



SAINT MATTHEW'S  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CHANDLER, ARIZONA

## ◆ ABOUT WEDDINGS AT SAINT MATTHEW'S ◆

One of the great blessings of life is a Christian family. When a man and a woman are joined together in Christ and build their family upon his grace and his ways, they enter a new and wonderful way of life.

Such blessings do not come spontaneously, though. They must be sought, worked for, and treasured. This is especially true today, when there is little support in our culture for Christian marriage, when the whole question of sexuality and family is confused, and when the institution of a lifelong union between two people is beleaguered.

At Saint Matthew's, we have a strong commitment to couples preparing for marriage. We want to help them develop a solid foundation for their life together, a task which takes some time and work. In order to facilitate this, we have developed a premarital process that combines study, prayer, worship, self-examination, and pastoral care. Issues discussed cover the simple details of the ceremony, the Christian understanding of marriage, the practical points of taking two lives and histories and putting them together under one roof, and the Biblical concept of family living.

## ◆ GETTING MARRIED AT SAINT MATTHEW'S ◆

Since we want to be deeply involved in the lives of our people who are considering marriage, we ask engaged couples to be *active, pledging and giving members of record of Saint Matthew's*, worshiping here for *at least* three months before submitting a marriage application.

Membership and pledging forms are available from the Parish Office. This helps us get to know the couple better. It also helps the couple place the priority of their relationship with the Lord in its rightful place as the center of the marriage relationship. We anticipate that the premarital process itself will take between six and nine months from the date of the application to the date of the wedding. We ask couples to plan accordingly and apply early.

## ◆ PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS ◆

When you are ready to apply, Call the Parish Coordinator to obtain a wedding application. This form must be completed and returned to the Rector. When you return your completed application, the Parish Coordinator will do the following:

- ◆ Set a *tentative* date for your wedding. There are some restrictions on the days, church seasons and times available for weddings and rehearsals. We will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the wishes of the couple applying for marriage, but please apply early. The date becomes final *upon completion* of the premarital process and *only with the final approval of the Rector*.
- ◆ Give you information on how to contact the Rector who will work with you throughout the premarital sessions and who will perform the Marriage service.
- ◆ Give you information on how to contact our Organist/Choir Master who will oversee all music for the wedding,

and the Wedding Coordinator from the Altar Guild who can offer assistance regarding decorations and flowers.

If either of you have been married before, you will need to allow additional time to prepare. You must provide a copy of your divorce decree and complete a form regarding your previous marriage. The officiating priest must submit a letter to the bishop of the diocese requesting permission to conduct the ceremony at least 90 days in advance of the wedding.

While the Rector usually officiates at all weddings held in the church, there may be occasions when the participation of another clergy person is desired. You must obtain the approval of the Rector before any plans for visiting clergy are finalized.

On rare occasions, we will find couples who do not seem to be ready for Christian marriage. Couples who do not appear ready for the responsibilities of marriage will be asked to delay their wedding plans and work with our Clergy to overcome the problems causing postponement. **Permission must be granted by the Rector before any wedding plans or arrangements can be made final. Invitations to the wedding should not be sent out before that time.**

A wedding is a great opportunity for two people to lay a foundation for the remainder of their lives. It is a time for new beginnings and a chance to talk seriously about the place of the Christian faith in the home and in the practical matters of married life. Thus, we do ask those who come to Saint Matthew's to be married to take advantage of this opportunity for the kind of discussion that is unique to this

occasion. We are eager to do all we can for the engaged couples of this parish to help them build a strong and blessed Christian family life.

### ◆ FEES & LICENSE ◆

Use Fee	\$500 (may be refundable as follows)
Altar Guild Fee	\$200
Music/Organist Fee	\$125
Priest	\$200
Soloist Fee	\$75.00 each soloist

All fees must be paid in full *at least 14 days prior to the wedding*. The \$500.00 Use Fee is payable at the time the wedding is booked. Only the \$500.00 Use Fee may be partially or completely refundable as follows:

- \$100.00 – the entire bridal party is *present and on time* for the scheduled start of the rehearsal;
- \$100.00 – the entire bridal party is *present and on time* for the scheduled start of the wedding;
- \$100.00 – the Sanctuary is clean and in good condition following the wedding;
- \$100.00 – the Office Building is clean and in good condition following the wedding;
- \$100.00 – the Parish Hall is clean and in good condition following the wedding.

Any amount to be refunded will be mailed to the newly married couple within 10 days of the wedding date.

All Checks should be made payable to *Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church*.

You must acquire a valid marriage license from Maricopa County. Deliver the license and all accompanying materials to the Parish Office at least one week prior to the date of the wedding.

### ◆ BASICS ◆

Weddings may be held any time during the year, subject to scheduling, except the following:

Before 11:00 a.m. or after 6:00 p.m.,  
Sundays,  
During Lent or Holy Week,  
During Easter Week,  
Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday,  
During Advent, and  
Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve or  
New Year's Day.

All weddings will use the form for the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage from the Book of Common Prayer.

Rehearsals are usually held the evening before the wedding, with ALL members of the wedding party present. Everyone involved in the rehearsal is to be seated in the front pews of the church at the scheduled rehearsal time.

Please note that smoking and alcoholic beverages are **NOT** permitted at Saint Matthew's. It is **YOUR** responsibility to make sure your wedding party understands this.

### ◆ ALTAR GUILD ◆

A Wedding Coordinator from the Altar Guild will be assigned to your wedding once the Wedding Application and deposit are received. The Wedding Coordinator will call you to discuss the wedding arrangements and will work with you to ensure that all goes smoothly. Representatives from the Altar Guild will be available for both the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. They prepare the Eucharist, and if requested, set up the pew torches and candelabra. They are prepared to assist the bridal party as needed.

### ◆ PHOTOGRAPHY ◆

You may take as many photographs as you wish before the ceremony. After the service, 30 minutes are allowed for group photos. Since the Sacrament of Marriage is solemn, no still photography is allowed during the service. With permission of the Rector, a single fixed video camera may unobtrusively be placed to record the ceremony. Your photographer and videographer should be apprised of these restrictions.

### ◆ FLOWERS ◆

Only fresh flowers are allowed on the altar at Saint Matthew's. Your florist should contact the Parish Office for information. After the ceremony it is customary and necessary for the flowers to remain on the altar since they have been consecrated.

## ◆ MUSIC ◆

Wedding music shall be appropriate for this sacred occasion. The Church Organist generally plays for all services and a consultation with him is required prior to the wedding date. If you wish to use other musicians, you will need to obtain his permission. He can assist you with recommendations.

## ◆ LESSONS ◆

It is customary to choose one or more passages of scripture to be read at the wedding. If there is to be Communion, then a third passage, from the Gospel, concludes the readings.

The following readings, suggested in the Book of Common Prayer, are appropriate.

Genesis 1:26-28 (Male and female he created them)

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24 (A Man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)

Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7 (Many waters cannot quench love)

Tobit 8:5b-8 (*New English Bible*) (That she and I may grow old together)

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Love is patient and kind)

Ephesians 3:14-19 (The Father from whom every family is named)

Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33 (Walk in love, as Christ has loved us)

Colossians 3:12-17 (Love which binds everything together in harmony)

1 John 4:7-16 (Let us love one another for love is of God)

Matthew 5:1-10 (The Beatitudes)

Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the light . . . Let your light so shine)

Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock)

Mark 10:6-9, 13-16 (They are no longer two but one)

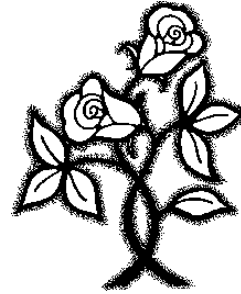
John 15:9-12 (Love one another as I have loved you)

## ◆ USHERS ◆

Ushers play an important part in the wedding. They are key to having people seated in a timely and orderly manner. Ushers need to be ready and in the narthex no later than one half hour prior to the wedding. In order to keep the narthex clear, ushers are encouraged to seat people as they arrive so that all guests are seated well before the wedding.

Ushers are also encouraged to make it known to visitors who carry cameras that it is inappropriate to take photos during the service.

Another important function of ushers is to escort mothers and grandmothers down the aisle just a few minutes before the beginning of the wedding. Just which ushers are to do this should be decided before the rehearsal.



“For this reason a man  
will leave his father & mother  
and be united to his wife,  
and the two will become  
**one flesh.**” Ephesians 5:31



**SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

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