



## *Weddings*

*at*

### *Church of the Ascension*

*In considering a wedding at the Church of the Ascension, there are a few guidelines to keep in mind. Because Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between two people in the presence of God, marriage is taken very seriously by the clergy and people of this parish. According to the Canons of the Episcopal Church, the Rector or officiating priest may decline at any point to officiate at any marriage. Nonetheless, throughout the preparations, the Rector, clergy and parishioners of Ascension commit themselves to providing a community of support and nurture to those entering into Christian marriage here.*

### **Wedding Policies and Procedures**

#### **Who Can Be Married At Ascension**

Normally, at least one of the persons being married here should be a baptized Episcopalian, and a member of Ascension. Adult children of present members of Ascension are also welcome. In some cases persons who are members of another Episcopal church may be married here with the cooperation of their priest. Persons who do not presently have any church or Gooden School affiliation should attend Sunday services at Ascension consistently for two months after introducing themselves to the Rector before he will discuss wedding plans with them. Couples are encouraged to become parishioners, and Sunday attendance at worship is assumed before as well as after the wedding. Any exception to this policy will be made on a case by case basis by the Rector. Some divorced persons, under certain circumstances, with the permission of the Bishop of Los Angeles, may be remarried in the Episcopal Church.

#### **Booking a Wedding Date**

Although the Canons state that the absolute minimum notice is thirty days, it would be very unusual for less than ninety days to be adequate. Please do not decide upon or consider any dates before you consult with the Rector. Also, please remember that weddings are not performed here during Lent (the six weeks before Easter).

#### **Pre-Marital Preparation**

All marriages celebrated at this parish will be preceded by several sessions of pre-marital preparation, covering such areas as personal finances, sexuality, family backgrounds, personal histories, communications skills, commitments beyond the marriage, Christian theology of marriage, and compatibility. Please be aware that on rare occasions, issues arise during the pre-marital discussions that compel a couple to alter their plans to marry or affect the priest's willingness to officiate.

#### **Marriage License**

This must be obtained from the County Clerk's office of Los Angeles County. The license must be at the parish office three days before the wedding, For more information call 800-201-8999.

#### **Church Seating Capacity**

Our maximum capacity is 210 people comfortably. Our space also limits the size of the wedding party. The church is air conditioned for summer weddings.

## **Wedding Staff**

The Clergy of Ascension perform the ceremony unless in rare cases special permission has been granted by the Rector for guest clergy to officiate.

The Wedding Directress is a member of the Altar Guild and will help you with any questions, preparations and decisions that need to be made prior to the wedding. She is available for consultation on flowers, photographers, and many of the details to make a wedding a wonderful occasion. The Altar Guild provides at least two wedding hostesses to assist you with the rehearsal and the wedding itself.

The church also can provide an organist for music during the wedding. The Sexton sets-up and cleans up before and after the wedding. Acolytes are available for the ceremony upon request.

## **The Marriage Ceremony**

### **Vows**

All weddings will be performed according to the Canons of the Episcopal Church and will strictly adhere to the rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer (1979)*.

### **Blessings of Civil Marriages**

Occasionally, couples choose to have their wedding elsewhere and have their marriage blessed here at Ascension. Please consult with the Rector about this.

### **Music**

The clergy and the organist are willing to work with you in the selection of music for before, during, and after the service. **It is a general rule that only sacred music will be permitted.** Hymns are encouraged. There are certain compositions which are strongly discouraged, and the use of which will have to be negotiated. The Rector and organist will need to approve any selections you make.

### **Flowers**

Those being married are responsible for ordering and purchasing any extra flowers for the High Altar, Chapel Altar and the Mary Shrine. **Flowers placed in the church remain there after the service as an offering to God for Sunday Services.** Our wedding directresses can give you helpful advice about suitable arrangements.

### **Rice, Confetti, or Rose Petals**

Sorry, the throwing of rice, confetti, bird seed or rose petals is not allowed anywhere on the church grounds.

### **Photography and Video**

The recording of an event in the church should never intrude on or obscure the event itself. **We do not permit any flash pictures during the wedding.** Your photographer may use the available light in the church for pictures during the wedding and may take a flash picture as you leave the church. Videotaping is also permitted from certain positions using available light. Flash pictures are permitted both before and after the service for posed photographs of the wedding party. We insist that photographers be unobtrusive and cooperative and work under the instructions of the officiating clergy and wedding staff. Please consult with your wedding hostess about this before hiring a photographer. Our belief is that this is a solemn and beautiful event which must be respected and cherished.

## Ascension Wedding Fees

### Facility Use\* - \$300

This fee applies only to those who are not pledging members of this parish.

### Altar Guild\* - \$300

### Clergy Honorarium - \$300

This required honorarium applies only to couples who are not pledging members of the parish. Members of the parish may choose to offer an honorarium to the officiating priest at their own discretion. It is given to the officiating priest on the day of the wedding.

### Organist\* - \$175

This fee is in accordance with the American Guild of Organist standard. If the organist is to attend the rehearsal, there will be an additional charge of \$70. With prior approval another musician may play our organ, and in that case, the parish organist receives a "bench fee" of \$100.

**Sexton\* - \$40** (Additional \$40 if reception is included)

**Acolytes\* - \$20** each (use of acolytes is optional)

**Aisle Runner\* - \$35** (use of the runner is optional)

**Candelabras – no charge** (optional, but the couple provides the pre-approved candles)

### Receptions - \$200

This includes the use of the parish Hall and kitchen facilities. Please see the section on receptions for more information.

*\*These donations are to be placed in separate, marked envelopes, and given to the wedding hostess at the time of the rehearsal. We request that the amounts be in cash, please.*

## Receptions

We do offer receptions in our parish hall. The length or ending time of the reception will be determined in advance with the Rector.

### Facilities

The parish hall and kitchen may be used for the preparation and serving of food. This includes the refrigerator, the stove, and both the conventional oven and convection oven. The Church of the Ascension does not provide serving equipment for receptions. You must provide table cloths, silverware, plates, glasses, serving dishes, punch bowls, coffee makers, napkins, decorations, etc.

We have ten round tables, six rectangular tables and about eighty chairs which you may use. If you do choose to use them, you must set them up and put them away after the reception.

The sexton is not responsible for setting up chairs and tables, or for putting them away. His cleanup work does not include doing dishes or cleaning the kitchen. You are responsible for this.

### Alcoholic Beverage Policy

Beer, wine and champagne may be served at receptions provided non-alcoholic beverages are served also. No hard liquor is permitted. Hosts of the reception are responsible for their guests' behavior.

### EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

25 E. Laurel Avenue

Sierra Madre, CA 91024

626-355-113

Office hours: 9:00 – 2:00, M-F

[www.ascension-sierramadre.com](http://www.ascension-sierramadre.com)

email: [parish@ascension-sierramadre.com](mailto:parish@ascension-sierramadre.com)

Rector: The Rev'd Canon Michael A. Bamberger  
Wedding Coordinator: Lynne Holl 626-355-1560