and time of the wedding and rehearsal. Please note that no wedding is officially scheduled until this meeting has been held and a decision to proceed has been made by the Clergy. No plans should be made, invitations ordered, or florist or photographer hired until you have begun the process of pre-marital counseling.

Step Two

Make an appointment to begin counseling

Once you and the Clergy reach a mutual agreement to have the marriage ceremony at St. Edmund's, you will be scheduled for a series of pre-marriage counseling sessions. Because the marriage relationship is so important, the Episcopal Church insists upon adequate counseling before the ceremony takes place. At St. Edmund's Church, this usually entails three sessions with the Priest, in addition to the rehearsal.

In the first meeting, the Priest reviews the marriage application and finds out more about the couple. In following sessions, the priest will discuss various spiritual and practical matters pertaining to marriage. The focus of these meetings is on "Being Married." Only when this is fully covered will the details of "Getting Married" (i.e. the wedding ceremony) be discussed.

Step Three

Meet with the Director of Music

During the period of time you are going to counseling sessions, you should contact the Director of Music to select the music for your wedding. No musical arrangements are to be made prior to this meeting. At this meeting the Director of Music will:

- ◆ assist you in selecting music from the rich repertoire of music suitable for a church setting,
- ◆ arrange for any additional vocal or instrumental musicians which may be desired.

An outside organist may be used only with permission from the Director of Music, who may charge the customary fee whether or not the organist plays for the wedding.

Step Four

Meet with the Wedding Coordinator

At this meeting, you will discuss flowers, photography and the structure and mechanics of the wedding day itself.

Step Five

Follow-up Meeting with a member of the clergy

This meeting will take place during the course of the counseling sessions.

At this meeting the specific details of your wedding will be addressed, including the selection of Scripture readings.

The selection of Readings can be found on page 426 of *The Book of Common Prayer*. A homily will normally be offered by the priest from St. Edmund's.

Step Six

Payment of Fees—Please see enclosed Financial Consideration Sheet

All fees are required to be paid one month before the ceremony takes place.

Membership is defined as follows:

- ◆ 1. You are a baptized Christian.
- ◆ 2. You are a frequent attendee at Sunday worship for at least one year prior to the wedding inquiry.
- ◆ 3. You are a pledging member in the St. Edmund's Stewardship program, for at least one year.
- ◆ 4. You are involved in the life and ministry of St. Edmund's.

Step Seven

Obtain and Deliver the marriage license

Arrangements for marriage licenses need to be made well in advance and must be issued in the State of California.

The license must be brought to the church office at least two weeks prior to the wedding. If there is no license there can be no marriage ceremony!

A word of caution! Be sure to proofread the license before you leave the Clerk's office to make sure all names, dates, etc. are accurate.

Step Eight

The Wedding Rehearsal

The Rehearsal is generally scheduled on the Thursday or Friday evening before the wedding, between the hours of 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. The rehearsal will last approximately one hour and **must start on time**.

The Organist does not attend wedding rehearsals except by special arrangement. An additional fee of \$150.00 is required for the expense of the organist at the rehearsal.

The purpose of the rehearsal is to walk through the wedding service so that all the participants are sure of their parts.

It is necessary for all attendants, readers, and parents to be present **on time**.

Who may officiate?

Officiating Clergy will be the priests of St. Edmund's Church, or, by special request and permission, an Episcopalian or Anglican priest in good standing. Under special circumstance a cleric from another Christian denomination or Faith Tradition may assist in the service.

If Episcopal clergy from outside the Diocese of Los Angeles are to be involved, they must receive permission in advance from the Rector of St. Edmund's.

In addition to the officiating priest, there must be at least two persons present to witness your ceremony. This is rarely a problem, and in fact, most couples' main concern is keeping the guest-list from getting out of hand.

May we use an outside wedding consultant?

Professional wedding consultants are welcome at St. Edmund's, but must work in coordination with St. Edmund's Wedding Coordinator and conform to the policies contained in this booklet.

What about flowers and decorations?

- ◆ The Wedding Coordinator will give you an information sheet to give to your florist. If the florist has not done a wedding at St. Edmund's Church, it is required that they meet at the Church with the Wedding Coordinator. Florists, happy to work with the Altar Guild and who have done weddings at St. Edmund's, can be recommended for all your floral arrangements. Any plan for decorations must be cleared with the Church.

- ◆ Flowers at the altar must be left for the use of St. Edmund's Church on Sunday (**NO EXCEPTIONS**). Sunday's service leaflet will note that the altar flowers are given in thanksgiving to God for your marriage.
- ◆ You may also use the altar flowers which are delivered to the Altar Guild on Saturday, for which a donation of \$175 is requested. Of course, these also stay after the ceremony.
- ◆ Pews accessories must be cleared in advance with the parish wedding coordinator, and **nothing which marks, scratches, or permanently alters the pews is permitted!**
- ◆ Because of the hazard of guests slipping, falling, and being injured, we must insist that **no flower petals and no rice** be thrown on church property. Please alert your wedding party and guests to this rule.
- ◆ Canvas aisle runners and extra decorative accessories are obtained from the florist, if desired, **and must be removed by the florist immediately following the service.** Your florist must always check with the wedding coordinator for instructions.
- ◆ If an aisle runner is to be used, one 100 feet long is required for the church, and one 60 feet long for the Chapel. There are 22 pews on either side of the center aisle in the Church, and 14 pews on either side of the center aisle in the Chapel.

What rules govern photography?

- ◆ The policies regarding photography at weddings have been developed to preserve the sanctity of the ceremony, while allowing the photographer to record this very special day. An information sheet will be given to you on your first meeting with the wedding coordinator to give to your photographer and/or videographer.

- ◆ It must be clearly understood that **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHS** are to be taken during the ceremony. (This applies to family members and guests as well as professional photographers). Ushers should be instructed to relay this information to anyone carrying a camera into the Church.
- ◆ The photographer is to be **INSTRUCTED BY THE COUPLE** to remain in the back of the Church throughout the ceremony. If the photographer desires to take photos from other areas he or she should discuss this with the priest. Time exposures may be taken, or fast film requiring no flash may be used from the balcony.
- ◆ Meet your photographer **BEFORE YOUR WEDDING DATE AND DECIDE WHAT POSES YOU DESIRE.** Your photographer should make an earnest attempt to limit post-ceremony photographs to a thirty minute session, during which flash pictures may be taken.
- ◆ Please remind your photographer that your marriage is being solemnized in a house of God. Appropriate dress will be required.
- ◆ Video taping from a fixed point in the balcony and/or designated areas, but without artificial lighting, is permitted only after discussion with Clergy.
- ◆ It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to convey these customs and rules to the photographer, videographer and the bridal parties.

After the service...

It is important to let people know that throwing confetti, rice, flowers or birdseed is not permitted.

What are the possible times for the wedding to be held?

Weddings are normally held weekdays or Saturdays. Weddings are not held during Holy Week, Easter Week, in the last week of Advent, Christmas Eve or Day, Boxing Day (Dec 26), or New Year's Eve. Other arrangements may be made with the priest's approval.

Recommended Florists

Jacob Maarse—Pasadena
626-449-0246

Amy Smith—Pasadena
626-399-9097

Recommended Photographers/ Videographers

Cherie Steinberg Cote—Beverly Hills
310- 358-8133
www.cheriefoto.com

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Office address:
2975 Huntington Dr. Ste 200
San Marino, CA 91108

Phone: (626) 793-9167
Fax: (626) 793-3874
www.SaintEdmunds.org