



Wedding Customary

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church

Wedding Customary

O Gracious and everliving God, you have created us male and female in your image: look mercifully upon this man and this woman who come to you seeking your blessing, and assist them with your grace, that with true fidelity and steadfast love they may honor and keep the promises and vows they make; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer

Introduction

A wedding is an event that requires preparation and attention to detail. The Wedding Customary is designed to answer as many questions as possible in planning your wedding.

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church requires that thirty days' notice be given before the proposed date of the marriage. The couple is also required to participate in premarital counseling with the clergy regarding "the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony." The clergy may be able to answer questions regarding the wedding service but the primary purpose of the counseling sessions is to discuss marriage. Normally this takes three or more sessions.

If either the bride or the groom has been divorced, it is necessary to receive the approval of the bishop for the officiating clergy to perform the marriage ceremony. This procedure is done in consultation with the clergy and an additional thirty days may be necessary for the bishop to consider the request.

Because the church vows to support a couple in their married life together, participation in the regular life and worship of this parish is expected, both before and after the wedding. We believe that the blessing of the marriage will have the most meaning within the context of a faith community. Non-member couples will need to contact the Church Office and make an appointment to meet with a priest to discuss how to become members.

A priest of Palmer church will officiate at all weddings. Other members of the clergy, either of the Episcopal Church or of other denominations, may be invited by the Rector of this parish to assist in the service.

Weddings are not scheduled during the seasons of Advent and Lent, or on Sundays.

Weddings at Palmer Church are celebrated according to the rites provided in the Book of Common Prayer. The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is regarded as a classic of Christian liturgy expressing the joy, solemnity, and meaning of this state of life. While personally composed vows are not permitted, there are a number of options regarding the selection of readings and prayers that will enable you to express the uniqueness of your relationship within this tradition.

The main church has a seating capacity of 350.

Flowers & Decorations

Palmer is a beautiful church; we recommend simplicity in decorating it.

1. Speak to the Wedding Coordinator before selecting your florist. The Church or Chapel decorations, including the flowers for the altar, must be completed by a time agreed upon by the Wedding Coordinator and the florist.
2. In the Nave, no flowers are allowed on the altar itself. Flowers are placed on the reredos on either side of the cross. In order for the flowers to fit in the church's brass vases, they **MUST** be in a container no larger than 8 inches tall, 5 inches wide at top, and 3 inches wide at bottom. The height of the floral arrangement may not exceed 42 inches. Flowers may not be removed once they have been placed on the reredos or credence shelves. The Palmer Altar Guild later takes them to the sick or the homebound. Greenery is allowed in the church on the stair rails going up to the chancel area, on the chancel rail and on the pews. Arrangements may also be placed on the marble ledges at the base of the stairs if desired.

3. In the Chapel, flower arrangements may be placed on the credence shelves on either side of the cross. Containers from the florist may be used in the chapel with the approval of the wedding coordinator.
4. There are to be no artificial flowers or greenery (i.e. plastic or silk) used in the decorations in either the church or chapel. Aisle runners also are not allowed in the church or the chapel.
5. There are several options regarding the use of candelabra in the church. These options may be decided at the time of your meeting with the Wedding Coordinator. Our service does not allow for the use of a unity candle.
6. Pew markers of ribbons and greenery are allowed in the church or chapel if desired. They must be attached in such a way that they do not damage pews or chairs.
7. Aisle candles are allowed in the church. These are to be furnished and installed by the florist, and they must also make arrangements to have someone light them. This is not the duty of the acolyte.
8. The florist must be on hand immediately after the wedding to remove the decorations.

Wedding Music

Weddings at Palmer are accompanied by music that reflects the style of worship and musical traditions associated with Palmer Church. While remaining within those traditions, the Organist is ready to assist in planning wedding music that reflects the unique quality of the occasion. Whether the marriage service is to be small or large, informal or stately, the music should be suitable for a religious service. During the music consultation the organist will give a demonstration of pieces of music to illustrate this principle. Varieties of musical resources, however, are available.

All weddings at Palmer Church utilize the services of the Organist for consultation and performance. Singers and instrumentalists from the church staff can also be utilized.

Please do not retain any musicians, singers, choirs, or instrumentalists without prior consultation with the organist. Policy guidelines regarding what may or may not be used in services of the church are derived from statements on page 14 in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Nuptial Eucharist

Many people are returning to the custom of having a Nuptial Eucharist in which the marriage service is the first part of the Eucharist. Generally this changes the length of the service by approximately fifteen to twenty minutes. As with all celebrations of the Holy Eucharist in Palmer Church, all baptized Christians are invited to participate. A decision regarding the Eucharist should be made after conferring with the clergy during consultations and at least a week prior to the wedding.

Rehearsal

Rehearsals of weddings are entirely under the direction of the Wedding Coordinator. It is not customary for clergy to attend wedding rehearsals. Only the members of the wedding party need be present for the rehearsal.

Photography & Video Recordings

1. Check with the Wedding Coordinator before selecting a photographer.
2. A flash photo of the bride and her escort coming down the aisle and one of the bride and groom leaving the Nave are permitted, but no flash pictures during the ceremony are allowed. Time exposures may be taken from the balcony if desired. These time exposures should not be taken during prayers.
3. It is imperative that the photographer meets with the Wedding Coordinator before the ceremony. Photographs may be taken of the bride and her attendants in the Bride's Room and the area outside it before the ceremony. A limited

number of photographs may be taken of the wedding party after the service; we ask that this photo session not exceed 15 minutes. These photographs should be limited to the wedding party and the immediate family only. Candles are extinguished at the conclusion of the ceremony.

4. Video recordings are allowed if made by a videographer who has been approved by Palmer Memorial Church. The Wedding Coordinator can furnish a list of persons so approved.

Clergy Honorarium

It is customary for the bride and groom to offer the officiating clergy an honorarium for his/her services. For further information, please see page 8.

Fees

Fees are set according to the policies of the church. A fee schedule is found on page 8. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to discuss this with the Clergy.

License

Arrangements for the marriage license should be made with the County Clerk well in advance of the ceremony. Law requires that a marriage license may not be executed within seventy-two hours of its issuance. The license should be given to the wedding coordinator at the time of the rehearsal. It is the responsibility of the clergy to complete it and return it to the county.

Dressing Areas

There is a room available in which the bride and her attendants may dress before the wedding. If you plan to have more than four attendants, please let the Wedding Coordinator know so that additional dressing rooms can be made available. The groom and groomsmen need to arrive in their wedding attire since there are no rooms set aside for this purpose at Palmer. As a general rule the groom and groomsmen may wait prior to the wedding in the Parish Hall.

Receptions

The Parish Hall and the patio are available to be reserved for receptions. A deposit in advance is required to secure the date. Please consult the fee page for rates. The Parish Hall and the Patio are available for two hours following the ceremony and no later than 10 pm on Saturday evenings. This time limit is necessary for us to have the building prepared for Sunday programs.

Caterers

Caterers have use of the kitchen of Palmer Church, but are responsible for full clean up and for leaving the facility in a ready-to-use condition.

For more specific information, please contact the Palmer Wedding Coordinator:

Ragna Case
713.818.9772
palmerweddings@gmail.com

Title I

Canon 18

The Member of the Clergy shall have required that the parties sign the following declaration:

“We, _____ and _____,
desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a
lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

“We believe that the union of husband and wife, in heart, body, and mind, is 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.

“And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek
God’s help thereto.”

Title I

Canon 19

When marital unity is imperiled by dissension, it shall be the duty of either or both parties, before contemplating legal
action, to lay the matter before a Member of the Clergy; and it shall be the duty of such Member of the Clergy to labor
that the parties may be reconciled.

Signature of the Bride

Signature of the Groom

Date: _____

Date: _____

Wedding Disclaimer

We have read the Wedding Customary for Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church, as outlined in the Customary booklet, and agree to strictly adhere to its regulations as we prepare to celebrate our wedding.

At *no time* is alcohol to be consumed on church property prior to the wedding by the wedding party or their guests.

For receptions held on church property, only beer or wine may be served, and only by vendors holding appropriate licenses and permits, subject to verification and approval by the church business administrator.

It is our responsibility to communicate these guidelines to our caterer, florist, and photographer and to any other persons who might be involved in helping us prepare for our wedding at Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church.

Must be signed by both parties.

Bride's Name – *printed*

Groom's Name - *Printed*

Bride's Signature

Groom's Signature

Date

Date

Wedding Information

Since church records will be made from this information, *please use full names only; do not use initials.*

Groom Information

Groom's Full Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

e-mail: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Baptized? Yes No

If yes, what denomination: _____

Confirmed? Yes No

If yes, what denomination: _____

Church Membership (present): _____

Is this marriage your first? Yes No

Widower? Yes No

Divorced? Yes No

If you are divorced, please fill out the information requested on the Remarriage Petition section at the end of this form.

Bride Information

Bride's Full Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

e-mail: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Baptized? Yes No

If yes, what denomination: _____

Confirmed? Yes No

If yes, what denomination: _____

Wedding Information

Church Membership (present): _____

Is this marriage your first? Yes No

Widow? Yes No

Wedding Date: _____

Priest Officiating: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____

Parent Information

Groom: _____

Father's Full Name: _____

Mother's Full Name: _____

Parents' Address: _____

Parents' Phone: _____

Divorced? Yes No

If you are divorced, please fill out the information requested on the Remarriage Petition section at the end of this form.

Wedding Time: _____

Eucharist? Yes No Reception at Palmer? Yes No

Rehearsal Time: _____

Bride: _____

Father's Full Name: _____

Mother's Full Name: _____

Parents' Address: _____

Parents' Phone: _____

Remarriage Petition Information

Since church records will be made from this information, *please use full names only; do not use initials.*
Return completed form to: Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church • 6221 Main Street • Houston, Texas 77030

Groom

Name(s) of former spouse(s):

Date of final divorce decree(s):

For a second marriage, a waiting period of one year from the date of the final decree is normally required. If a lengthy separation (in excess of 2 years) has occurred, a 6-month waiting period may be granted.

NOTE: If clergy has seen a copy of the divorce decree(s), it is not necessary to include a copy of the decree with this petition.

In the event of a third marriage by either party, the parties to the proposed marriage must consult with a licensed marriage therapist as to their readiness for marriage. The written opinion of the therapist must be conveyed to the petitioning priest and included with the petition to the Bishop.

Insofar as fourth marriages by either party are concerned, no petitions will be considered except under very unusual circumstances.

If any of the children of the divorced spouse(s) are minors, state the court-ordered financial arrangements for their support and whether all such payments are current.

Bride

Name(s) of former spouse(s):

Date of final divorce decree(s):

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Wedding Service Fees

Basic Expenses

Expenses include Organist, Security, Wedding Coordination, Rehearsal, Premarital Counseling, Sexton, and Facility usage.

Honoraria for the clergy are not included, but the usual honoraria are \$300 per clergy.

Nave	\$1,500 (\$300 non-refundable deposit)
St. Bede's Chapel	\$750 (\$100 non-refundable deposit)
Holy Cross Chapel	\$750 \$100 non-refundable deposit)

Optional Expenses

Soloist from Palmer Church Choir (each)* or Instrumentalists	\$150
Parish Hall**	\$1,500 (\$300 refundable deposit)
Patio**	\$500 (\$100 refundable deposit)

* *All music arrangements must be made with the organist.*

** *All reception arrangements must be made with the wedding coordinator and with the approval of the Palmer Parish Administrator.*

Change Ringing

It is common practice to ring change ringing bells as the married couple leaves the church during the recessional at the end of the wedding service. Normally, the ringing continues in celebration for 20-30 minutes following the ceremony. We also have a tradition at Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church to ring (very briefly) as the bride and groom are pronounced married. The bells can heard in the church.

A fee of \$150 is customary if change ringing bells are desired at your wedding. Please make your reservations for this service as early as possible to assure that there will be ringers available for your wedding date.

If you have any questions about any aspect of change ringing, please feel free to contact the church office.

Wedding Orders of Service

A wedding order of service printed by the church is not included in the fees. The wedding coordinator can provide samples of services with or without the Eucharist. To have the order of service produced by the church contact Dustin Jesudason, Publications Editor, at 713-529-6196 ext 112.

Dustin asks that the information for the service be available to him the Wednesday prior to the week of the wedding—at least 1 1/2 weeks before the wedding date. Each wedding order of service is \$1.00 per copy.



Know and share the love of Jesus Christ

6221 Main Street • Houston, Texas 77030 • PalmerChurch.org