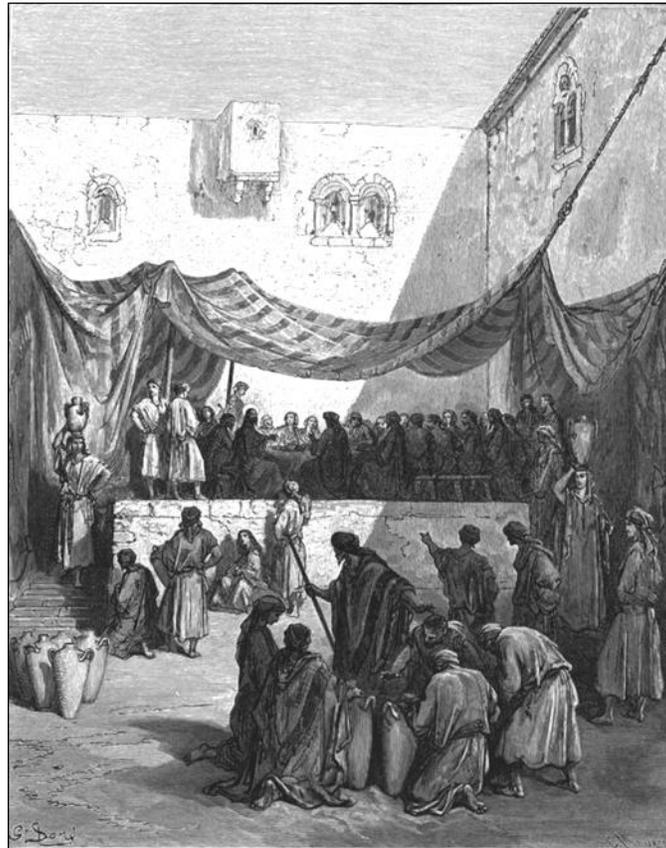


Preparing for Holy Matrimony in The Anglican Diocese of Pittsburgh



The Wedding Feast at Cana. Gustave Doré (c. 1865)

Materials for Marriage

Revised 2018

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TO THOSE PREPARING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY:

Dear sister or brother in Christ,

Marriage is the most common of all Christian vocations (callings); and often the most transforming. Like all vocations, the call to marriage must be tested and lived into. Marriage preparation in the Anglican Church in North America helps you in this process of discernment and formation. In order to do discernment and formation well, we will expect multiple preparation sessions and a commitment to participation in the life of a local congregation. We want you to experience the grace of our Lord Jesus enabling you to live fully into your calling. We find this grace in Christ's Body.

Marriage is "a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman, binding both to self-giving love and exclusive fidelity" (from the Canons of the Anglican Church in North America). It is a school of love – real, abiding, enduring, faithful love – and a picture of Christ's love for the Church.

If you want to have your calling confirmed and to learn the disciplines of Christian marriage, we want to help, now and for the rest of your life. The marriage preparation process makes a beginning. The rest of this booklet is designed to assist you and your priest to make this beginning, and to give you the understanding, tools, and God's grace to succeed in this most common, most transforming vocation.

Faithfully in Christ,

+ Jim

Provincial Canons on Marriage

Title II, Canon 7

Of Christian Marriage

Section 1

This section was amended by the Provincial Council and ratified by the Assembly at its meeting on June 29, 2017. It becomes effective on September 27, 2017.

The Anglican Church in North America affirms our Lord's teaching that the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman, binding both to self-giving love and exclusive fidelity. Jesus Christ teaches that God is the author of marriage from the beginning of time. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27; cf. Matthew 19:4-6). God's design for marriage has always involved one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24). Marriage is established by God for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord for mutual joy, and for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; to maintain purity, so that husbands and wives, with all the household of God, might serve as holy and undefiled members of the Body of Christ, and for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom in family, church and society, to the praise of his holy Name.

Section 2

It shall be within the discretion of any member of the Clergy to decline to solemnize any marriage.

Section 3

Members of the Clergy of this Church shall conform to the Canons of this Church governing the solemnization of Holy Matrimony.

1. Both parties shall be baptized. Any exception to this requires the permission of the Bishop;
2. There shall be thirty (30) days' notice of intention to marry unless waived for weighty reasons, in which case the Bishop shall be notified immediately and in writing;
3. The Clergy shall provide counsel to both parties on Holy Matrimony with respect to theological and social implications and responsibilities;
4. The Clergy shall ascertain that the man and woman, parties to the marriage, have a valid marriage license.

Section 4

As marriage is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman in which the two become one flesh, it is both an ordinance of Creation, affirmed as such by our Lord, and commended by Saint Paul as a sign of the mystical union between Christ and His Church (Matthew 19:3-9; Ephesians 5:22-32). Therefore, the failure of a marriage is always a tragedy. Scripture acknowledges our fallen nature and does provide guidance to know when a marriage may be declared a nullity or dissolved and allows the possibility of a subsequent marriage in certain circumstances (Matthew 19 and 1 Corinthians 7).

1. Couples who request to be married by a member of the Clergy of this Church must have approval from their Bishop if either party has ever been divorced;
2. When a divorced person seeks permission to remarry, the Clergy must ascertain the pertinent facts concerning a declaration of nullity or termination of marriage; and in the absence of a

declaration of nullity, forward such information to the Bishop in writing for his godly advice and consent;

3. The Diocese is responsible to create a process by which this discernment may be made with reasonable promptness.

Section 5

1. No Clergy knowingly, after due inquiry, shall solemnize any marriage if they have unresolved concerns regarding any of the following impediments

- (a) Consanguinity and affinity as defined in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer;
- (b) Mistaken identity;
- (c) Absence of the capacity for free and intelligent choice;
- (d) Bigamy, evidence of sexual perversion or conviction of a sexually related crime;
- (e) Fraud, coercion, abuse or duress.
- (f) Failure to conform to the teaching of this Church regarding man, woman, and marriage as set forth in the Holy Scriptures and in these Canons.

2. Any declarations of nullity may only be granted by a Bishop with jurisdiction and shall be based upon Scriptural principles including the foregoing impediments to marriage.

Section 6

The Clergy shall require the parties to sign the following declaration:

“We, N.N. and N.N., 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 it is established by God for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord; for mutual joy, and for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; to maintain purity, so that husbands and wives, with all the household of God, might serve as holy and undefiled members of the Body of Christ; and for the upbuilding of Christ’s kingdom in family, church, and society, to the praise of his holy Name. 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.

Section 7

In all cases marriages shall be solemnized according to the forms contained in an authorized Book of Common Prayer, or other rite authorized this Church and permitted by the Bishop.

Section 8

The Clergy shall cause to be recorded in the permanent records of the congregation the name, age, and residence of each party. Such record shall be signed by the member of the Clergy, the married parties, and at least two witnesses.

Marriage Laws

Marriage laws in the US are established by the individual states, not the federal government.

Here's a summary of each state's marriage law procedure, including premarital [blood tests](#) and [waiting periods](#) before marriage, and the like. Because state marriage laws in this area have been changing rapidly — many states have recently eliminated blood tests and or physical exams. You should check with your county marriage license bureau office, county clerk's, city clerk's, or town clerk's office before making any wedding or travel plans.

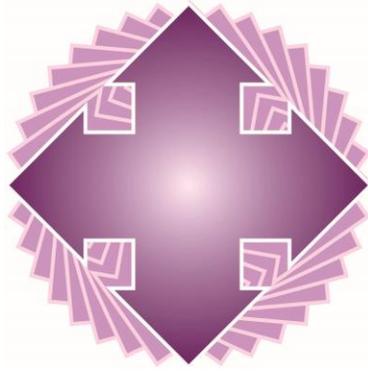
State Marriage Law Procedures

The Marriage License requirements for applicants to marry vary from state to state. Although there are differences between the requirements in the various states, a marriage between two spouses performed in one state must be recognized by every other state under the Full Faith and Credit Clause of the United States Constitution.

Pennsylvania State Requirements for a Marriage License

While there are some uniform regulations for marriage in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, you will need to inquire with the county in which you will be married for particular details. Click on the link below to find some sample information from the Allegheny County homepage.

[From Pennsylvania, Allegheny County Website](#)



Declaration of Intention
According to Title II, Canon 7, Section 6

Place of Marriage _____

Rector or Priest in Charge _____

Parish _____

Date _____

*“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 it is established by God for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge
and love of the Lord; for mutual joy, and for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and
adversity; to maintain purity, so that husbands and wives, with all the household of God, might serve
as holy and undefiled members of the Body of Christ; and for the upbuilding of Christ’s kingdom in
family, church, and society, to the praise of his holy Name. 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.*

Signed _____

Standards for Marriage Preparation

Couples are to meet a minimum of three times usually with the priest officiating at the wedding (or designated counselor) for premarital counseling. These sessions are in addition to the meeting to discuss a wedding date, wedding plans, etc. The following topics are covered.

1. The nature of the commitment they are making by deciding to undertake a Christian marriage.
2. The nature of each of their commitments to Christ and his Church.
3. Sexuality.
4. Preparation for and the nurturing of Christian children.
5. Relationships with in-laws.
6. The legal and financial implications of marriage in regards to:
 - a. Financial planning
 - b. Wills
 - c. Health insurance
 - d. Life insurance
 - e. Credit
7. Communication skills in marriage.
8. Decision-making in marriage.
9. Conflict resolution in marriage, including the spiritual resources of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation.

In accordance with the provincial canons, all couples must notify the minister of their intention to marry at least thirty days before the wedding ceremony. This requirement may be waived in very unusual circumstances and only through written communication with the Bishop by the priest.

The Diocese encourages couples to attend a marriage preparation weekend, such as Engaged Encounter, in addition to the three required sessions with the minister. Engaged Encounter is a ministry of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh but is open to all Christian couples. For information, visit their website: <https://diopitt.org/marriage-preparation>

Informational Forms for Premarital Counseling

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE GROOM

Page 1 of 2

Name _____

Place of birth _____ Date of birth _____

Name and location of parish in which you were baptized _____

_____ Date of baptism _____

Name and location of parish in which you were confirmed _____

_____ Date of confirmation _____

Name and location of parish you are now attending _____

How long have you been attending this parish? _____

Present address _____

Present marital status _____

Date(s) of any former marriage(s) _____

Place(s) of any former marriage(s) _____

Name(s) of officiating clergy or other official(s) _____

Date(s) of any divorce(s) _____

Father's name _____

Father's address _____

Mother's maiden name _____

Mother's address (if different from father's) _____

How are the resources of the Christian faith, such as the Scriptures, the Sacraments, fellowship and prayer, a part of your life?

Why do you want to be married in the Anglican Church?

What do you think makes a marriage a Christian marriage?

What will be your involvement in the Church after your wedding?

Informational Forms for Premarital Counseling

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE BRIDE

Page 1 of 2

Name _____

Place of birth _____ Date of birth _____

Name and location of parish in which you were baptized _____

_____ Date of baptism _____

Name and location of parish in which you were confirmed _____

_____ Date of confirmation _____

Name and location of parish you are now attending _____

How long have you been attending this parish? _____

Present address _____

Present marital status _____

Date(s) of any former marriage(s) _____

Place(s) of any former marriage(s) _____

Name(s) of officiating clergy or other official(s) _____

Date(s) of any divorce(s) _____

Father's name _____

Father's address _____

Mother's maiden name _____

Mother's address (if different from father's) _____

How are the resources of the Christian faith, such as the Scriptures, the Sacraments, fellowship and prayer, a part of your life?

Why do you want to be married in the Anglican Church?

What do you think makes a marriage a Christian marriage?

What will be your involvement in the Church after your wedding?

Informational Forms for Premarital Counseling

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE COUPLE

Page 1 of 1

Has any other minister of the Anglican Church, or any other church, declined to solemnize this wedding?

If so, please write the name, address, and phone number of this minister so he or she may be contacted. Please state the reasons given for the refusal.