



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

Procedures Regarding Holy Matrimony

December 2017



Dear Friends,

We welcome you to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. It is with particular joy that we welcome those who feel called to be married at St. Andrew's. This customary is designed to answer questions and to articulate our policies and procedures.

It is our desire that your planning and preparation be filled with joy. We wish to make your celebration a confirmation and strengthening of your love and to prepare you for your life together.

It is our expectation that one, if not both, members of a couple will:

- Be active in Sunday worship through regular attendance – more Sundays than not is a good beginning.
- Involved in ongoing Christian Formation through small groups, classes or other fellowship opportunities.
- Supportive of the Mission and Ministries of St. Andrew's by making an annual pledge of financial support.

We look forward to working and serving you and serving with you.

Please know that you will be held the prayers of St. Andrew's parish at the time of your wedding.

May God's richest blessings be upon you now and always.

The Reverend James M. L. Grace
Rector

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Beginning the Process	4
Parish Membership	5
Additional Arrangement Considerations.....	5
Service Coordinator.....	5
Service Bulletin	6
Service Music	6
Liturgical Ministers.....	6
Service Flowers	6
Service Photos.....	7
Service Video	8
Service Rehearsal	8
Ushers.....	8
Dressing Prior to the Service.....	9
Rehearsal Dinner and Reception	9
Additional Information.....	10
Appendix A – Union Blessing Service Music	11
Appendix B – Fee Schedule.....	12
Appendix C – Contact Information.....	13

Introduction

Any celebration of marriage taking place at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church must conform to the rules, requirements, and practice of the Episcopal Church. Holy Matrimony is celebrated according to the provisions of the Book of Common Prayer and canon law of the Episcopal Church. Since Holy Matrimony is a part of the church's worship, pastoral guidelines must be followed. In Holy Matrimony, the couple asks the church to witness their vows and to bless their relationship in the name of God. The liturgy may include a celebration of the Holy Eucharist by the gathered congregation. Obviously, to request a marriage in the church implies a commitment to Christian marriage and an understanding that the liturgy will be for the whole church and not a personal ceremony of and for the couple alone. Wedding services will only be held for members of St. Andrew's.

In each parish, the Rector is in charge of the local church and is responsible for observing the canons of the Episcopal Church. Thus, the Rector is in charge of all weddings. When couples wish to include clergy from other churches, it is the Rector who extends the invitation to participate. When guest clergy come from traditions other than the Episcopal Church, the Rector obtains written permission from the Bishop of Texas.

Beginning the Process

Those desiring to join in marriage must meet with one of the clergy of St. Andrew's 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. We recommend beginning this process 120 days prior to the anticipated service date.

If either bride or groom has been married to a former spouse who is still living, the Rector must be consulted at least 6 months in advance. If he or she agrees to officiate, the Rector will petition the Bishop of Texas for permission to remarry. The Rector will make this petition only after consultation with the bride and groom, as specified in prior paragraph. As this petitioning process can take as long as 60 days, please give the Bishop time to study the request and to render his or her judgment. Remember to consider this potential delay in your scheduling.

Weddings may be scheduled at any time of the year except during Lent, which is between Ash Wednesday and Easter. Only one joining ceremony may be scheduled at St. Andrew's on any one day. Evening weddings may begin no later than 6:00 p.m.

The couple must meet with one of St. Andrew's clergy to discuss their wedding at least ninety days in advance of their intended ceremony date. The date cannot be considered confirmed until it is on the priest's schedule and the church master calendar.

Parish Membership

In order to have your union blessed at St. Andrew's one of the following conditions must be met.

1. One member of the couple must be a baptized Christian who is an active, attending, and pledging member of St. Andrew's and is in on-going Christian formation.
2. One member of the couple grew up attending St. Andrew's and is active in another church outside of Houston. If the couple lives in Houston, they must be members of St. Andrew's.
3. Couples living outside of Houston will be considered upon request from the Rector of their parish.

Under certain circumstances, some exceptions to this policy may be made. Such exceptions will be considered after discussed with the Rector.

Additional Arrangement Considerations

Notify the church of your intention to marry at least 120 days before the proposed date of marriage. You must arrange the date and time of the wedding with the Rector, who then officially enters the date on the parish calendar. Only then should you make any public announcement of the wedding date.

Arrange with the Rector a time for instruction in the "nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony". This instruction usually requires at least three sessions.

Arrange with the Harris County Clerk for the marriage license well in advance of the date of the ceremony.

Give the marriage license to the Rector at the rehearsal. The Rector will complete the license and return it to the office of the County Clerk, who will return the original license to the married couple.

Service Coordinator

St. Andrew's Altar Guild Director also acts as the Service Coordinator to assist the couple with the plans and details of their wedding from the day the service is put on the church calendar to the day of the event. She will advise the couple about altar flowers, photography allowed (during, before, and after the service), and parish personnel fees. The Coordinator works closely with the couple and officiating priest and will be present at both the rehearsal and wedding. It is strongly recommended that you contact and meet with the coordinator as soon as your date is confirmed, but no later than six weeks prior to the service.

Service Bulletin

The couple may provide the service bulletin or coordinate with the Parish Administrator for preparing bulletins. See Appendixes for contact info and pricing.

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage from the Book of Common Prayer is the liturgy used for weddings in the Episcopal Church. A copy of this liturgy can be found on page 423 of the BCP or at www.bcponline.org.

Your service bulletin must be reviewed and approved by the priest who will officiate or preside at the service prior to the printing of the bulletins. Please plan to coordinate this with the Parish Administrator at least one month prior to the service.

Service Music

The music you select for your wedding must reflect a Christian understanding and be appropriate for a worship service. The Organist & Choirmaster, John Kirk, will help guide you in this matter. Please contact John for a consultation as soon as they date has been set.

When the organ is to be used in a union blessing service, there is a fee as outlined in Appendix B.

Other instrumentalists may be used with prior approval.

Liturgical Ministers

The church can provide liturgical ministers such as acolytes or lay readers, if desired. Let the Coordinator know if you need assistance in this area.

Service Flowers

Flowers and other decorations must be kept in their appropriate liturgical place.

We want the flowers to help make the wedding service a beautiful experience for you and to compliment the worship space appropriately.

The sanctuary will be vested in white hangings, but flowers can be different colors if desired, though must be suitable for a church service. Flowers on the altar are your gift to the church, and they remain on the altar for Sunday services, if the union blessing service occurs on a Saturday.

Floral arrangements are ordinarily limited to two or four on the levels of the Altar and reredos (the wood panel behind the Altar). These arrangements should be no wider than 24 inches, no deeper than 8 inches, and may not include bows. The Altar Guild will place floral arrangements.

Remind your florist that flower arrangements should be delivered between 9AM and 10AM on the day of the wedding, or 1-1/2 hours before the wedding begins, or at a time pre-arranged with the Altar Guild Wedding Director or Altar Guild member assisting with the wedding.

The church does not allow any artificial flowers or greenery and any type of fasteners such as tacks, nails, florist tape, etc.

Please refrain from tossing any materials at the end of the service, such as rice, confetti, flower petals, bubbles, birdseed, and the like. If you feel strongly that the custom of wishing the couple well in this manner is critical, discuss possible options with the Coordinator.

Be sure that you discuss your floral plans with the Coordinator before finalizing your arrangements.

If pew bows/flowers are used, they must be removed within thirty minutes after the end of the service.

Florists familiar with the requirements of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church include:

- Darlene's Flower & Gift Shop (713-680-2350) - Parish Florist
- Floral Events (713-683-7900)
- Heights Floral Shop (713-862-8811)

Other florists may be used and are responsible for abiding by the guidelines of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Service Photos

A wedding is a liturgical service and must be treated with due reverence. Our guidelines regarding photography are as follows:

1. 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 will be allowed for photographs following the service.
2. Photographs may not be posed inside the altar rail.
3. During the procession, recession, and service the photographer must stand behind the last pew of the center section to take all photographs. Flash photography may be used during the procession and recession. No flash photography is permitted during the wedding service.

4. Silent equipment may be used in one location (either time-exposure and/or videotape) with the approval of the Officiant and the Coordinator.
5. No furniture in the church may be moved.
6. If the photographer has any questions, they should contact the Coordinator.

Service Video

Again, a wedding is a liturgical service and must be treated with due reverence. The guidelines at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church are as follows:

1. Silent equipment may be used in **ONE** location, which has been approved by the Officiant. Permission for any additional video equipment must be approved by the Officiant prior to the day of the service.
2. All equipment must be set up thirty minutes before the service is to begin.
3. No lights or headsets may be used.
4. No furniture in the church may be moved.
5. If the videographer has any questions, he or she is to contact the Officiant or Coordinator.
6. If the videographer has not worked at St. Andrew's before, he or she must talk to the Coordinator prior to the day of the wedding to discuss these guidelines.

Service Rehearsal

The rehearsal is a preparation for the wedding service and is normally held the day before the service itself. One of St. Andrew's parish priests will be in charge of the rehearsal. The priest may ask the couple to arrange a walkthrough prior to the rehearsal. Presenters and all others that are part of the service are asked to attend the rehearsal.

Generally, rehearsals begin between 5:00 and 6:00 PM to allow time to complete the rehearsal, if there is to be a dinner afterward.

Ushers

Ushers are a critical part of the service as often your guests are visitors to the church. Plan to have one usher per 50 guests. The suggestions below have been provided to help your ushers understand their role:

- Arrive early, at least an hour before the time of the wedding.
- St. Andrew's has two Sanctuary entrances, one at the side, and one at the back. For weddings, we recommend having guests come in the Narthex entrance facing Heights Boulevard. In inclement weather,

- Take your place at the entrance (Narthex) of the church at least thirty minutes prior to the start of the service.
- Make your first word a word of welcome. Be prepared to give directions to the restrooms as needed.
- Hand each person a service leaflet. If you happen to see a guest with a camera, please remind the owner that photographs are not allowed during the ceremony.
- Seat the mothers just before the entrance of the wedding party. The groom's mother is seated first and should be on your right arm and the bride's mother on your left arm when she is seated.
- Stand at the back of the church during the wedding. Watch for anyone who may be having difficulty that requires your assistance. Take care of emergencies with grace. Guests that arrive after the start of the service should be seated through the side doors on either side, and not in the middle aisle.
- As the wedding party processes into the Narthex, come down the side aisle and wait by the front pew until the wedding party reaches the narthex, then escort the mothers out - the bride's mother first and then the groom's mother.

Dressing Prior to the Service

Two dressing areas are available on the premises if you prefer to dress at the church. One location is at St. Andrew's House and one upstairs in the main church building.

These spaces can be available two hours before the service. Service participants should plan to arrive at least 90 minutes prior to the ceremony.

Please remember to coordinate removal of your belongings from these spaces in a timely manner after the service, as the building will be prepared for upcoming services and locked after the ceremony.

Rehearsal Dinner and Reception

If you are interested in having your rehearsal dinner or reception at St. Andrew's, please contact our Parish Administrator, Trish Mehrkam, as early as possible.

The Parish Administrator can advise you about rental fees and availability of facilities.

Additional Information

- We ask that all pagers and cell phones be turned to “silent” mode or turned off, and we ask that all guests refrain from any kind of photography during the service. Ushers should remind guests of this policy.
- We ask that all participants and guests wait until after the service to consume any alcoholic beverages they may have brought with them for celebration.
- Parking is always free to visitors and members of St. Andrew’s. The campus parking lot is located directly behind the church at 19th Street and Yale Street. Approximately 60 parking spaces are available. Parking is also available on Heights Blvd. and on 18th Street. We do not recommend parking in nearby business lots.
- St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church will comfortably hold 200 guests.
- Due to city fire ordinances, lighted candles other than those used in the course of normal worship are not allowed.

Appendix A – Union Blessing Service Music

Music Title, Composer

1. Trumpet Voluntary in D, Jeremiah Clarke
2. Trumpet Tune in D, Henry Purcell
3. *Rondeau* from Premiere Suite, Jean Mouret
4. March, Henry Purcell
5. Hornpipe from Water Music, G. F. Handel
6. *Allegro vivace*, Suite in D, 1st Movt., G. F. Handel
7. *Allegro vivace*, Suite in D, 2nd Movt., G. F. Handel
8. March I, Suite in D, G. F. Handel
9. March II, Suite in D, G. F. Handel
10. *Maestoso* from Heroic Music, Georg Telemann
11. *Con bravura* from Heroic Music, Georg Telemann
12. Trumpet March, J. B. Lully
13. Trumpet Aria, Henry Purcell
14. Trumpet Voluntary, John Stanley
15. Sinfonia, Henry Purcell
16. March, J. S. Bach
17. *Finale* from Royal Fireworks Suite, G. F. Handel
18. Psalm 19, B. Marcello
19. *La Marche*, G. F. Handel
20. Prelude to *Te Deum*, M. Charpentier
21. *Rigaudon*, André Campré
22. The Emperor's Fanfare, Antonio Soler
23. Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring, J. S. Bach
24. Crown Imperial March, William Walton

ORGAN SELECTIONS:

1. *Toccata* from Fifth Organ Symphony, Charles Widor
2. Prelude in Classic Style, Gordon Young
3. Prelude No. 1 in C Major, J. S. Bach
4. *Berceuse*, Louis Vierne
5. Now Thank We All Our God, S. Karg-Elert
6. Sheep May Safely Graze, J. S. Bach
7. *Allegro* from Organ Concerto No. 8, G. F. Handel
8. *Sinfonia*, G. F. Handel

Hymns – from the 1982 Hymnal

1. Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee 376
2. All Creatures of Our God and King 400
3. Love Divine, All Loves 657
4. Holy, Holy, Holy 362
5. When in Our Music 420
6. Praise My Soul the King 410

Appendix B – Fee Schedule

- Members of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church pay no fee to use the church for the wedding ceremony.
- The Organist fee is \$300.00 for the wedding service.
- The Altar Guild/Service Coordinator charge is \$200.00.
- The Rector charges no fee. A gift may be given to the Rector’s Discretionary Account. Such a gift is generally \$300.00 or more, but is not required.
- Service bulletins are \$1.00 each if done at St. Andrew’s.
- The church altar flowers can be used in lieu of ordering wedding flowers for a fee of \$100.00.

Fees should be paid by check at the service rehearsal. Please write separate checks for each item above with the “for” line designated to appropriate fee. Thank you.

Appendix C – Contact Information

Rector

The Rev. James M. L. Grace (Jimmy)

Office 713- 861-5596

Email jgrace@saecheights.org

Service Coordinator (Altar Guild)

Stephen McCormick

Sem1971tx@prodigy.net

Parish Administrator

Trish Mehrkam

Office 713- 861-5596

Email trish.mehrkam@saecheights.org

Organist & Choirmaster

John Kirk

Office 713-861-5596

Cell 281-904-6055

Email jkirk@saecheights.org



THE REV. JAMES M. L. GRACE, RECTOR
ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL
1819 HEIGHTS BLVD.
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77008
713-861-5596
FAX: 713-864-6218
SAECHEIGHTS.ORG