



Wedding Customary for

The Church of the Redeemer
5603 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21210

MARRIAGE SERVICES AT THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

A Celebration of Christian Marriage is a significant event in your life, as well as an important moment in the life of the Church. In the Episcopal Church, Holy Matrimony is a sacrament and service of worship. The staff believes we have a responsibility to help you prepare for this joyous event and what it means for the rest of your life. The following customs and practices of this parish will give some basic information, and we ask you to read them carefully. If there are questions, we hope you will let us know.

1. **WHO MAY BE MARRIED HERE:** The canons of the Episcopal Church state that at least one of the parties has been baptized in some Christian tradition. Marriages are performed for couples in which one (or both) is a member of this parish, or is in the immediate family of an active member, or has been given special permission by a member of Redeemer clergy. There are canonical provisions concerning previous marriage ending in divorce. If one or both parties have been previously married and the former spouse is still living, the Bishop must grant permission.
2. **HOW TO GET STARTED:** Contact Ms. Hart in the Parish Office (410) 435-7333, ext. 221 to give the name, address and phone number of the prospective wedding party, and the month desired for the marriage. You will need to make an appointment *as soon as possible* with the priest scheduled for your ceremony. Firm arrangements for date, time and place (Church or Chapel) of your service will be made after discussion with the priest. *This meeting should take place **before** arrangements are made for the reception.* We do not schedule marriage services on Sunday or after 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. The wedding coordinator will contact you about details of arrangements for the service.
3. **OFFICIATING CLERGY:** One of the parish clergy will officiate at the rehearsal and service. Clergy from another parish, including those of other denominations, are most welcome to assist. If you wish this, please speak to your officiant at your initial meeting. The officiant will then extend the appropriate invitation.
4. **HOLY MATRIMONY:** A sacramental rite of the church. Although it is the wedding party's special day, it is also an important part of the ministry of the church. Couples who are actively involved in the church are strongly encouraged to include the Eucharist in the worship.
5. **CHURCH ATTENDANCE:** Since Holy Matrimony is a sacramental rite of the church, we encourage couples to worship together while preparing for marriage.
6. **PREMARITAL PREPARATION:** According to the canons of the Episcopal Church, the priest instructs "both parties as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony." This generally means three or more meetings to discuss all aspects of a Christian marriage. These discussions also enable the priest and the couple to know each other better, adding to the significance of this union being celebrated before God's altar. Under normal circumstances marital counseling must be completed one month before the wedding.

7. MUSIC: The couple must consult the Director of Music, to plan the music for the marriage service. All arrangements for music should be made no later than two weeks before the wedding. If the organist does not hear from the couple by that time, he will select appropriate music from the recording. The service of worship may include two congregational hymns.
8. MARRIAGE LICENSE: Only a Baltimore City license is valid for use at The Church of the Redeemer. Applications are filed with the Clerk of the Court at the Clarence Mitchell, Jr. Court House, (regardless of your residence), 111 N. Calvert Street, Room 628, (9:00-3:30 weekdays' only/410 333-3790). There is a 48-hour waiting period before the license is issued. One party of the couple must make the application in person. The license must be brought to the priest at the last counseling session.
9. CHURCH OR CHAPEL: Marriages may be held in either place. Seating capacity in the Chapel is 180, in the Church up to 850. Saturday weddings in the church may be up to 2:00 p.m. because of the service at 5:00 pm. For the sake of the sexton, we encourage couples to leave at a reasonable amount of time. All fees are due at the last pre-marital counseling.
10. WEDDING REHEARSAL: The date and time should be set during the initial interview with the officiating priest. The officiating priest will conduct the rehearsal with the assistance of the wedding coordinator. The following people participate in the rehearsal: the couple, parents, all attendants, readers and ushers.
11. FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS: One or two arrangements of flowers for the altar are appropriate in the Church or Chapel. Specific plans can be discussed with the wedding coordinator. Flowers should be delivered no later than three hours before the service. They will be placed on the altar by the wedding coordinator. The coordinator can advise you or your florist about proper proportions for flower arrangements. Flowers may be left on the altar for Sunday morning.
 - Candles: Please make arrangements with the coordinator.
 - Runners: Are NOT permitted, as they create a serious safety hazard.
12. PHOTOGRAPHS: Because Holy Matrimony is a sacrament, no pictures are permitted in the Church or Chapel during the service. Pictures or videos taken in available light are permissible from the back of the Church or Chapel or from the Chapel balcony by one professional photographer. If the balcony is to be used, photographic equipment must be in place at least 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the liturgy. The loft in the Church is not available for photography. Because the marriage service is worship, guests should be requested in advance not to use cameras during the service. There is a contract that must be signed by you and your photographer and returned to the church one week before the wedding.
13. CONFETTI: Rice, confetti, rose petals, bird seed, etc. cause maintenance and safety problems, and are not permitted on church grounds.

14. BULLETIN: The layout of the service bulletin can be prepared by the staff of The Church of the Redeemer if it is the standard 2 fold. Printing is to be done elsewhere. The couple needs to provide music and reading selections to the church no later than two weeks before the wedding so that there is sufficient time for preparation and printing.
15. COSTS: The wedding fee is \$500 for pledging members and \$900.00 for non-pledgers, which is brought with the Baltimore City license to the clergy at the last premarital counseling session. The standard fee for organists is \$300. When additional soloists, instrumentalists or choristers are requested, and additional rehearsal time required, there will be an extra charge. The church check should be made out to The Church of the Redeemer and have "wedding" in the memo. The check for the organist should be made out to the organist. An offering of thanks to the officiant is customary.
16. WEDDING COORDINATOR: Our wedding coordinator will assist you with details of arrangements. She assists the clergy in conducting the wedding rehearsal and coordinates the procession of the wedding party from the back of the Church or Chapel. You may expect to hear from the hostess about four weeks before the wedding, or Ms. Hart can put you in touch with her sooner if you have questions. We want to help your wedding be a time of great joy. Please contact the officiating priest or Ms. Hart as questions arise. The Parish Office number is (410) 435-7333.