

FROM THE RECTOR

Christian Marriage is a sacrament of the Church. Therefore, it is an outward and visible sign of Christ's inward and spiritual grace. Marriage is marked by mutuality, fidelity and permanence. It is a spiritual, as well as physical, union. We at St. Andrew's expect that those who seek to be married here desire that their wedding and marriage relationship reflect their faith in Christ and Christ's love in this world. Marriage is also a civil contract. Therefore, a marriage license must be given to the Rector performing the marriage ceremony by the day before the service. Otherwise the wedding cannot, and will not, proceed.

A wedding is a worship service. Therefore, the Rector has final approval of the ceremony, decorations, music, liturgy and conduct of service. Please study these policies carefully and thoroughly. As a parish, we hold you in prayer and share in your joy as you prepare for this happy event in your life.

WHO MAY BE MARRIED AT ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

- Active members: parishioners who are in good standing.
- Members who are presently inactive, but willing to commit themselves to becoming active.
- Children or grandchildren of members of St. Andrew's.
- Out-of-town Episcopalians who attend and support St. Andrew's when here, as well as attending and supporting their primary parish in their community of permanent residence.
- Out-of-town Episcopalians who are active in another Episcopal parish and whose priest grants permission for the marriage.
- Those new to St. Andrew's who are willing to become a part of the life and worship of our Church as they prepare for their marriage.

In evaluating and granting wedding requests, the Rector of St. Andrew's will take into account the schedule of events already on the parish calendar, the workload of the Altar Guild, and other staff.

SOME REQUIREMENTS FOR MARRIAGE AT ST. ANDREW'S

- The first step is to contact the church office (252-727-9093) and arrange for an introductory meeting with the Rector. No wedding date can be considered firm until that meeting takes place and the “Declaration of Intention” and “Application for Marriage at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church” are completed.
- The request for marriage must be made at least sixty days prior to the preferred wedding date.
- At least one of the parties must be a baptized Christian.
- When either or both parties have been previously married and that marriage has ended in divorce or annulment, the Bishop of the Diocese of East Carolina must be consulted and grant permission for the priest to perform the ceremony. Except in rare circumstances, the Bishop may authorize the remarriage only if a year has elapsed since the final divorce decree.
- A series of at least three counseling sessions is required of the couple. No wedding date should be considered firm until the Rector grants permission.
- The marriage must conform to the laws of the State of North Carolina and the canons of The Episcopal Church. No ceremony will be allowed to proceed without the marriage license. The couple should obtain their license at least three weeks prior to the wedding date and bring it to the rehearsal.
- Wedding rehearsals are under the direction of the Rector. All members of the wedding party are expected to be at the wedding rehearsal.
- The marriage license is to be given to the Rector one week prior to the service, and absolutely no later than at the rehearsal. A wedding will not proceed without a valid license in hand.
- The marriage license and Parish Register will be signed by the couple and two witnesses immediately following the rehearsal.

PRACTICAL MATTERS

The Rector

- Marriage is a worship service of the church. The service used at St. Andrew’s is that provided in The Book of Common Prayer of The Episcopal Church.
- The wedding rehearsal will be arranged at a suitable hour and begin promptly.
- There is no expectation that the Rector be invited to the prenuptial festivities, the rehearsal party or the wedding reception. However, the Rector and his wife will be happy to attend any of these, if available, with a written invitation.
- As in every service of the Church, the priest is charged by Canon Law with the final responsibility for determining the appropriateness of all arrangements and details.

Assisting Clergy

- If it is the desire of the couple to have other clergy (regardless of denomination) to assist at a wedding, please discuss this with the Rector before any indication or invitation is given to the other clergy. It is imperative that the invitation to other clergy comes from the Rector of St. Andrew’s.

Pre-Marital Counseling

- Pre-Marital Counseling is required before a wedding can be held. This includes a minimum of three sessions with the Rector or another minister approved by the Rector. The purpose of pre-marital counseling is to insure the couple’s willingness and readiness to enter into the covenant of Christian Marriage. If the Rector believes the couple is not ready for such a commitment, he may require the wedding be postponed until the couple is ready. This may also require referral to a professional counselor.
- St. Andrew’s uses the “Prepare/Enrich” inventory as part of marital preparation. There is a fee for “Prepare/Enrich” which is paid for by the couple.

Wedding Director

- St. Andrew's has wedding directors trained by the Rector. Because of specific policies and traditions in the Church, outside wedding coordinators are not needed at the rehearsal nor the ceremony. One of our staff will coordinate seating and the processions while the Rector will assume direction of the actual ceremony.
- An "Altar Guild Wedding Information Form" should be completed and given to the wedding director at least two weeks prior to the rehearsal.

Times and Dates

- Dates and times for the wedding must be scheduled through the Rector.
- Weddings must take place no later than 5:00 p.m. If a reception is to be held in the Parish Hall, the wedding can be no later than 3:00 p.m.
- Weddings are most appropriate during festive Church seasons. Therefore, weddings are not held on Sundays or during the Lenten season. We can accommodate one wedding in the Church on a given day.
- Weddings scheduled between December 26 and January 7 will be held with full Christmas decorations intact.

THE CEREMONY

The Liturgy

- The Episcopal Church is a liturgical church, and, as such, worship services are defined by The Book of Common Prayer, and normally include a liturgical procession, with a crucifer leading the wedding party and clergy.
- The wedding service always includes readings from Holy Scripture. You may have a friend or family member read, if you choose.
- A list of scripture readings is available for you to choose from.

Children in the Wedding

- Our experience has proven that it is unwise to have children under the age of six participate in weddings, either as Ring Bearer or Flower Girl.

Acolytes

- We at St. Andrew's encourage the use of an acolyte as crucifer. The couple is encouraged to select acolytes who are members of the parish; however, may choose others who have been approved by the Rector beforehand.

Number of Attendants

- Due to limited space in the Nave, the ENTIRE wedding party, including the couple, can consist of no more than twelve people.

Number of Guests

- St. Andrew's can accommodate 125 people comfortably, a maximum of 150.

Music

- Music for the Church is under the direction of the Rector and the Parish Organist.
- St. Andrew's does not use the popular wedding marches, both of which are taken from secular works. Music for weddings is selected from the works of great composers, all of whom have written both joyous and appropriate music.
- Music also may be selected from our hymnal.

Photographs

- The professional photographer and/or videographer must be approved by the Rector.
- The taking of photographs during the wedding service is not allowed except by the designated photographer. Posed pictures may be taken in the church before and after the service up to an hour. The photographer and videographer will be restricted to the balcony or back of the Church, and without artificial lighting. The photographer must remain behind the last pew. The photographer is allowed to take pictures of the bridal attendants in the Parish Hall. Please share this information with the photographer.

The Communion

- Since the marriage service is a worship service involving the whole congregation, a celebration of Holy Communion is appropriate but not required. When Holy Communion is celebrated as a part of the marriage ceremony, all baptized Christians will be invited to share in this sacrament of unity. Alternatively, Holy Communion may be celebrated either before or after the rehearsal.

Rice and Birdseed

- St. Andrew's does not allow birdseed, rice, flower petals, etc. be scattered either in the Church, on the steps or in the courtyard. There are many elderly members of the parish and this practice might prove dangerous to them and others.

Flowers

- Flowers may be used behind the Altar and in the Narthex only. The Church florist is Sandy's Flower Shoppe, 4702 Arendell Street, phone number 252-247-3323, but the wedding party may use their own florist provided the Altar Guild is notified in advance to arrange for time of delivery and size of Altar flower urns.
- The florist must arrange with the Altar Guild if flowers are to be delivered more than two and one-half hours prior to the ceremony.
- There should be no flowers or greenery in the windows or on the pews.
- Poinsettias (white or red) may not be used as wedding Altar flowers before Christmas.
- Neither silk nor potted flowers may be used.
- It is the custom at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church that flowers prepared for the Altar are to remain on the Altar for Sunday services.
- Spreading flower petals on the aisle is not permitted.

Pew Markers

- The use of pew markers is optional. St. Andrew's has a set of markers to indicate the first two reserved pews on each side. A ribbon may be used as markers.

Candles

- Candles for the Altar are furnished by the Church. No other candles are to be used in decorating the Church.
- The use of "Unity Candles" is not permitted.
- Aisle runners are not permitted.

Receptions

- The Parish Hall is available for catered receptions. Consult with the Rector should such a reception be desired.
- One member of the couple must fill out a Building Use application to receive permission to use the Parish Hall for a reception.
- Appropriate compensation to the sexton is required according to the fee schedule and an additional fee may be charged for use of the Parish Hall/Kitchen.

Alcohol Policy

- Alcoholic drinks are not permitted on the premises at receptions unless approved by the Rector thirty days in advance. Such approval will be for wine and/or champagne and limited to two servings per guest. According to Diocesan policy, if alcohol is served there must be adequate food and alternative non-alcoholic beverages available.

- The wedding party is expected to refrain from having any alcohol prior to the rehearsal and the wedding. Please do not spoil this special day by inappropriate behavior. The Rector reserves the right to excuse a member of the wedding party from the ceremony under these circumstances.
- The parish policy on alcohol use must be agreed to before permission is granted.

Dressing at the Church

- The wedding party may use the Parlor in the east wing and/or the room upstairs as a dressing room for the wedding. Smoking or drinking of alcoholic beverages in these areas is not permitted. Someone in the wedding party should remove all personal belongings from these rooms immediately after the wedding and assure that these areas are picked up and left as they were found. The parish cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items.

Fees

- Rector: There is no charge for pledging members of St. Andrew's, their children and grandchildren; however, an honorarium may be offered for services by the Rector. For all others, the fee is \$250.00. This payment is to be made directly to the Rector.
- Organist: \$250.00. This payment is to be made directly to the organist.
- Sexton: \$25.00 per hour with a minimum of two hours. This payment is to be made directly to the sexton.
- Use of the Church: There is no charge for pledging members of St. Andrew's, their children and grandchildren. For all others, the fee is \$900.00. This payment is to be made to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. *(One-half of this fee will be used for the Altar Guild; one-half will be used for operating expenses.)*
- Use of the Parish Hall: \$250.00, if used for the reception.



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

**2005 Arendell Street
Morehead City, North Carolina
252-727-9093**

Wedding Policies

Revised April 21, 2016