

INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS CONCERNING MARRIAGES

Definition:

The bond of marriage was established by God at creation. Marriage is the union of a **man and a woman** in heart, body, and mind. It is created by their mutual free consent, is entered into within the community of faith, and is life long in intention. Marriage is intended by God for the mutual joy of the husband and wife; for the help and comfort given to each other in good times and bad; for the procreation of children (if it may be) and their upbringing as persons well rounded in knowledge and love of Our Lord. Both parties freely and knowingly consent to such a marriage, without fraud, coercion, mistake as to identity of a partner, or mental reservation.

When the Church presides over the ceremony it serves as the witness to the vows, and through the priest bestows the blessing of God upon the union, with prayers and support that the couple may have grace to fulfill their vows of fidelity in creating a Christian home and family.

The Anglican Province of America nationally requires every couple to sign a Declaration of Intention that they understand the nature of Holy Matrimony and will do all in their power to have a Christian marriage.

Times and Seasons for Marriages:

Since the fourth century A.D. it has been customary not to have marriages in Lent, which is a penitential season. Here at St. Alban's marriages are not held during this season, during the Advent season, nor on Sundays, except after consultation with the rector. Four month's minimum, and preferably six month's notice is required for instruction.

Personal Requirements:

Both parties must be baptized. Unbaptized persons entering into marriage at St. Alban's must receive baptismal instruction prior to the marriage.

Divorced persons having a living ex-husband or wife, who seek to be married by the Church must bring the matter privately to the rector. He will give his judgment as to the possibility of the matter, and in turn can lay the request before the Bishop. In such situations, suitable time for such action must be allowed, which can be as long as thirty days.

Counseling Sessions:

Prior to any marriage in the Anglican Church, instruction in the nature of marriage must be given by the clergy. At St. Alban's four sessions are held, with the couple and clergyman meeting for at least an hour each time. These sessions are arranged by appointment and are separated by several weeks. A reading list will be given to the couple to complete before their wedding. (See below for the list.)

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Announcements:

Public or formal announcement of the marriage is to be made only after consultation with the rector. The date and time of the marriage and of the rehearsal (if any) will be decided at that time.

Seating Capacity:

St. Alban's seats about 65 persons.

The Rehearsal:

The rector, or his appointee, is in charge of the wedding rehearsal. Florists, bridal consultants, or other persons shall not direct how a rehearsal shall be conducted.

The Service:

The service used will be that authorized by the Church (i.e. from the Book of Common Prayer, 1928), and alterations will not be made. Other clergymen asked to participate in the marriage ceremony will be personally invited by the rector after consultation with the Bishop.

Music:

The canons of the Anglican Province of America state: "It shall be the duty of every Minister to appoint for use in his congregation hymns or anthems from those authorized by the Rubric or by the Constitution and Canons of this Church, and, with such assistance as he may see fit to employ from persons skilled in music, to give order concerning the tunes to be sung in his congregation. It shall be his especial duty to suppress all light and unseemly music, and all irreverence in the performance. To this end, he shall be the final authority in the administration of matters pertaining to music in his congregation."

Here at St. Alban's, requests of the bride and groom for organ and choral music are welcomed and wanted, but they are subject to the approval of the rector and music director. The "Bridal Chorus" from the opera Lohengrin, known as "Here Comes the Bride," shall not be used, nor shall the "Wedding March" from A Mid-Summer Night's Dream by Mendelssohn, be used. It is suggested that other music, not suitable for a religious service, be played or sung at the reception.

The music director and organist of St. Alban's will play for all services unless otherwise agreed on. The fee will be decided upon by the bride and groom and the organist, and must be paid before the wedding.

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Flowers and Decorations:

Arrangements for flowers, candles, and decorations are made through your florist in consultation with the officiating clergyman. All flowers used are to be real; furthermore, their colors must be real and not the result of artificial tinting. Ribbons on the floral arrangements are not to be used. Altar flowers become the property of the church. Frequently they become part of the flowers used at the next Sunday service.

Candles may be used on the aisle windows. These are arranged for through the altar guild. No rice is to be used inside or outside of the church building because people may slip on the grains and fall. (The throwing of rice is a carry-over from pagan customs in which offerings of grain were made to the god of fertility.)

Fees:

There is no charge by the clergy or for the use of the church.

Legal Requirements:

The couple must apply for a marriage license, and the license must be given to the officiating clergyman before the ceremony.

Required Reading List:

1. The Canons of the Anglican Province of America concerning Holy Matrimony
2. The following portions of the *Book of Common Prayer* (1928)
 - Pages 300-304: “The Form of Solemnization of Holy Matrimony”
 - Pages 267 – 268: Collect, Epistle, and Gospel “At a Marriage.”
3. The following passages from the Bible:
 - 1 Corinthians 7
 - Ephesians 5:21-6:4
 - Colossians 3:12-24
 - 1 Peter 2:13 – 3:22
4. “Holy Marriage” (Chapter 18) from *The King’s Highway* (George D. Carleton). A photocopy will be provided.
5. Marriage: The Mystery of Faithful Love (Dietrich Von Hildebrand)
Note: it is recommended that you purchase and start reading this book as soon as the marriage preparation sessions begin so you will be finished by the time the preparation is complete.

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Note: The rector may assign other readings that he feels are pertinent and worthwhile as well.

Other Recommended Books:

The Marriage Builder – Larry Crabb

The Five Love Languages – Gary Chapman

The Mystery of Christian Marriage – Peter Jeffrey

Dear Newlyweds – Pope Pius XII