

## **Marriage in the Church**

The Anglican Church of Canada affirms, according to our Lord's teaching as found in Holy Scripture and expressed in the Form of Solemnization of Matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer, that marriage is a lifelong union in faithful love, and that marriage vows are a commitment to this union, for better or for worse, to the exclusion of all others on either side. This union is established by God's grace when two duly qualified persons enter into a covenant of marriage in which they declare their intention of fulfilling its purposes and exchange vows to be faithful to one another until they are separated by death. The purposes of marriage are mutual fellowship, support, and comfort, and the procreation (if it may be) and nurture of children, and the creation of a relationship in which sexuality may serve personal fulfillment in a community of faithful love. This covenant is made in the sight of God and in the presence of witnesses and of an authorized minister.

*(Preface to Canon XXI; Canons of General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada)*

### **Note:**

No alterations or additions may be made to the wedding service, including the vows as found in the authorized wedding liturgies of the Anglican Church of Canada.

This is a Church ceremony and the House of God. Proper respect for this Holy space must be maintained at all times, which also excludes the moving of church furnishings.

This wedding service is both a Sacrament of the Church as well as a Civil ceremony, and therefore if any member of the bridal party smells of alcohol on the day of the wedding it cannot proceed.

If the unity candle is being used, explain that the two family representatives (usually two mothers) will light a family candle each from the Gospel altar candle as soon as the whole bridal party has reached the front of the church. The music for the procession will continue until the candles are lit and the family representatives have returned to their seats.

### **Photographer**

The photographer will only take pictures during the opening procession, signing of the register, and closing procession. If the photographer would like to 'set up' some pictures of the exchanging of vows or rings, this can be arranged for after the service

### **Videographer**

The videographer will set up in one place for the duration of the wedding. The videographer is asked not to move around, but may move to the back, if desired, for the closing procession.

## **Marriage Anglican Church of Canada**

*Marriage enhances life together, provides deep joy and offers life-sustaining strength in the relationship between husband and wife.*

### **What is marriage?**

In marriage, people give and find respect, comfort, help, delight and tenderness. They may have children. Marriage means commitment and care in good times and in bad. Each is linked to the family of the other. Marriage is a gift from God.

### **What are the requirements for marriage?**

The province of Ontario requires a licence to marry. Each party to the marriage must be 19 years of age. Neither partner may be currently married, or too closely related to the other. To be married in the Anglican Church of Canada, at least one of the couple must have been baptized in a Christian church (not necessarily Anglican).

### **What marriage preparation is required?**

All couples married by the Anglican Church undergo marriage preparation. This is an important time to examine issues such as communication, how you will handle money and whether you will have any children. Any successful long-term relationship takes work. You will have the opportunity not only to talk about things that might challenge your marriage, but also to identify and celebrate what will make your relationship strong.

### **Do the couple have to be members of the Anglican Church?**

Membership in the Anglican Church of Canada is not required by church bylaws (canons). You are certainly invited to join if you are not part of our parish community.

### **Must an Anglican marriage take place in a church building?**

No, but couples are encouraged to consider marrying in church. Marriages in other places may be allowed for certain pastoral reasons at the discretion of the priest involved, but please keep in mind that

Anglican marriage is a public ceremony and done in a dignified manner (No bungee-jumping).

**What is the marriage service?**

The service includes a statement of Christian marriage, readings from scripture and sometimes a sermon. Family members may take part in the service by reading scripture or leading prayers. Then comes the vows made to each other, and prayers. The couple signs church and civil registers, as do two witnesses and the priest. The service may conclude with Holy Communion, or simply with a blessing.

**Must there be a Holy Communion service?**

The marriage service is a joyous time of thanksgiving. Holy Communion (often called the Eucharist) acknowledges that the source of love in this marriage is God. This is especially meaningful when many of the guests are Christian. However, Holy Communion is not always required – discuss this with your priest.

**How do we go about arranging a marriage?**

The first step in moving toward marriage is to contact the church office for an interview with a priest. It is best to arrange this meeting at least two months in advance of the desired date of the marriage service.

**How does the church support marriage following the marriage ceremony?**

The church is a caring community in which both the joys and struggles of life are shared and celebrated. The weekly worship times offer focus for your lives, connection with people with common values, a time for families to be together and a source of spiritual strengthening and renewal.