



WEDDINGS

AT

ST. PHILIP'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE

AN INTRODUCTION

Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in the presence of God. The celebration and blessing of a wedding is a sacramental action of the Church, as well as an event for a couple and their family and friends. It is our desire at St. Philip's to assist individuals as they plan for their wedding so that the preparation time can be a period of growth in the understanding of Christian Marriage. The service itself is a witness to our conviction that marriage was instituted by God and that our Lord does indeed bless those who make a sacred covenant with one another in His name before His altar.

Marriage is one of the most significant events in a person's life. In order to assist couples and their families to begin planning with an understanding of the regulations and traditions of the Church for a wedding of beauty and dignity, the following guidelines are provided.

The worship of the Lord is at the heart and understanding of the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage at St. Philip's Church. We take this very seriously and joyfully. We plan it carefully.

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

1. The Rector is informed of the interest to be married at St. Philip's and an application is provided to you.
2. The Application is completed and returned to the Rector. Applicants for remarriage, must return a signed Declaration of Intent, a copy of which is provided herein, together with the Application.
3. An initial interview must be held with the Rector, and the above requirements must be met, before the date and time of the proposed wedding ceremony may be officially set.
4. The wedding date and time is set and a non-refundable deposit of \$500 is required.
5. The Altar Guild, Choirmaster/Organist, Parish Secretary and Wedding Coordinator are informed of your wedding.
6. At least 3 counseling sessions with the Rector are required for all couples. Additional sessions may be needed if either party had been divorced.
7. A meeting with the Choirmaster/Organist is scheduled and held to discuss the music for the Ceremony.
8. The Planning Form is completed with the Rector. One week prior to the wedding date, the balance of the fees must be received by the Parish Bookkeeper, together with a separate check payable to St. Philip's Episcopal Church for \$250.00 as security for any late fees. Such check to be returned to you should it not be applied.
9. The Rehearsal is held.
10. The Wedding Ceremony is celebrated!

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Under the canons of the Episcopal Church, applications for marriage must be made to the Rector at least three (3) months in advance. This ensures adequate time for the premarital counseling required by the Church and the many other details that could arise.

"No minister of this church shall solemnize any marriage unless he shall have ascertained that both parties understand that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of a man and woman, entered into within the community of faith, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will; and with intent that it be lifelong." – *Title I, Canon 17, Sec. 2(b)*

2. The bride and groom must be Baptized Christians.

3. Those intending to have their wedding at St Philip's must attend three (3) premarital counseling sessions with the Rector. (See pre-marital counseling)

4. Prior marriages and divorces must be disclosed to the Rector as soon as possible for further consultation with the Bishop. Please understand that St. Philip's requires no less than four months prior to the wedding to complete this consultation process with the Bishop and our Rector.

5. We greatly appreciate if no announcement of a wedding at St. Philip's is made until the couple has had an interview with the Rector and he consents to officiate. In the event a judgment is necessary by virtue of a divorce, no announcement may be made until the Bishop has signified his permission.

6. Christian marriage is a request for God's blessing upon a covenant freely undertaken by a man and woman for their lifetime. The service for the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage, which often involves the Eucharist as well, is a sacrament of the Church. There are some permissible modifications that may be made to the ceremony, but it should be kept in mind that the form of the service itself is prescribed by the Church (see *Book of Common Prayer*, pages 422-432; 437-438) and neither the priest nor the couple is free to alter the service beyond the permissible options.

7. If any clergy of the Episcopal Church has declined, for any reason, to officiate at your wedding, you are required to inform the Rector at St. Philip's at the time of your interview. Please understand that our Rector is not at liberty to proceed with the preparations for the nuptials without prior consultation and consent of the former clergy involved.

8. It is the prerogative of the resident clergy of St. Philip's to officiate at all weddings. Clergy from other Episcopal churches or other denominations may, with the approval of the Rector, be invited to assist in the service, but are not allowed to officiate.

9. The Chancel area of the Church accommodates a maximum of 12 attendants. The occupant capacity of the Church is 325 people.

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING

The Canon Law of the Episcopal Church sets forth certain requirements which must be met before a priest of this church can agree to officiate at a marriage. We also know that because marriage is one of the most significant events in a person's life, it is important that certain personal and marital issues should be discussed and prepared for before the couple enters into married life. Therefore, we at St. Philip's not only emphasize the spiritual nature of marriage, we attempt to help the relational aspects as well.

Initial Interview with Rector. The initial meeting with the Rector is a general meeting to get acquainted, learn about the marriage requirements and gain a deeper understanding of marriage.

Second Session with Rector. At the second meeting, you can expect to discuss the practical aspects of married life (i.e. financial) and the importance of maintaining a balance between work, marriage and personal life.

Third Session with Rector. At the third meeting, the Rector will review the details of the Wedding Ceremony and finalize the [Planning Form]. If necessary, additional sessions with the Rector may be scheduled at this time.

Please be aware that appointments with the Rector should be scheduled during normal business hours, Tuesday through Friday.

TIMES FOR REHEARSAL AND WEDDING

All services at St. Philip's begin on time. Therefore, it is expected that the rehearsal and wedding begin promptly. You will be assessed a late fee of \$250 for any delays longer than 20 minutes.

All rehearsals will begin at 5:30 P.M. on the day before the wedding, generally Fridays.

Weddings are to be arranged at such times that do not conflict with regularly scheduled services. Weddings should not be scheduled before 1:00 PM or after 7:00 PM on Sundays. No weddings will be held at St. Philip's on major feast days, including the season of Lent.

FLOWERS AND ACCESSORIES

1. Flowers are appropriate symbols of joy and life. Flower arrangements and other decorations must be consulted with the Wedding Coordinator.
2. Flowers placed in the church for a wedding are considered to be an offering to God; afterwards, they are taken to the sick and shut-ins. If the Church is otherwise decorated for a special event or season, such decorations and flowers may not be removed.
3. The wedding kneeling cushion and candelabras are provided by the Church.
4. Only the candles normally used at the services in the church are to be used. A “unity” candle is available for your use during the Ceremony, if requested.
5. Reserved pews may be marked only by ribbons or modest floral arrangements. These markers should be removed immediately following the service.
6. Aisle runners are a safety hazard and may not be used. The dropping of flower petals in the center aisle is not permitted.
7. Rice or bird seed may not be thrown on the Church grounds.

DRESSING ROOMS

1. Rooms are available to the bride and her attendants to dress for the wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHER

1. No flash pictures may be made during the service, by either a professional photographer or members of the congregation.
2. The professional photographer may have 1 hour following the service for posed pictures.
3. The officiating Clergy will be available for 15 minutes after the Ceremony for natural-light photographs of the service.
4. A video camera may be used to record the service, provided that it is on a stationary stand in an unobtrusive location approved by the officiating clergy.
5. The parish office can provide names of professional photographers who are familiar with Episcopal customs and who provide their services for a reasonable fee.

MUSIC FOR THE WEDDING

A consultation with the Choirmaster/Organist should be arranged as early as possible in the planning stages of the wedding. He will discuss various music options with you (some of which are provided herein for your review and consideration) and advise you accordingly. The following points are to be observed:

The wedding or the Nuptial Eucharist is a sacred service. Music texts having a secular connotation may not be used.

Any texts that are sung must, under the Canons and Rubrics, be from the Bible, the Prayer Book, or other authorized services, from the Hymnals of the Episcopal Church, or is theologically consistent with them.

The final decision on the appropriateness of music and soloists must reside with the Rector in consultation with the Choirmaster/Organist.

Should a guest organist be desired, it must be with the approval and under the supervision of the Choirmaster/Organist. In such case, the Choirmaster/Organist functions as a consultant.

Soloists are expected to contact the Choirmaster/Organist at least *four* weeks prior to the service and make necessary arrangements for rehearsals.

REHEARSAL

The purpose of the rehearsal is to prepare the wedding party to participate in the service in such a way as to render praise to God and joy to the bride and groom. In deference to the nature of the service and to the many people who must be on hand for a rehearsal, members of the wedding party are expected to be present and on time.

The rehearsal is under the sole direction of the officiating clergy. It is to be conducted prayerfully and reverently. The rehearsal time should take no more than 1 hour. Rehearsals are expected to start promptly and late fees apply for delays longer than 20 minutes.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

The marriage license issued in the State of Florida must be delivered to the Church office the Monday prior to the wedding and given to the Parish Secretary.

WEDDING FEES

The fees for weddings at St. Philip's Episcopal Church are:

St. Philip's Episcopal Church Member*	\$1,500.00
St. Philip's Episcopal Church Non-member	\$2,000.00
Rector	Discretionary

The Church Fee listed above includes marriage counseling services, the rehearsal and wedding ceremony, consultations with the Director of Music, the organist's services, the Sexton's services of set up and clean up for the rehearsal and ceremony, the acolyte, who assists with the formal proceedings during the ceremony and the Wedding Coordinator, who assists the bride and groom in their planning and facilitates the rehearsal and wedding.

Checks should be mailed or delivered to the Church Office, to the attention of the Parish Bookkeeper, one week prior to the wedding.

** a member is defined as someone who has made St. Philip's their church home, attends worship regularly and has fulfilled a financial pledge for at least one year at the time of application.*

WEDDING SERVICE BULLETINS

The wedding service bulletin provided for guests and family members is the responsibility of the bride and groom. The format and content must be approved by the Rector prior to printing and distribution. Examples of previous wedding bulletins are available through the church office.

DIRECTIONS TO ST. PHILIP'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Please inform your guests that St. Philip's Episcopal Church is located at 1142 Coral Way in the city of Coral Gables. The major cross streets references are Granada Boulevard and Columbus Boulevard. Parking is one block south of Coral Way on Andalusia Avenue, across from Salvadore Park. The doors to the Church open onto Andalusia Avenue.