



Policies for the Blessing of a Relationship

Christ Episcopal Church
321 West Avenue
Red Wing, Minnesota 55066
651-388-0411

To the Couple:

It is our hope that your holy union will be a joyous celebration and an expression of your mutual love. This ceremony is meant to convey the profound bliss and promise of Christian union. As the *Book of Common Prayer* states, it is "...not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purpose for which it was instituted by God."

Similarly, the service of worship asking for God's blessing on your union commands a special respect as well. It is important to remember that you come to a church not just to get married (all that takes is a justice of the peace) but to ask God's blessing on your relationship. A certain appropriate reverence and spirituality will therefore enhance the actual ceremony, making it true to this purpose.

The guidelines and forms that follow are intended to help you in planning for your ceremony of holy union. They are practical and will help simplify your efforts at a time when you are no doubt quite busy. Should special circumstances arise that call for the changing of these guidelines, the Clergy and Altar Guild will try to act in the best interests of all.

If you have any questions, please feel free to direct them to the Clergy or the Altar Guild Director. It is our desire to make this ceremony an occasion you will cherish for the rest of your life.

Faithfully yours,

The Community of Christ Church

Celebration and Reception Guidelines and Responsibilities

We are delighted that you have an interest in Christ Episcopal Church as the place for the blessing of your relationship. The celebration of love between two people is always an exciting sign of new life. The information below applies generally for both members as well as non-members renting the church for the occasion. Fees will vary accordingly; please note the schedule on page 7.

Specifically for church members:

Please contact the rector as soon as you consider setting a date. At least one of you must be a baptized Christian, preferably familiar with the Episcopal tradition. We prefer to work with couples who are active members of Christ Church, regularly worshipping with us, planning to continue in the life of this community after their celebration, and sharing in our ministries and stewardship. We realize that finding a parish home and planning your celebration often happen concurrently.

Prior Unions: The Episcopal Church understands that some relationships end and is happy to celebrate subsequent unions. If either of you have been divorced or have separated from a pledged life-partner, approval for the celebration must be obtained from the Bishop of Minnesota. This is a simple process and the priest will assist you in preparing a petition to clarify your status in the Church. You will also be required to demonstrate divorce decrees and custodial arrangements for children, should there be any.

Pastoral counseling: The Episcopal Church requires that a minimum of 30 days notice be given to the priest prior to a wedding. At Christ Church, you can expect a minimum of 6 months to assure that proper counseling takes place. The priest will explore with you the nature of your relationship, issues that may be relevant to your future life together, and the creation of your celebration using *The Book of Common Prayer*. When a couple lives far away they may make arrangements with a suitable counselor or priest at another Episcopal or other denominational Church.

The Ceremony: *The Book of Common Prayer* provides the form for all blessings of relationships at Christ Church. Communion is a normal part of the ceremony but may be omitted, if appropriate, after talking with the priest.

Wedding Bulletin: Many couples like to have a bulletin to give to their guests who come to the wedding. The main purpose of the bulletin is to assist the guests in worship so that they know what is happening and how best to participate. The best bulletin will have the entire service within it and requires 8 to 12 pages. A simpler bulletin may also be used, simply listing the parts of the service in the order in which they come with the appropriate page and hymn numbers showing. Often these bulletins allow for all the key participants to be listed by name and for the couple to extend their thanks to the guests. There are sample bulletins in the church office. It is the couple's responsibility to put the bulletin together and to have it printed in sufficient quantities for all the guests. Before final printing of the bulletin, the parts that apply to the service itself need to be approved by the clergy.

General information for all couples:

Setting a date and time: We establish dates on our calendar on a first come, first served basis. (Please see the form on page 11.) All scheduling for your holy union, including rehearsal date, is made through the church secretary (651-388-0411), but such reservations are only temporary until the rector has given permission for the rite to occur. A non-refundable deposit of \$200.00 is required for non-members to save your date. After the date and time have been set, please contact the Altar Guild Director (contact information available through the church secretary), who will advise you on the rules with respect to decorations, photographers, etc. within the church.

Wedding License: To be legally married you must first obtain a license from your county of residence. This license, as applicable, must be presented prior to the celebration of blessing.

Visiting Clergy: If you are a member, clergy from other Episcopal Churches or other denominations are welcome to assist in your holy union; please discuss this with the rector. If you are a non-member renting the building for this occasion, you will be required to find a minister to conduct the ceremony.

Rehearsal: The rehearsal, which usually takes place the evening prior to the celebration, will last about one hour. All members of the celebration party and anyone who will read lessons or prayers should be present and prompt. The exact time should be arranged well in advance with the priest. The wedding license and all checks should be presented at the rehearsal to avoid confusion on the celebration day.

Music: Generally the church organist plays for weddings and should be contacted immediately. He/she will gladly help in the selection of music and will advise as to what music is appropriate and permitted. All music is subject to the approval of the music director working with the priest. Please contact the office for the name and phone number of the organist. If you wish to provide your own organist, you must obtain the approval of our church organist, and a consultation fee will be required. Only approved organists are allowed to use the organ. If you wish to include a vocal or instrumental soloist, please bear in mind that he or she needs to practice with the organist. The added time for this should be born in mind when paying for these services. You will also want to consult with the clergy, who will have final say about where to place solo music in the service.

Décor: By 10 A.M. on the day of the wedding, flowers for the church decorations must be at the church. Should you wish your altar flowers to remain at the church after the ceremony to be used for Sunday services, please check with the Altar Guild to see if this is a possibility. The Altar Guild Director can answer any questions you have regarding flowers, including use of the church vases. Large baskets or rented candelabra are not used in the altar area of the church. (Please see the form on page 9 and discuss it with the Director.)

The Altar Guild Director must approve all decoration.

Photography: Christ Church permits one video camera operator to record from the side of the nave only. No artificial lighting may be used during the service. Still photos may be taken before or after the service, but not once the celebration begins. This means that pictures may be taken while the participants process down the aisle and as they leave.

Reception: A reception at Christ Church may allow you the use of the kitchen, chapel, or parish hall depending on your needs. Smoking is not allowed in any part of the church facility or within 100 feet of any entrance of the church. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in any part of the church. The reception must end by 10:00 PM. (Because of the demands on the church personnel, Saturday celebrations after 5:00 PM are discouraged and an extra fee will be assessed.)

Miscellaneous:

We ask that you not use rice or confetti in the church or on the church grounds. Instead, birdseed or bubbles may be used outside.

Church hours are seasonal, so please consult with the church staff for your needs (this might affect florists, photographers, decorators, etc.).

The wedding party may dress at the church. Please consult with the Altar Guild Director about this.

Liability: When you hold your celebration at Christ Church, you agree that the church is not liable for injuries, theft and/or damage to personal property, and you agree that you are responsible for any damage to property that might occur during the period of your celebration and reception.

THE BLESSING OF A RELATIONSHIP

Fee Schedule

FEES:		PAYEE		NON-
CLERGY		Clergy	Discretion	\$200
ALTAR GUILD		Christ Church Altar	\$100	\$300
WEDDING COORDINATION		Wedding	\$175	\$200
CUSTODIAN		Sexton	\$75	\$100
ORGANIST	(1)	Organist	\$200	\$350
	fee to church organist if outside organ-	Organist	\$75	\$75
INSTRUMENT FEE	(3)	Christ Episcopal	None	\$100
CHURCH USE (WEDDING ONLY)		Christ Episcopal	None	\$500
CHAPEL USE (WEDDING ONLY)		Christ Episcopal	None	\$300
CHURCH USE (PARISH HALL)		Christ Episcopal	Consult with Clergy	\$500
DEPOSIT	(2)	Christ Episcopal	None	\$200

- (1) The Organist's fee includes one consultation about music, and playing for Wedding Rehearsal and Wedding Ceremony. Additional meetings requiring the organist's time, including rehearsal with other musicians, will be charged at \$35 per hour by the organist.
- (2) Non-refundable deposit to book church for that date.
- (3) If there will be no keyboard music, there will be no bench fee or instrument fee.

THE BLESSING OF A RELATIONSHIP

Information Sheet for Members

Full Names

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

Address

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

Phone

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

Number of this union 1. _____ 2. _____

Baptized 1. _____ Denomination _____

2. _____ Denomination _____

Confirmed 1. _____ Denomination _____

2. _____ Denomination _____

Date of Birth 1. _____

2. _____

License Number _____

Where Issued _____

Names of Witnesses _____

THE BLESSING OF A RELATIONSHIP

Declaration of Intention

We,

and

*desiring to receive the Church's blessing on our relationship,
do solemnly swear that we hold our bond to be
a lifelong union characterized by fidelity, monogamy,
mutual affection and respect,
careful and honest communication,
and the holy love that enables us
to see in each other the image of God.*

*We renounce promiscuity, exploitation, and abusiveness.
We affirm the purpose of our union to be mutual fellowship,
encouragement and understanding; the procreation (if it may be)
of children and their physical and spiritual nurture;
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.*

Signatures

Dated

Request to Use Property

Christ Episcopal Church
321 West Avenue
Red Wing, Mn 55066
1-651-388-0411

Date of application: _____

Please type or print:

Name of person making request

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Daytime tel.#() _____

Evening tel.#() _____

Email _____

Date requested _____

Property requested: Church _____

Chapel _____

Parish Hall _____

Kitchen _____

Time of event _____

Rehearsal time/date if applicable _____

Signature _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY			Date	Y	N
Approval given by Rector:					
Requesting Party notified of approval by:					
Church key issued out by:	# of Keys	Returned:			
Requesting Party issued Use of Facilities Policy					
Amount of Deposit: \$	Check#	Cash Receipt #			