

St. John's Episcopal Church
Austin, Texas

WEDDING CUSTOMARY

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St. John's Episcopal Church
11201 Parkfield Drive
Austin, Texas

Dear Friends,

We welcome all couples, church members and non-church members, to be married at St. John's Episcopal Church.

This Wedding Customary is designed to be helpful in planning your wedding and in understanding our Episcopal approach to matrimony as a sacrament. The following procedures are the customs of St. John's Episcopal Church and I hope they will help make your wedding plans go smoothly and joyfully.

All guidelines, fees, and restrictions apply to all weddings, although there are some distinctions if the wedding couple or their parents are members of St. John's.

Each couple preparing for marriage will be in the prayers of St. John's Parish. I look forward to visiting with you to discuss your wedding plans.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew T. Seddon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M" and "S".

The Rev. Matthew T. Seddon †
Rector

SETTING THE DATE

A couple wishing to be married at St. John's Episcopal Church must make an appointment with a member of the clergy before a date can be placed on the parish calendar. At this meeting the officiating priest will answer any questions, set out the preparation process and clarify the teaching of the Church regarding Christian marriage.

If either the bride or the groom is divorced, specific requirements of the Church must be met before an Episcopal priest may perform the marriage rite. Weddings may be scheduled at any time of the year; however, weddings during Lent are not permitted, and weddings occurring in the three weeks prior to Christmas are strongly discouraged.

The bride and groom must notify the St. John's clergy of their intention to marry at least sixty to ninety days in advance of their intended wedding date to make certain the calendar is clear. The wedding date and hour cannot be considered confirmed until it is on the priest's schedule and on the Parish Calendar. Usually, the Wedding Rehearsal is held the Friday evening prior to the wedding, no later than 6:30 p.m. Sunday weddings are normally not scheduled, but if extenuating circumstances dictate, they cannot be scheduled before 5:00 p.m.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

A four-week series of premarital counseling with a clergy person is required for all persons wishing to be married at St. John's. These counseling sessions are on a fee basis for all couples. It may be deemed advisable to refer the couple to an independent marriage counselor, in which case any costs thereof are the responsibility of the couple. During this time of premarital counseling, it is expected that the couple be attending St. John's Sunday services.

WAITING PERIODS BEFORE A WEDDING CEREMONY IS PERFORMED

First Time Marriages: Episcopal Canon Law requires a minimum of 30 days notice before a wedding can be solemnized. There is a two-month interval before a wedding may be performed by the clergy at St. John's Church or elsewhere.

Second Marriages: The Canons of the Diocese of Texas require that a waiting period of one year from the date of the final divorce decree for a second marriage. If a lengthy separation (in excess of two years) has occurred, a six-month waiting period may be granted. The clergy member must be provided with the divorce decrees and a dispensation letter has to be obtained from the Episcopal bishop before a second marriage can be performed. It takes a minimum of 30 days to receive this dispensation. Additionally, if any children of the divorced spouse(s) are minors, a statement of the court-ordered financial arrangements for their support and a statement that all such payments are current must be provided. All other requirements also apply.

Three Marriages: In the event of a third marriage by either party, the parties to the proposed marriage must consult with a licensed marriage therapist as to their readiness for marriage. The written opinion of the therapist must be conveyed to the petitioning priest and included with the petition to the Bishop. A special dispensation letter has to be obtained from the Episcopal bishop before a marriage is performed. If such a dispensation is obtained, there must have been a minimum of a five year waiting period between the date of the last divorce decree and the date of the proposed new marriage. All other requirements also apply.

MARRIAGE LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

State law requires that each couple obtain a marriage license from the State of Texas in the county in which they currently reside. The license can be obtained from the Travis County Courthouse (Phone 512/854-9188). A priest of this Church cannot perform a marriage without this license, which should be given to him or her at the wedding rehearsal. Once the license is issued, the wedding service cannot take place within the first seventy-two hours, but must be performed within thirty days.

REQUIREMENT OF BAPTISM

The Sacrament of Baptism is the Foundation of the Church community. It is a requirement that at least one of the couple be a baptized Christian. Those who have not been baptized and who wish to be baptized should make arrangements either at St. John's or another Church of their choice to be baptized prior to the wedding date.

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

Although it is not mandatory that either the bride or groom be regular members of St. John's in order to be married in the parish, it is recommended that non-member couples attend church services prior to the wedding in order to feel comfortable with our Episcopal Church and its services.

Active, baptized members of St. John's Parish who wish to be married at St. John's have priority in terms of wedding schedules, and there are separate fee schedules for those who are regular members.

VISITING PRIESTS/MINISTERS

Priest or ministers from outside this parish may officiate or assist with the consent and invitation of the Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church. Usually, it is the responsibility of the visiting priest to contact the Rector and obtain his or her consent.

FORM OF WEDDING SERVICE

The form of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony, found on page 423 of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, is the only form permitted for use at St. John's Episcopal Church. Holy Communion for Bride and Groom, for the wedding party, or for the whole congregation, is an option. If you are planning on having Holy Communion, please discuss this with the Priest.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH WEDDING DIRECTOR

Many couples bring in their own Wedding Coordinator to assist them with the plans and details of the wedding. If you choose to bring in a Wedding Coordinator or consultant, please insure that the coordinator/consultant confirms any plans that involve the church with the St. John's Wedding Director. All advice to the bridal couple about flowers, photography, suitable music for the ceremony and parish personnel and wedding fees must be confirmed with the Church Wedding Director well in advance of the wedding date.

WEDDING MUSIC

The music you select for your wedding must reflect a Christian understanding of marriage as stated in the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage and A Guide to the Practice of Church Music. (See Appendix B)

The St. John's organist and/or the priest can guide you in this matter. You are requested to contact our Organist and arrange an appointment to select appropriate music. Additional instrumentalists may be used with prior approval of the organist. If you obtain approval to use an organist other than the regular St. John's Organist, the music must be approved in advance and the guest organist must display their competence with the organ to the St. John's organist. (See Resources Section)

WEDDING FLOWERS

The Episcopal Church considers weddings to be one of the most solemn and sacred rites of the Church. The clergy of St. John's Church welcome flowers at the wedding. At the same time flowers and other decorations must be kept in their proper liturgical role. They are meant to enhance a worship experience and are not to be a statement of social and financial status. We want flowers that will help make your wedding ceremony a beautiful experience for you.

Silk or artificial flowers are never used inside the altar railing.

Unless special arrangements are made, all flowers at the altar are your gift to the church. Flowers from a Saturday wedding must remain at the altar for Sunday worship services. Thus, the flowers used must be hardy enough to remain fresh. Following the Sunday

services, the flower ministers will take the flowers to members of the congregation who are ill or living in nursing homes here in north Austin.

The Altar will usually be vested in white hangings for a wedding ceremony unless the wedding is scheduled during the seasons of Advent or Lent. Therefore, wedding flowers in the Episcopal Church are traditionally white, but this does not preclude color arrangements. Discuss this with the Rector and Church Wedding Director. It is preferable to use the St. John's florist (see Resources); however, if you obtain approval to use another florist, the outside florist should contact the St. John's florist for guidelines as to size and shape of the containers. We want your wedding to be as beautiful as possible, so please be candid with us concerning your financial situation. We may be able to help you save on uncritical items. Only the plastic clips/holder provided by the Altar Guild or by a florist may be used to secure bows or decorations on pews. Absolutely no nails, tacks, or tape may be used for this purpose. **You are expected to take any decorations or arrangements with you when you clean up after the wedding (with the exception of the Altar Flowers). If flower pedals are dropped in the aisle or floor of the church, they will have to be picked up after the wedding ceremony and before the next worship service. No rice or confetti is permitted, either in or outside the church.**

UNITY CANDLES

A Unity Candle ceremony, if desired, may be done after the Nuptial Blessing by the priest, or at the end of the wedding ceremony at a place in the sanctuary indicated by the officiating priest.

WEDDING PHOTOS AND VIDEOGRAPHY

All weddings are services of worship and must be treated with reverence. The guidelines for photos and video taping are as follows:

1. Wedding party photographs can be taken prior to the service and/or following the service. They must be completed thirty minutes before the service is to begin. No more than thirty minutes should be scheduled for photographs following the service.
2. Photo equipment must not be staged inside the altar rail or around the altar area.
3. Photo/Video equipment may be used from an approved, stationary location with prior approval of the presiding clergy. The photographer/videographer may stand behind the last pew of the center section, or on the floor to the right of the altar area to take all photographs during the processional and the recessional. A flash may be used for these photos, but **NO FLASH** is permitted between the processional and recessional (during the actual ceremony).
4. Photographs – without Flash - may be taken of the wedding couple during the exchange of vows, exchange of rings, and receiving Holy Communion, but only from a stationary, approved place.

5. No furniture in the church may be moved.
6. The photographer must contact the Church Wedding Director and work out a plan for photography. The photographer is encouraged to visit the church prior to the rehearsal by calling and making an appointment with the Church Wedding Director.
7. You must insure that all family and friends (your guests) understand that cameras with flash are not to be used during the service, and that moving about the church to take pictures is not permitted. A wedding is an important sacrament of the Church and flash bulbs detract from the solemnity and spirit of the service.

DRESSING ROOMS

Space in the Choir/Vesting room in the main church or in the Godly Play room in the Parish Hall is available to the bride and her attendants for **2 hours** before the ceremony.

The groom and his attendants may dress in an office or in the church sacristy.

Remove your things from the dressing room(s) before the ceremony. Please **do not leave any valuables** in any of the dressing rooms during the ceremony. This is a public building, and we cannot be responsible for the loss of any valuables. (Most wedding parties find it helpful to have someone not in the immediate wedding party to take care of clothes and other incidentals.) It is also your responsibility to remove all items which are brought in or generated by your Wedding party guests.

There **may be no alcohol served or consumed on church premises, other than for the reception, if applicable**. Food, unless part of a pre-approved Reception, is not permitted. If timing dictates nourishment for the wedding party, make arrangements to have lunch/snack before coming to the church. If for some reason you must have food for your wedding party in the choir or chapel area there is a required \$75.00 fee for cleaning and pest control.

NOTE: Only those areas designated for use of the Wedding Party may be used. No furniture may be moved without prior approval by the Church Wedding Director or Rector.

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

The rehearsal is a preparation for the marriage service and is normally held the day before the ceremony at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise scheduled. The officiating priest and Church Wedding Director will be in charge of the rehearsal. All members of the wedding party are expected to attend and to be on time. Please be sure the attendants understand the importance of arriving on time.

ALL participants in the wedding should be at the rehearsal. A wedding is confusing enough without having members of the immediate party who don't know their part.

Reminder: Bring your marriage license to the rehearsal.

WEDDING RECEPTION

St. John's is presently equipped for wedding receptions for no more than 100 people. The kitchen facilities and space is limited. If you would like to have a reception in the St. John's Parish Hall you should reserve the space when you book the church so that the space is designated on the church calendar. In addition, prior to the wedding (preferably two weeks or more) you will need to give the Church Wedding Director information on the scheduled time of deliveries for food, flowers and other items. (The Church is not left open and someone will need to be here to allow services entry). You are responsible for your catering and other deliveries.

NOTE: No alcoholic beverages may be served or consumed on church property other than wine or champagne served during the reception. No rice, confetti, birdseed, flower petals, or other materials may be thrown in the church or church grounds in the reception areas.

You are responsible for the setup, decoration, and clean up of the reception area. A limited number of tables are available for use. **It is your responsibility to clean up and remove all rental equipment after your wedding and/or reception.** If your wedding is on a Saturday evening, any decorations, rental equipment, food, and trash must be removed that night.

NOTE: No church items can be removed from the walls without specific approval of the Church Wedding Director. St. John's is a house of worship with many church related activities planned. Posters or notices of these activities are important to the parishioners and must not be moved or removed. It is your responsibility to see that your friends and family, who are helping with the wedding festivities understand they are not to disrupt church activities; i.e., moving items from tables or counters except those approved by the Church Wedding Director.

APPENDICES

Appendix A -- APPLICABLE FEES

Note: All checks covering fees/donations as listed should be made out as directed and delivered to the church office no later than two weeks before the rehearsal date. Please use the following address if mailing:

St. John's Episcopal Church
11201 Parkfield Drive
Austin, TX 78758-4264
Attn: Parish Administrator

FEES

	<u>Non Member</u>	<u>Regular Member</u>
Premarital Counseling (Check to St. John's-Rector's Expense Account)	\$200	\$100
Honorarium for the Rector (Check to St. John's-Rector's Expense Account)	\$200-300	\$150-200
Use of the Sanctuary (Check to St. John's)	\$250	
Use of Parish Hall (Check to St. John's)	\$350	\$250
The Church Wedding Director (Check to Director)	\$150*	\$100*
The St. John's Organist, If vocal or instrumental rehearsals are required an additional fee of \$25 per rehearsal is charged	\$125	\$100

* If a Reception is to be held in the Parish Hall, the Church Wedding Director receives an additional \$50.

Totals:	\$1,275 +	\$700
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Appendix B -- MUSICAL SELECTIONS APPROPRIATE FOR WEDDINGS

Hymns - for Processionals, Sequence, and/or Recessional - From *THE 1982 HYMNAL*

- | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. | Praise my soul the King of Heaven | Hymnal 410 |
| 2. | Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee | Hymnal 376 |
| 3. | All Creatures of Our God and King
Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones | Hymnal 400 or
Hymnal 618 |
| 4. | Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart | Hymnal 556 |
| 5. | Love Divine, All Loves Excelling | Hymnal 657 |
| 6. | Holy, Holy, Holy | Hymnal 362 |
| 7. | God of Grace and God of Glory | Hymnal 594 |
| 8. | When Morning Guilds the Skies | Hymnal 427 |

Hymns of Marriage - from *THE 1982 HYMNAL*

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. | O God of Love | Hymnal 350 |
| 2. | May the Grace of Christ our Savior | Hymnal 351 |
| 3. | O God to Those Who Here Profess | Hymnal 352 |
| 4. | Your Love O God has Called Us Here | Hymnal 353 |

Please consult the clergy person or the church Organist for vocal solo selections and other instrumental selections appropriate for weddings. Any vocal or additional instruments must be approved by the Organist. Please inform the Church Wedding Director of vocalists or additional instruments.

Use of recorded music is not permitted except in limited cases (discussed with and approved in advance by the Rector) where such music supports a solo singer.

Appendix C -- MANDATORY STATEMENT OF CONCURRENCE

We have read and understand the guidelines as presented in this document for wedding services held at St. John's Episcopal Church, Austin, Texas.

We agree to abide within the guidelines as we plan our wedding, and to instruct those who are assisting us in the planning of our wedding to follow the guidelines, as well.

Any questions or conflicts with the guidelines that we may have we will discuss with the officiating priest or his/her designee.

Signature of Bride to Be

Date

Signature of Groom to Be

Date

Please return this page to St. John's Episcopal Church, Attn: Wedding Coordinator, 11201 Parkfield Drive, Austin, TX 78758-4264, no later than **two (2) weeks before the date of your wedding**. Also include a copy for the clergy person who will preside.

Appendix D – WEDDING CHECK LIST AND PLAN

Bride Phone: Cell:

Previously married? # Previous Marriages

Groom Phone: Cell:

Previously married? # Previous Marriages

Bridal Consultant/Coordinator : Phone: Cell:

Date and Time of Wedding:

Location:

Bride and groom dress at church? Y / N

Date and Time of Rehearsal:

Location:

Guest Priest/Pastor: Phone:

Holy Communion/Eucharist? Y / N

Estimated number of guests: # in Immediate families:

Thurifer:

Crucifer:

Torchbearers/Acolytes:

Lay Servers:

Ushers:

Oblation Bearers:

Reader:

Bride's Attendants:

Groom's Attendants:

Color Scheme:

Flowers:

Florist Name:

Phone:

Flowers to be delivered:

Pew/Communion Rail/Other Decorations:

Organist: St. John's Organist Y / N

Guest Organist's Name:

Phone:

Photographer/Videographer:

Phone:

Rental Company:

Phone:

Reception Location:

Reception Time if at St. John's:

Names and Phone numbers of those who will clean up after the reception:

Premises will be vacated by:

Wedding Plan

For (Bride/Groom):

Date:

Opening Hymn/Music:

Entrance Rite/Processional Form:

Hymn/Psalm/Anthem after Declaration of Consent (optional):

First Reading:

Reader:

Choices: Genesis 1:26-28 (Male and female He created them)

Genesis 2:4-9 (A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)

Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8: 6-7 (Many water cannot quench love)

Tobit 8:5b-8 New English Bible (That she and I may grow old together)

Psalm/Hymn/Anthem:

Appropriate Psalms are 67, 127 and 128.

Second Reading:

Reader:

Choices: 1 Corinthians 12:1-13 (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)

Psalm/Hymn/Anthem:

Appropriate Psalms are 67, 127 and 128.

Gospel:

Gospeller:

Choices: 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)

Sermon: Y / N

Exchange of Rings? Y / N

If No Holy Eucharist:

Prayers on BCP 429, which?

Who reads?

Blessing Prayer: BCP 430 OR BCP 431

Peace: Y / N Details:

Closing Hymn:

If Holy Eucharist – Continue Next Page.....

If Holy Eucharist:

Omit Lord's Prayer on BCP 428
Prayers on BCP 429 Who reads?
Blessing Prayer: BCP 430 OR BCP 431
Peace (Y)

Offertory Hymn:

Eucharistic Prayer: A or B
Sanctus:
Lord's Prayer:

Communion Hymn(s)?:

Post-communion Prayer is BCP 432
No blessing (done during wedding)
Closing Hymn:

Appendix E -- CONTACT RESOURCES

St. John's Church Office		512-836-3974
		512-836-3936 fax
	Email	austinstjohns@aol.com
	Website	austinstjohns.org
Rector: Rev. Matthew T. Seddon		512-836-3974
	Email	RevMatt@austinstjohns.org
Church Wedding Coordinators		
Church Organist, Philip Riley		512-837-3360
Church Florist <u>Browns's Floral</u>		<u>(512) 538-0656</u>

Appendix F -- BIBLE READING SELECTIONS

As listed on Page 426 of the *Book of Common Prayer*

Old Testament

Genesis 1:26-28 (Male and female He created them)
 Genesis 2:4-9 (A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)
 Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8: 6-7 (Many water cannot quench love)
 Tobit 8:5b-8 New English Bible (That she and I may grow old together)

New Testament

1 Corinthians 12:1-13 (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)

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

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)

Appendix G – Required Canonical Statement

Declaration of Intention

**Following the Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the
United States of America**

Canon I.18.3(d-g)

We, _____ and _____, desiring to receive the blessing of Holy
Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold
marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set
forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

We believe that the union of husband and wife, 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 procreation of
children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

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.

Signed: _____ Name:

_____ Name:

Date: _____

Witnessed: _____

The Rev. Dr. Matthew T. Seddon, Rector

Iglesia Episcopal San Juan

Declaración de Intención

Segun los Cánones de la Iglesia Episcopal Protestante en los Estados

Canon I.18.3(d-g)

Nosotros, _____ y _____, deseosos de recibir la bendición del Sagrado Matrimonio en la Iglesia, declaramos solemnemente que consideramos que el matrimonio es una unión de por vida de esposo y esposa tal según se dispone en el Libro de Oración Común.

Creemos que la unión de esposo y esposa, en corazón, órgano y mente es el objetivo de Dios para la alegría mutua, para ayuda y consuelo recíprocos en prosperidad y adversidad, y cuando es la voluntad de Dios, para la procreación de hijos y su crianza en el conocimiento y amor al Señor.

También nos comprometemos, en la medida que nos sea posible, a hacer todo cuanto podamos para establecer esta relación, buscando la ayuda de Dios para ello.

Firmada: _____ Nombre:

_____ Nombre:

Fecha: _____

Testigo: _____

The Rev. Dr. Matthew T. Seddon, Párroco