

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WICHITA KS

**"EMBRACING CHRIST'S LOVE THROUGH ACTION AND WORSHIP IN DOWNTOWN
WICHITA SINCE 1870."**

A CUSTOMARY FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE JUNE 2017

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CUSTOMARY

The primary purpose of this customary is to aid couples in the planning of their wedding. In addition, it gives a concise explanation of the requirements of the Episcopal Church, the Diocese of Kansas and this parish regarding the conduct of weddings in the Church and the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Marriage the sacramental rite of the church in which two persons "enter into a life-long union, make their vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows" (BCP, p. 861). The union is understood to be intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord (BCP, p. 423). At the Declaration of Consent, both persons promise to love, comfort, honor, and keep their spouse, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, to be faithful to their spouse as long as they both live (BCP, p. 424). The congregation witnesses the couple's promises, and the members of the congregation promise to do all in their power to uphold the couple in their marriage. At the Marriage, the couple may pledge their lives to each other by the giving and receiving of rings as symbols of their vows. When desired, other appropriate symbols of their vows may be used instead of rings. Any marriage performed in this church must be in accord with the laws of the State of Kansas, the laws of the Episcopal Church, the laws of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas and customary of this parish.

THE CANONICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE CHURCH

- ✘ All marriages solemnized in this Church must be contracted according to the laws of the State of Kansas. Proof of the legal ability of the couple to be married (the marriage license) must be presented to the priest who will solemnize the marriage.
- ✘ The marriage must be entered into within the community of faith. The intent of both parties must be for a lifelong commitment to each other in marriage.
- ✘ At least one of the parties to be married must be a baptized Christian.
- ✘ It is the duty of the priest to determine that both parties consent to the marriage freely, without fraud, coercion, mistake as to the identity of either, or mental reservation.
- ✘ It is the duty of the priest to provide instruction for the couple regarding the nature of Christian marriage.
- ✘ There must be at least two witnesses to the solemnization of the marriage.
- ✘ All pertinent data regarding the marriage must be recorded in the Parish Register.
- ✘ Both parties must sign the following Declaration of Intention: "We understand the teaching of the church that God's purpose for our marriage is for our mutual joy, for the help and comfort we will give to each other in prosperity and adversity, and, when it is God's will, for the gift and heritage of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of God. We also understand that our marriage is to be

unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong; and we engage to make the utmost effort to accept these gifts and fulfill these duties, with the help of God and the support of our community. (*Title I Canon 18 Sec. 4. Constitution and Canons.*)

- ✘ It shall be at the discretion of any Minister of this Church to decline to solemnize any marriage.” *Title I Canon 18 Sec. 7. Constitution and Canons.*)
- ✘ In the case of remarriage by either party, content of the Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas must be obtained to solemnize the marriage.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING & INSTRUCTION

Premarital Counseling sessions are required. The clergy must receive at least six months notice of an intended wedding so that counseling sessions may be scheduled and completed. No date shall be finalized by the intended parties until such date is approved by the clergy. Couples completing Premarital Counseling elsewhere must present proof of completion.

If one or both of the parties to the proposed marriage have been divorced and have a living ex-spouse, the clergy must obtain the consent of the bishop for the proposed marriage to take place. The clergy must first be assured that the former marriage(s) have been dissolved by final judgment or decree of a civil court and that continuing concern will be shown for the well-being of the former spouse and any children of the prior marriage(s). It is important that the clergy be made aware of all prior marriages at the time of the first counseling session.

The marriage license must be presented to the Rector no later than the time of the rehearsal.

THE WEDDING SERVICE

“The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage” begins on page 423 of *The Book of Common Prayer*. This rite has been recast with inclusive language for all couples in the document “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage 2.” An entirely new rite available is entitled “The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage.” These last two liturgies are available from the parish office. The clergy will discuss with you the options within the service and help you make choices, such as which passages from Holy Scripture are to be read and whether or not Holy Eucharist will be celebrated.

An order of service is prepared in consultation with the clergy and the couple and a service bulletin is printed in the parish office. If it is printed elsewhere, the content must be approved by the Rector.

The entire service of Holy Matrimony proclaims the unity of the married couple, so the lighting of a “unity candle” or the use of any other “unity” symbol is redundant.

THE SERVICE BULLETINS

All pertinent information for the service bulletin must be provided to the parish office at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

PARTICIPANTS

With the consent of the rector, anyone the couple desires may participate in the service. It is especially important that you inform the rector as early as possible if you want to invite clergy from outside this parish to assist. This is particularly important if the guest clergy is not licensed in the Episcopal Church.

MUSIC FOR THE WEDDING

St. John's Director of Music will guide the selection of appropriate music for the service. A wide variety of music and instrumentation is available; with sacred music being the norm. The final approval rests with the Rector. The Director of Music is the designated organist for all weddings, and vocalist or instrumentalists are under his or her full direction.

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

St. John's Parish Wedding Coordinator will oversee the wedding rehearsal. The rehearsal makes the service go more smoothly, it allows another opportunity for questions to be answered, and it provides the participants a certain level of confidence. It is imperative that all members of the wedding party be present and on time. A date and hour for rehearsal must be set with the clergy and must be held prior to any dinner or party. **No food or drink is allowed in the nave of the church, nor any other part of the church building or property.**

The participating clergy and staff do not expect or plan to attend any event such as a rehearsal dinner or wedding reception without having received an invitation in advance.

DECORATING THE CHURCH

Historic St. John's is a beautiful setting for a wedding ceremony; and it's considered unnecessary to expend time and money on extra ornamentation in the church. There are certain restrictions imposed by the fire marshal for everyone's safety; candles other than the altar candles must be approved by the Rector.

The Wedding Coordinator, in consultation with the Altar Guild, supervises the decorating of the church. For weddings, white altar flowers are ordered to the specifications of the vases and niches in which they are placed. The flowers remain in the niches for the next service, at which time prayers of thanksgiving are offered for the newly-married couple. Any decoration at the ends of pews must be removed following the wedding ceremony. The strewing of flower petals is prohibited.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Formal Photographs should be taken prior to the wedding. Photography must not interfere with the arrival of guests or delay the service start time. No photography is allowed during thirty minutes prior the start time. Pictures may be taken during the procession and recession, but picture taking is not permitted during the sacred ceremony.

Videography of the service is allowed; however, the camera must remain in one place previously approved

by the Rector. No extra artificial lighting is allowed.

The church will remain open for no longer than thirty minutes after the service for any additional photography and videography.

It's recommended for photographers who aren't familiar with St. John's be invited to observe the rehearsal.

PARKING

Church parking lots are located on the northwest corner of Third and Topeka Streets (in front of the church) and on the northwest corner of Third and Emporia Streets (behind the church). Additional parking is available at the meters on the street. Please notify your guests.

ACCESSIBILITY

St. John's has two elevators; one is inside the east entrance of the education building and the other, accessible from Topeka St., is located outside under the west crosswalk within the gated courtyard.

USE OF CHURCH BUILDINGS

The pews in the nave can comfortably seat **200** people.

Dressings rooms are made available for up to two hours prior to the service. The bride and her attendants will use the church parlor on the upper level of the education building. The groom and his attendants will use the youth group room on the lower level of the education building. The Parish Wedding Coordinator is available to assist the bride and their attendants if necessary and to assist the florist with corsages and boutonnieres if desired. Light refreshments are permitted in the dressing rooms. **Alcoholic beverages are prohibited from all parts of St. John's property, including parking areas. Please notify all members of the wedding party of this restriction.**

Infant and toddler supervision, if desired, is the full responsibility of the wedding party, in which case St. John's nursery facilities will be made available.

Wedding guests should refrain from releasing balloons or showering the newly married couple with rice, birdseed, confetti, soap bubbles, etc., as they depart from the church. Such items are harmful to the environment, difficult to clean up and can cause a danger of slipping on the steps. Please help discourage these practices.

St. John's is not responsible for any lost or stolen articles/personal effects.

CHURCH EXPENSES

St. John's Wedding Fees are listed below. Payment plans may be arranged if needed. **Half of the Wedding Fee is due at the time of application. The balance is due 30 days before the wedding rehearsal.**

✕ Wedding Ceremony

St. John's Wedding Service includes the use of the Parish Wedding Coordinator, Organist, Altar Guild, and Security; the Altar Flowers and Printed Service Bulletins are provided and can be color specific.

Wedding Fee for Active Members of St. John's **\$ 500.00**

Wedding Fee for Non-Members **\$ 1,500.00**

The above Wedding Fees do not include payment for a soloist and/or additional musicians. Those costs will be settled between the wedding party and the soloist and/or musicians.

✘ Clergy

Because the wedding is a service of worship, no fee is charged by the clergy for the service. It is appropriate to give the clergy an honorarium; which may be paid to their Discretionary Fund.

CONTACT INFORMATION

✘ Rector's Administrative Assistant

Parishoffice@stjohnswichita.org

Telephone (316) 262-0897

✘ Mailing Address

St. John's Episcopal Church

402 N. Topeka St.

Wichita, KS 67202-2414

✘ Website

stjohnswichita.org

✘ Parish Office Telephone

(316) 262-0897

NOTES

Wedding Application

St. John's Episcopal Church, 402 N. Topeka St., Wichita, KS 67202

Date _____ Requested Date & Time of Ceremony: _____

Acceptance of St. John's Requirements and Wedding Fee

We read St. John's Customary for Christian Marriage. We agree to abide by all requirements listed, understand these policies are not negotiable, and accept the Wedding Fee of \$ _____, half paid with this application and half paid 30 days before the wedding rehearsal.

_____ and _____
Party A Party B

Declaration of Intention

We, _____ (Party A) and _____ (Party B), desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union as it is set forth in the *Book of Common Prayer*. We understand the teaching of the church that God's purpose for our marriage is for our mutual joy, for the help and comfort we will give to each other in prosperity and adversity, and, when it is God's will, for the gift and heritage of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of God. We also understand that our marriage is to be unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong; and we engage to make the utmost effort to accept these gifts and fulfill these duties, with the help of God and the support of our community. (*Title I Canon 18 Sec. 4, Constitution and Canons.*)

_____ and _____
Party A's Signature Party B's Signature

Names and Contact Information of Applicants

Party A Full Legal Name: _____

Email: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Residence: _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Party B Full Legal Name: _____ Email: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Residence: _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Party A:

Date of Birth _____ Age: _____

Current Status: ☐ Single/never married
☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced

Baptized? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Confirmed in the Episcopal Church? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Current Communicant? (Attend church?) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Full Legal Names of Parents:

Father: _____
First Middle Last

Mother: _____
First Middle (Maiden) Last

Party B:

Date of Birth _____ Age: _____

Current Status: ☐ Single/never married
☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced

Baptized? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Confirmed in the Episcopal Church? ☐ Yes ☐ No

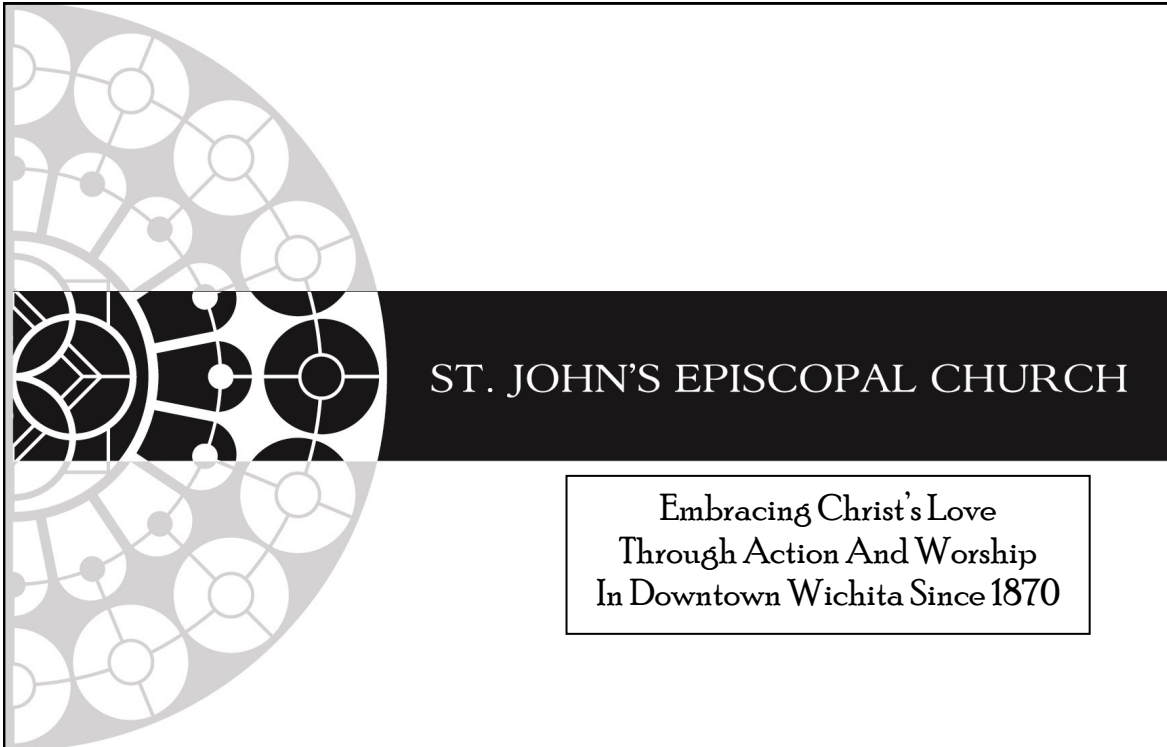
Current Communicant? (Attend church?) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Full Legal Names of Parents:

Father: _____
First Middle Last

Mother: _____
First Middle (Maiden) Last

Additional Information for Parish Register (required by Church Canon)



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

402 NORTH TOPEKA STREET

WICHITA, KS 67202-2414

stjohnswichita.org