



# LIVING WORD EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Evangelical • Reformed • Catholic

## Wedding Policy

Congratulations on your impending marriage! Our prayer is that your years together will be happy and fulfilling.

This wedding guide has been prepared for use by the Bride and Groom and their families. It is intended to be a useful aid in planning and performing your day of days, and a step to help make this busy time more orderly. Be assured the Rector, staff and membership at Living Word Church are ready to assist you in every way we can and to minimize any complications that arise.

We understand why you would wish to be married in our heritage pioneer church. It is important, however, that couples applying to be married in our church are or become aware of the obligations they are undertaking in making this life-long commitment. Wedding ceremonies are important, but fleeting occasions. Marriages are meant to go on for years, forever, we hope.

### Requirement for Counseling

Our concern, thus, is that both parties to a marriage understand the seriousness of their impending vow, and the consequent need to base their relationship on a serious commitment to Jesus Christ. Church marriages should be for church people. The idea of a couple appearing at a church for their wedding on a given day and then never returning until the next family wedding or baptism or funeral is foreign to us, and one we believe we cannot in good conscience support. It is with this concern that we insist that couples accede to pre-marital counseling, the details of which may vary from case to case and will be determined by the Rector.

### Who may be Married at Living Word Church?

Only baptized Christians, at least one of whom is an active communicate of Living Word Church may be married in the church. Clergy from other church may assist in the service at the discretion of the rector. Note that the church is not a wedding chapel and is not rented to non-members for wedding services. Be aware that the Rector and the Vestry of the Church reserve the right to decline any application for a wedding, without explanation.

**IMPORTANT** - A valid marriage license must be presented at the rehearsal. In accordance with Canon 34, Section 4 of the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, the bride and groom must sign the following declaration prior to the ceremony:

*"We A.B. and C.D., desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a life-long union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. We believe that it is for the procreation (if it may be) of children, and their spiritual and physical nurture, for mutual fellowship, encouragement, and understanding, and for the safeguarding and benefit of society, and we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort and to seek God's help thereto."*

### Application and Scheduling

If you are interested in being married in our church, your first point of contact should be with the Rector. You will need to schedule an initial appointment, at which time further meetings for counseling and planning of the service may be scheduled. You will also need to provide the rehearsal, wedding, and reception dates. Note that any request to be married must be submitted at least sixty days, preferably no less than ninety days, in advance and that weddings are not performed on Sundays or during Lent. Also, time of day must be scheduled so as not to interfere with other church activities. All rehearsals, ceremonies and receptions are expected to begin and end at the mutually agreed upon times.

### Divorce

Living Word Church will consider the remarriage of divorced people under the guidelines of Canon 34 of the Reformed Episcopal Church's Canons. The first requirement of the Canon is that the Rector must submit a statement in writing to the Ordinary of the Diocese as to the circumstances of a divorced person desiring remarriage. The following provisions also apply:

- 1) That one calendar year will have passed since the civil decree of divorcement.
- 2) That documentation will attend the application.
- 3) That evidence of responsible behavior toward former spouse and any children of the marriage will be presented.
- 4) That understanding of the reasons for the marriage's failure have been achieved.

### The Wedding Service

Two service options are available for the wedding. You may choose to use *The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony* in the Book of Common Prayer or you may choose to use a modern-language version of the same service. In neither case are any additions or substitutions permitted. Supplemental material, such as poetry, especially composed vows or other similar material not found in the Prayer Book, will not be allowed. Also, once the marriage rites have begun, no interruptions for music will be permitted. Clergy, other than the Rector, may be permitted to assist in the ceremony at the sole discretion of the Rector, recognizing that the Rector maintains the central pastoral role at all weddings. For planning purposes the Church will hold 65-70 guests comfortably, but as many as 85 if necessary.

### Music

One of the Church's Organists will serve as organist at all weddings. A substitute may be employed only if the Church's Organist is not available and only with her personal and explicit agreement. A repertoire of religious and classical music suitable for weddings is available from which the Bride and Groom may make selections, in discussion with the Organist and Rector. Note that

contemporary popular music is not permitted in the Church. Solos or instrumental music may be played prior to the beginning of the service, but must not intrude on the flow and solemnity of the ritual to follow, and must be approved in advance by the Organist.

### **Floral or Other Decorations**

The use of floral or other ornamentation or any other type of décor must be approved by the Rector. Two floral arrangements to stand before the altar and the pulpit are sufficient. Dimensions for these arrangements should not exceed 24 inches in height and 30 inches in width. The finished arrangements should be delivered to the church between 9:00 and 10:00 AM on the day of the wedding. Artificial flowers are not permitted. Altar flowers are customarily retained for use the following Sunday. No décor that will alter or obscure any part of the sanctuary may be utilized (bowers, potted trees, candelabra and the like). The charm of the interior of the church is its simplicity, and should be respected. The use of petals in the church is prohibited. Birdseed or rice may be used outside the church building. The Church's flower coordinator may be available to provide floral arrangements at your expense and if time permits.

### **Photographs**

Photography, recording and videotaping is permitted, with the following limitations. Photographers/Videographers should be counseled to remain as inconspicuous as possible and flash photos should cease as the service begins. No more than one photographer and one videographer will be permitted. The wedding party is responsible for making the photographer aware of all rules and restrictions.

### **Alcohol**

While it is recognized that at the time of a wedding a certain amount of exuberant celebration will take place, the Bride and Groom accept that there will be no consumption of alcoholic beverages the day of the wedding prior to the reception. Any sign of

intoxication from any of the wedding party will be deemed sufficient reason to delay or cancel the ceremony. Please ensure that all the members of the wedding party are aware of this admonition. No alcoholic beverages are permitted on church property.

### **Receptions**

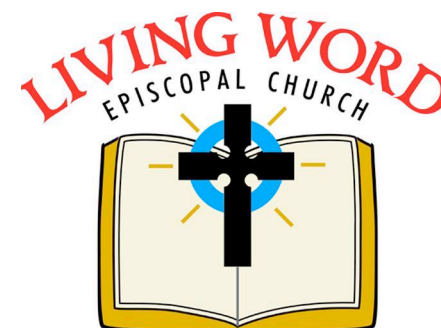
The Church's parish hall is available for receptions, but be aware that space is *very* limited and most couples will probably be better off scheduling their reception at a different location. If a reception is to be held at the church, this needs to be approved and scheduled with the Rector. Simplicity is key due to limitations of the space.

### **Honoraria & Gifts**

There is no charge for use of the church building by members of Living Word Church.

An honorarium is customarily given to the officiating minister and to participating musicians in an amount determined by the couple.

# WEDDINGS AT LIVING WORD CHURCH



*Therefore shall a man leave his  
father and his mother, and shall  
cleave unto his wife; and they shall  
be one flesh.  
– Genesis 2:24*