

Holy Matrimony
As customarily celebrated in
St. Benedict's Episcopal Church
Lacey, WA



Oct 2017

What is Christian Marriage? Christian marriage is a lifelong union of a man and woman in heart, body, and mind. It is celebrated within the community of faith, by mutual consent, and with the intent that it be a lifelong commitment. Marriage is intended by God to be for the mutual joy of the man and woman, for help and comfort in prosperity and adversity, and when it is God's will, for the bearing and raising of children in the knowledge and love of God. (see BCP p. 423)

Who are the ministers of the Marriage? The man and woman are the ministers; they marry one another. The minister presides and pronounces the Church's blessing on the union the couple has made. The gathered congregation witnesses the vows made by the couple and proclaim their support for the couple in their new commitment to each other.

Who may be married in St. Benedict's Church? Normally only members of the congregation or their immediate family are married in the church, others may at the discretion of the vicar, and they must comply with all canonical requirements, including pre-marital counseling. Couples not living in the area must complete pre-marital counseling with their local pastor. Marriage in the Church requires that at least one of the persons to be married must be a baptized Christian. It is expected that couples who live in the local community who are not members of St. Benedict's will attend worship at least during the marriage preparation time, and consider becoming members of St. Benedict's.

How do I schedule a wedding at St. Benedict's?

You must contact the vicar, in person, by phone - 360.870.1649 or email - vicar@sbechurch.org before you set dates or times for the wedding, rehearsal, or reception. Normally the wedding must be at least 90 days from your first contact with the vicar. The canons of the Episcopal Church

require that the officiating priest or other qualified person must determine that the couple may be legally married and that at least one party is baptized. In addition the couple must be instructed about the nature of Christian marriage, its nature, meaning and purpose.

Pre-marital counseling and instruction will vary depending on the couple and their particular circumstances, and be determined by the officiating priest in consultation with the couple. Usually during the first meeting with the priest a date may be set for the wedding.

Once you have made initial contact with the priest and have scheduled a meeting, you need to complete the bride and groom information on the form at the end of this document and bring it to the first meeting. If either party has been married before, there will be additional information required.

Are there limitations on when a wedding may be scheduled? Yes. Weddings are usually not done in the season of Lent or on Sundays, except as part of regular Sunday worship. Other days must be scheduled based on our activities calendar.

The couple must sign the following Statement of Intent that they understand and agree to the Church's understanding of Christian marriage.

"We, _____ and _____, desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a life-long union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the liturgical forms authorized by this Church. We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their physical and spiritual nurture, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society. And we do

engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto."

Are there any special requirements when either party is divorced? Yes, you must provide some information about the previous marriage and the priest must obtain the permission of the Diocesan Bishop to preside at the marriage. This may also require additional pre-marital counseling. In these cases, the couple should plan to give at least three months notice.

Can a minister from another church preside? An Episcopal Priest or Bishop, other than the vicar, may preside with the vicar's permission. Clergy from other denominations cannot preside, but may assist the officiating priest.

Can a priest decline to preside at a marriage? Yes, the canons of the Episcopal Church and St. Benedict's policies allow a priest to decline to preside at a marriage.

Can the couple make up their own marriage vows? No. There are some provisions to "customize" your wedding using An Order for Marriage in the Book of Common Prayer, but you must choose one of the forms of vows contained in the Rite.

Can a civil marriage be blessed in the Church? Yes, there is a form in the Book of Common Prayer for the blessing of a civil marriage. This service must be scheduled and meet the same conditions as a marriage.

Who plans the service? The priest, in consultation with the couple, plans the service using the Book of Common Prayer. Couples should review pages 422 through 437 of the BCP before their first appointment with the priest.

Should the service include Holy Communion? Holy

Communion is not required at a wedding, but is encouraged because it symbolizes Christ's self-giving love towards all human beings.

What about music? Music is planned in consultation with St. Benedict's musician, and is normally the musician for the wedding. Recorded music or other musicians must be approved by the vicar. Musical texts must come from Holy Scripture, the Hymnal or the Prayer Book. Popular "love songs" are not appropriate for a Church wedding.

When should we get the Marriage License? The license should be applied for at a county clerk's office in the State of Washington. The marriage license must be brought to the rehearsal. The wedding will not take place without a valid license.

Can we use an outside wedding consultant? No. The Officiating Priest, Music Director, and Altar Guild Director provide these services.

What about Church decorations? The only decorations and flowers allowed are the flowers placed in vases behind the altar. Simple aisle decorations may be used, with permission of the vicar. Isle runners may not be used.

Arrangements for flowers must be made in consultation with the Altar Guild director (call the parish office for the name and number of the current director). Only those candles normally used for worship in the church are allowed for a wedding. "Unity" candles or other secular decorations and ceremonials are not allowed.

The Altar Guild prepares the church before the wedding and cleans up after. Throwing confetti, or petals is not allowed. Bubbles, rice or birdseed may be used outside. If birdseed or

rice is used, there is an additional clean-up fee of \$25.00.

What about service bulletins? Service bulletins are not required, but are useful for souvenirs and to help the guests follow the service. Examples are available and the vicar will assist in preparing bulletins, however, the couple must prepare and print the bulletins. The final proof copy must be approved by the vicar before printing. If you wish us to prepare and print the bulletin, an administrative fee may be charged.

What about photographs of the wedding? Flash photographs may not be taken during the service, nor may a photographer move around in the nave or chancel during the service. A stationary video camera in the nave may be used. Arrangements may be made for the priest and wedding participants to pose for photographs before or after the ceremony.

You should discuss what kind of photography (still and/or video) and plan for the particular scenes or settings they wish to have photographed and give the photographer specific instructions.

You should consider taking the “posed” photographs before the wedding. This allows for the wedding party to immediately be available to greet guests and attend the reception. It also places a limit on the length of the photography session. Photo sessions in the church after the service are limited to 30 minutes, as a courtesy to the waiting guests and the Altar Guild and Sexton. The photographer is expected to attend the rehearsal.

What fees are charged for a wedding?

All Fees must be delivered to the officiating priest at the rehearsal and the priest will distribute to the appropriate

people.

There is a \$250 fee for use of the church for non-members or non-contributing members (non-contributors-of-record for the previous six months). There is no fee for use of the church for contributing members; however, they are encouraged to make a donation to the parish.

Episcopal clergy are not paid for officiating, however, it is expected that a contribution will be made to their Discretionary Fund (checks made out to "Discretionary Fund") (suggested contribution is at least \$100).

The musician is paid \$100 (checks made out to the musician) for the rehearsal and wedding. If additional rehearsals with soloists for other musicians are necessary, there may be an additional cost.

Receptions in the church

Arrangements for a reception in the fellowship hall are made through the parish office. St. Benedict's reception committee caters receptions and you may contract with them for your reception. Their fee is based on what arrangements are made with them. Alcoholic beverages may not be served. St. Benedict's has a no alcohol policy for all social gatherings or receptions.

Are members of the church staff who assist with the wedding automatically invited to the reception? No, The wedding is a public service of worship; however, the reception is considered a private party, by invitation only. If you wish to invite the priest, musician, servers, or others, you should send them an invitation.

What about a rehearsal? Wedding rehearsal is normally the day before the wedding. All participants, musician, readers, ushers, photographer, and all the wedding party, are expected

to attend the rehearsal. The rehearsal should be scheduled prior to any rehearsal dinner or party.

On the day of the Wedding. The bridegroom and best man should arrive at least 25 minutes before the service start. There are facilities for the bride and her attendants to dress and they should take the preparation time into account when determining arrival time at the church. Usually one hour before the service start is sufficient time.

Scripture Reading selections

Four lessons may be used (including a Psalm). At least a reading of the Gospel must be used.

Old Testament

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)

Between the Readings, a Psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said. Appropriate Psalms are 67, 127, and 128.

New Testament

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, 21-33 (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)

Gospel

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)

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

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

What about other questions? Ask the vicar.

A list of reminders

Date and time of Wedding: _____

Date and time of Rehearsal: _____

Meetings with the Priest: 1st _____

2nd _____

3rd _____

Consultation with Altar Guild: _____

Meeting with the Musician: _____

Choose readings for the service:

Old Testament: _____

Psalm: _____

New Testament Epistle: _____

New Testament Gospel: _____

Readers for lessons (except the Gospel)

Marriage License obtained: _____

Service bulletin prepared: _____

Notes: _____

Contacts:
St. Benedict's Episcopal Church
910 Bowker St. SE
Lacey, WA 98503
360.456.2240
sbechurch@gmail.com

PO Box 3811
Lacey, WA 98509

The Rev. Eldwin M. Lovelady, Vicar
Mr. Jason Asperin, Musician
Mr. Larry Frodsham, Office manager
For Altar Guild and Reception committee, contact the office.

**St. Benedict's Episcopal Church
Marriage Information Form**

Groom's full name:

(First, Middle, Last)

Date of Birth: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Is this your first marriage? _____

Are you Baptized? _____ In what church? _____

Are you Confirmed? _____

In what church? _____

Parents:

Father's Name _____

City and State of Residence:

Mother's Name _____

City and State of Residence:

Bride's full name:

(First, Middle, Last)

Date of Birth: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____

Is this your first marriage? _____

Are you Baptized? _____ In what church? _____

Are you Confirmed? _____

In what church? _____

Parents:

Father's Name _____

City and State of Residence:

Mother's Name _____

City and State of Residence:

Statement of Intent

"We, _____ and _____,

desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a life-long union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the liturgical forms authorized by this Church. We believe it is for the purpose of mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their physical and spiritual nurture, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society. And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto."

Groom signature

Bride signature

Date