

A Parish Member's Guide to Weddings at the Parish of the Epiphany



**The Parish of the Epiphany • 70 Church Street
Winchester, MA 01890
(781) 729-1922**

Welcome

The Parish of the Epiphany is available for wedding services for members of the church and their families, as well as those from outside the parish who request the use of the space provided the date and time requested are available and the Rector has approved the request.

Please read through the information below and if you would like to begin the planning process for your wedding please contact the Parish Office at 781-729-1922, and arrange for an appointment with the clergy.

In addition to the wedding ceremony, Epiphany is also pleased to rent our hall space, Hadley Hall, for wedding receptions or other functions associated with your wedding. For more information please contact the Parish Office.

Planning your wedding at The Parish of the Epiphany

Notify The Rector First

All arrangements for your wedding at The Parish of the Epiphany begin with notifying the Rector or officiating minister. It is important for you not to make any further wedding plans until you have talked with him/her about your wedding. It is suggested you schedule an appointment with the officiating minister, to meet one another, to discuss your plans, to discuss and confirm a possible date for your wedding and to ascertain that a projected marriage is in compliance with the Laws of the State and the Canons of the Church and is not contrary to the obvious dictates of common sense. A few simple questions during the course of the first meeting are normally sufficient to ascertain that everything will be in order as far as the Church's regulations and those of the State are concerned.

Normally there are no difficulties about complying with the State and Church regulations. Many of the things which the Rector or officiating minister is compelled to ascertain are usually obvious, such as, that the parties are sufficient age, not close blood relatives, not insane, generally normal people in proper health.

After your initial consultation with the officiating minister and a date has been set, you will be asked to fill out a wedding application and submit a wedding fee sheet.

Baptism Requirement

At least one of the persons to be married must have received Holy Baptism. The Episcopal Church accepts the baptism of any Christian tradition which baptizes in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Premarital Counseling with the Clergy

The Canons of the Episcopal Church provide that, prior to marriage, the officiating minister shall meet with the couple for a minimum of four hours, generally meeting for three or four sessions. During these sessions the officiant will discuss arrangements for the service, the meaning of the content of the service and its relevance to married life, communication, and practical aspects of marriage.

Assisting and Visiting Clergy

The Rector is always glad to make the facilities of Epiphany available to other Clergy for the conducting of Marriage services. Please make such arrangements with the Rector.

You may wish to have the Rector assist a visiting Episcopal minister, (though this is not necessary), or you may wish to have the Rector conduct the service and some other Episcopal minister who is close to either the bride or groom assist. Either arrangement can be made. Please discuss arrangements with the Rector.

Consider Holy Communion

The Prayer Book makes provision for the combining of the Service of Holy Communion with the Service of Holy Matrimony and this may be done at the couple's option. The Services are joined in such away that the marriage is concluded and your first act as a married couple is to hear the Communion Service and receive the Holy Communion. A Collect, Epistle and Gospel are provided for Holy Communion in conjunction with the Marriage Service. Please discuss this with the clergy person officiating at your service.

Flowers, Candles and Other Altar Guild Requests

Arrangements for decorating the church are made in conjunction with the Altar Guild and Flower Guild of The Parish of the Epiphany. After your initial consultation with the officiating minister and a date has been set, you will be asked to submit a Wedding Fee sheet. On this form you will make specific Altar Guild requests such as the use of the aisle runner, candelabra, pillar candles, etc...Please see the attached sheet for more information and costs.

Aisle Runner	\$125.00
Candles (Pillar Sconces)	\$125.00
Candelabra	\$ 35.00

Contact Information:

Altar Guild:	Gabrielle Stott	781-721-5796
Flower Guild:	Leslie Aitken	617-484-8044

Decorating Rules

Bearing in mind that the Altar Guild will be happy to discuss in detail your plans for decoration, please do remember some general rules.

1. No attachments may be made to walls, ceilings, or beams of the church, and no sub-structures, such as lattice works, may be installed.
2. Nothing should be placed in such a way as to obscure the Altar.
3. The essential beauty of the church as the House of God should be maintained at all times and decorations should not be so spectacular as to distract attention from the wedding itself and the bridal couple.
4. Messy decorating procedures such as scattering rose petals in the aisle, throwing confetti or rice are not allowed.

Flowers

If you wish to put flowers on the altar, or in the church, please discuss your intentions with the Altar Guild. There are some restrictions on flower arrangements regarding height and placement. For more specific decorating restrictions and for elaborate planning ideas please contact the Flower Guild.

Flowers used to decorate the church are generally left at the church and used for the Sunday morning services, and then for distribution to the sick and home bound.

Requests that the flowers be given to sick friends or shut-ins of the bride and groom, who cannot attend the service can be made. Please discuss with the Flower Guild.

Preparing a Program

The Order of Service generally follows The Celebration and Blessing of A Marriage Service in *The Book of Common Prayer*. The service should be discussed with the clergy person officiating at the service. Decisions regarding readings, hymns, psalms and other particulars to the service are made at this time. If desired a program will then be made up describing the order of service.

A program may also include a listing of the wedding party, information regarding the reception, and any other special inclusions the couple may wish to include. Programs are printed on Epiphany Bulletin stationary.

All special program requests, for example custom paper, custom printing, photo inclusions, are prepared for and provided by the couple. For information on program preparation please contact the Parish Administrator.

Please note that when a bride and groom are using the church space and providing their own outside clergy they are responsible for providing their own program.

Seating

The chapel comfortably seats 35 persons and the church can accommodate 400 people.

Music

Wedding music is planned by the bride and groom in consultation with our Organist/Music Director, Suzanne McAllister. She is a source for the selection of music and will have many helpful suggestions. The bridal couple may come with requests and/or ideas for specific music, but they should certainly feel no obligation to do so. Holy Matrimony is a service of the church, and the music needs to be appropriate for such an event. If a particular piece would be appropriate for Sunday morning worship, it would be appropriate for a wedding. The reverse also holds true. As a consequence, it is our firm policy not to use "secular" or "popular" music in weddings. By this we mean songs from movies or currently popular songs such as those heard on TV, radio and elsewhere. These selections may be used effectively at the wedding reception, but not in the service.

We are often asked about wedding marches. Please understand that the wedding procession need not "march" down the aisle. It is enough that the processional music have a feeling of movement and a mood of dignity and joy. A variety of trumpet tunes from the Renaissance and Baroque periods work well in our experience.

You can contact Suzanne at 781-239-9812 to schedule an appointment.

Instrumentalists and/or Soloists

Any soloists (professionals, family or friends) must be discussed with Suzanne. She maintains a list of musicians available for weddings and will be happy to help you decide who will best suit your needs.

Musician Related Fees

The organist's fee is \$200.00 for the ceremony and \$250.00 for the ceremony and rehearsal. Any extra rehearsal time with soloists is billed at \$50.00 per rehearsal.

When a soloist (instrumental or vocal) is used, there is a fee for the soloist (usually between \$100.00 and \$200.00).

Normally, the Parish organist is asked to play at all services of the church. If you desire to ask a guest organist to play, please discuss the matter with the Rector or officiating minister before issuing an invitation. In order to be approved, an organist must be a competent musician, willing to abide by the Canons of the Church Music of the Episcopal Church, and be able to be present at both the service and the rehearsal.

Arrangements For Our Sexton

The Sexton must be in attendance the day of the wedding to arrange for the opening and closing of the Church and to provide assistance to the guests and wedding party during the service. It is also strongly recommended to have the Sexton attend all rehearsals.

All weddings involving outside clergy require the presence of our Sexton at both the rehearsal and wedding.

Weddings are outside the range of services for which the Sexton is normally compensated. The Sexton should therefore be compensated \$175.00 for the wedding and rehearsal, or \$100.00 for the wedding only.

Showering the Couple

The Parish of the Epiphany earnestly requests that nothing be used in showering the bridal couple. If something is to be thrown at the bride and groom as they leave the church, birdseed is the only option. Using bubbles to "shower" the couple is also a recommended option.

Parking

Parking for guests is available on the streets surrounding the church.

Planning for the Rehearsal

A rehearsal gives all involved the opportunity to practice, which will allow the wedding service to be carried out without undue stage fright and confusion. Ordinarily, the rehearsal is conducted the day before the wedding. The rehearsal itself generally takes about an hour. You should also allow approximately fifteen minutes more for the bride, the groom, the best man, and the maid of honor to go to the Parish Office and sign the necessary papers after the rest of the party is finished.

Persons needed for the rehearsal are: bride and bridegroom, best man, maid/matron of honor, bridesmaids, ushers, father of the bride (or whoever is to "give" her in marriage), mothers of both the bride and groom, and readers, if any.

It is important that all participants be present and ready for the rehearsal five minutes before the scheduled starting time.

Photography and Videotaping

The use of an established local photographer is generally preferred. Please have your photographer understand that the following rules must be observed.

1. The photographer must meet with the clergy before the service.
2. No flash pictures are to be taken during the service.
3. The photographer may take some exposures from the back of the church, but he/she is not to wander about other parts of the church taking pictures during the course of the service with or without flash.
4. At the end of the service, the photographer may take a flash picture of the bridal couple leaving the service when they are about halfway down the aisle.
5. At the end of the service, the clergy are glad to go back to the Altar and pose for pictures recreating the wedding ceremony. If you wish to do this, please notify the Rector before the service.
6. The ushers should observe guests bringing in cameras and ask the guests not to take flash pictures during the service. (The Sexton has been asked to approach any guests taking pictures during the service and ask them to desist and the care of the ushers in this matter will avoid this embarrassment).
7. Please speak to the officiating minister if you wish to have a videotape made of your wedding. If you have someone do it, we must discuss arrangements with the camera operator.

Arranging for a Marriage License

For details on obtaining a marriage license, please contact your Town Hall. Note that the original license is mailed back to the Town Hall. In order to receive a copy of the license, the couple must return to the Town Hall after the license has been filed following the service.

Wedding Consultants

It is for you to determine whether you wish to hire a wedding consultant to assist with making arrangements for the wedding. Wedding consultants can be very helpful and when they are present, we welcome this contribution to the smooth running of the wedding. However, please understand that the direction of the service at the Church is completely the responsibility of the officiating minister. This means that the minister will not only officiate at the service, but also direct all aspects of the rehearsal as well.

Wedding Day!

In scheduling the hour of the wedding, it may be helpful to know that an Episcopal wedding service takes about 25 minutes without Holy Communion and about 40 minutes with Holy Communion. This may be significant when figuring out the time of arrival at the place where the wedding reception is to be held. It is important to note however that the length of the service can increase with your music selections.

Ushers should plan to be at the church, ready to play their important part in greeting the guests 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the wedding.

The Groom and Best Man should meet in the Rector's Office 30 minutes ahead of time as well. The Bride and her entourage will want to observe the same kind of timing—30 minutes ahead of time.

There is nothing “cute” or “fashionable” about being late for your wedding. It is only courteous and appropriate for members of the wedding party to be prompt.

Wedding Fees

Building Use

Building Use Fee: \$500.00 (Please make checks payable to the Parish of the Epiphany)
Waived for Parish Members.

Altar Guild Fee: \$125.00 (Payable to the member of the Altar Guild involved with your Wedding.) **Waived for Parish Members.**

A representative of the Altar Guild is involved with all weddings and wedding rehearsals. Their duties include attending, preparing the altar, and assisting the clergy. All questions regarding the Altar Guild should be directed to Gabrielle Stott 781-721-5796.

Organist

Rehearsal and Ceremony: \$250.00

Ceremony only: \$200.00

Rehearsal of instrumental music or soloist: \$50.00 minimum.

Additional music should be arranged in consultation with Suzanne McAllister 781-239-9812.
(Please make check payable to: Suzanne McAllister)

Sexton

Rehearsal and Wedding: \$175.00

Wedding only: \$100.00

It is strongly recommended that the Sexton be in attendance at all rehearsals. All weddings involving outside clergy **require** the presence of our Sexton at both the rehearsal and wedding.
(Please make check payable to: Fred Benson)

Clergy

There are no fees for the services of the clergy. You may choose, however, to make a contribution to the Rector's or Assistant's Discretionary Fund. \$100 minimum is suggested. Your gift will be directed to support an outreach ministry of that clergyperson's choosing.
(Please make checks payable to the clergy officiating at your service.)

Optional Requests

Altar Guild

Aisle Runner \$125.00

Candles (Pillar Sconces): \$125.00

Candelabra: \$ 35.00

(Please make check payable to The Parish of the Epiphany)

Hadley Hall

Cost of Hadley Hall and kitchen (separate form).

Preparing For Married Life

Common sense indicates, of course, that certain steps should be taken before marriage is contracted. The couple should have a viable economic base and a place to live, provided with the basic necessities of life, such as furnishings, etc. The specific matters noted below should also be taken care of. May we suggest that you use this page as a checklist.

Social Security Change

The prospective bride should notify the nearest Social Security Office of her marriage. She will receive a new Social Security card, with her permanent number, but with her new name.

Insurance Changes

Do remember that insurance companies do not automatically change beneficiaries when marriage takes place. If you wish your husband or wife-to-be to be the beneficiary of any insurance policy, you must be sure to notify the insurance company. If you do not have life and health insurance, it is wise to consider securing the latter and at least enough of the former to cushion any readjustments that might have to be made in the event of the demise of the wage earner.

Health Insurance

Emphasizing and expanding the previous point, "every couple should have hospitalization and, if possible major medical insurance. If you have this now, be sure that you change to a family policy. Do not wait to do this. Remember that most health insurance policies have either a ten or twelve month time lapse between the purchase of the policy and the eligibility for payment of maternity benefits. You should particularly aware of this if you are leaving the military service or a corporation which provides such benefits and are thinking ahead to starting a family soon after you make the change.

Wills

From the beginning of your marriage you will have an increasing estate to which the birth of children bring new complexities. You should, at the outset of your marriage, consult an attorney making reciprocal wills and providing for the care of any children that may be born in the event of the demise of both parents. Your will should be reviewed with your attorney from time to time, as your family grows and your estate becomes more complex. State laws vary, but the absence of wills can cause difficulties that most couples will not anticipate. Incidentally, it is best, in fact, to consult an attorney. In some states it is not sufficient to write your own will by hand, as some people do. Check with any state to which you move to see if will from both states are valid.

Concerning Remarriage

In cases when one or both parties requesting marriage in the Episcopal Church has had a prior marriage which ended in divorce, the couple must first meet with the Rector to determine whether he/she will support their request. It is the duty of the Rector or officiating minister to a.) satisfy himself or herself, by appropriate evidence that the prior marriage has been annulled or dissolved by final judgment or decree of a civil court of competent jurisdiction; b.) insure the well-being of any children of the prior marriage; and c.) consult with and obtain the consent of the Bishop to the proposed marriage. He/ She must then receive permission from the Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts to perform the ceremony. Please discuss with the Rector or officiating minister the requirements of the Bishop, so that you may be fully informed regarding his/her expectations.

In all cases it is the duty of the Rector or officiating minister to see that marriages are in full compliance with the laws of the State of Massachusetts and to ascertain that it is the intent of those desiring the Church's Blessing to live together in Christian harmony.

While all of this may sound very formal and legalistic, the underlying concern is a pastoral concern that the issues which led to the dissolution of the previous marriage do not come back to haunt the newly married couple. These are serious issues for all of us and it will be important to allow at least a six month period of time between the first interview with the Rector and the proposed date for the wedding.

Please note that application for remarriage does not automatically ensure acceptance by the Bishop.

The Rector invites your further inquiry for clarification or additional information on this subject.

A checklist which you may find useful...

Within one month after meeting with the Rector to determine a wedding date:

- Call Suzanne McAllister, Organist and Music Director at 781-239-9812
- Set up first pre-marital instruction date with the Rector.

Six weeks before the wedding:

- Call Gabrielle Stott regarding Altar Guild arrangements 781-721-5796.
- If a wedding program is desired, prepare and send (e-mail preferred) a proof copy for the Rector's approval before you go to print. Email to office@3crowns.org.

One month before the wedding

- Obtain marriage license

Day of the Rehearsal:

- It is much better to handle the "business" arrangements at the rehearsal than on the day of the wedding. Prepare fees and have ready to present to the rector at the rehearsal.
- If not already done so, the marriage license is required to be given to the Rector at the rehearsal.

