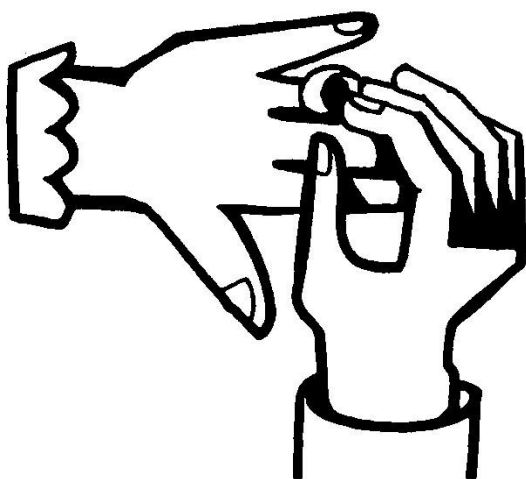


CHURCH OF THE  
incarnation



## Weddings at Incarnation



*Revised February 2022*

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage, and thank you for considering celebrating it at Incarnation!

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## **WHO CAN BE MARRIED AT INCARNATION?**

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In the Episcopal Church marriage is available to both same-gender and different-gender couples. The canons of the Episcopal Church require that at least one member of the couple be a baptized Christian.

We believe that marriage is a sacred, lifelong covenant between two persons, made in the presence of God and the community of faith. Couples being married in the Episcopal Church are required to sign the following Declaration of Intention:

*We understand the teaching of the church that God's purpose for our marriage is for our mutual joy, for the help and comfort we will give to each other in prosperity and adversity, and, when it is God's will, for the gift and heritage of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of God. We also understand that our marriage is to be unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong, and we engage to make the utmost effort to accept these gifts and fulfill these duties, with the help of God and the support of our community.*

Remarriage after divorce is permitted in the Episcopal Church, provided the couple have undergone appropriate counseling and preparation.

All weddings celebrated at Incarnation are marriage liturgies of the Episcopal Church. In general, clergy of this congregation officiate (in certain special situations, other Episcopal or Lutheran clergy may be invited to officiate). Most weddings are held in the church building; however, it is possible to consider arrangements at another location. It is not possible to rent the church building for services of other traditions.

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## **SCHEDULING**

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Weddings are not celebrated during the seasons of Lent (the six weeks preceding Easter) or Advent (the four weeks preceding Christmas) except in cases of urgent need. Other than that, weddings can be scheduled in most times of the year, provided that the church calendar is free and a priest is available. Please contact the church

office to discuss an exact day and time. Usually you will want to do this at least six to twelve months in advance. We cannot schedule weddings less than three months in advance except in cases of emergency. Weddings are scheduled only tentatively until after the couple's first conversation with the priest, when the date can be confirmed.

While most weddings are standalone services, it is also possible to be married as part of a regular Sunday morning service.

When one or both partners have been previously married, a consent from the Bishop is required. This process can take up to an additional month, so it is important to plan accordingly.

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## **HOW DO WE PREPARE?**

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All couples being married in the Episcopal Church are required to participate in appropriate preparation. Typically, at Incarnation, we do this by asking couples to meet both with the clergy person who will be officiating and with a licensed premarital counselor.

The first meeting with the clergy person is for getting acquainted, going over the marriage process, answering questions, and confirming the date. Next, the couple is asked to meet for two to three sessions with a licensed counselor. After this, the couple meet once more with the clergy person to reflect on the counseling experience and the spiritual dimensions of marriage.

We also ask the couple to attend Sunday services at Incarnation at least twice during this time of preparation, so you can get to know our community, and our community can meet you. (In cases where one or both partners do not live locally, this can be adapted so that you're visiting a local Episcopal church near you.)

Finally, a rehearsal is always scheduled, usually the day before the wedding service. All members of the wedding party are required to attend (please take this into account when making travel plans). Physically walking through the marriage liturgy beforehand helps reduce anxiety and frees us up to be fully, prayerfully present to the event itself.

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## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

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All weddings at Incarnation are celebrated according to the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer* or the additional rites in the supplemental volume *I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing*. The rites contain considerable flexibility, although the vows themselves cannot be rewritten. Two or three readings from scripture are always included. Friends or family members may be invited to do the readings or lead the Prayers of the People.

The Holy Eucharist, or Communion, is a standard part of the marriage service and is recommended when both partners are Christian. All baptized Christians, of any age or denomination, are invited to receive Communion in the Episcopal Church. In cases where one partner or most of the guests are from another faith tradition (or no faith tradition), it may be appropriate to celebrate the wedding without the Eucharist.

Music at Incarnation is led by our organist (and, when appropriate, one of our choir directors). Other musicians are not permitted without their permission. Music must be appropriate for a worship service. Recorded music is not generally used in worship. The church musician can help you choose hymns and arrange for soloists, instrumentalists, etc. if you wish.

Guest clergy (Christian or otherwise) may participate in the ceremony at the officiating priest's invitation. Depending on the situation, they might lead the prayers, preach the homily, or pronounce a blessing.

Our parish administrator acts as Wedding Coordinator for the church and coordinates all aspects of your use of the church's facilities. Couples sometimes hire a wedding planner to handle overall details. This can help reduce the stress of planning a complicated event. However, it is important to discuss the role of the planner with our Wedding Coordinator prior to making plans, especially regarding decorations and setup.

Incarnation seats 150 people comfortably, with a maximum capacity of 200. There are two moderately-sized parking lots adjacent to the church, with ample street parking in the neighborhood. Limited facilities are available for dressing and preparation of the wedding party if you wish to use them.

Flowers and decorations must be coordinated with Incarnation's altar guild. Only approved decorations can be used. In general, florists are welcome to furnish floor baskets or sprays on stands that can be taken after the ceremony. If you wish to have flowers behind the altar, these are arranged by the church's altar guild and remain in the church after the wedding. Every effort is made to provide the flowers and style of your choice. The price of the altar arrangement will depend on the size and type of flowers you suggest. For safety reasons, throwing rice, birdseed, etc. is not permitted.

Our church's livestreaming team may be able to offer a livestream of your wedding service (for example, if you have people unable to be there in person who would like to participate via Zoom). The church's video equipment can also be used to create a video recording of the service. This depends on the availability of a member of our livestreaming team.

Photography is permitted by a single photographer. Flashes may not be used during the service. Photographers should plan to touch base with the clergy person briefly before the ceremony. Additional photos can be taken after the service.

The couple is responsible for obtaining a wedding license (from any county clerk in the state of California). Please bring the license to the rehearsal so the priest can prepare it and hold it for safekeeping until the time of the service. The couple and priest sign the license and the church registry immediately after the service, before taking photos.

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## **COSTS**

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	<b>Members<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Non-Members</b>
Church building use (includes 3 hours for wedding plus a one-hour rehearsal the day before)	\$300	\$1,500
Extra time (per half-hour)	\$50	\$50
Clergy fees for meetings, rehearsal, and wedding	\$600	\$600
Sexton	\$150	\$150
Wedding Coordinator	\$200	\$200
Organist	\$300	\$300
Video/Livestream (if used)	\$200	\$200
Farlander Hall use (no kitchen)	\$200	\$400
Kitchen use	\$200	\$400
Refundable deposit to cover extra time, repairs, or cleaning	N/A	\$250

A \$250 payment is required at the time of booking, and the full payment is due three months before the wedding date.

If you wish, it is possible to hold your reception in our parish hall, known as Farlander Hall. Please speak with the parish administrator about renting this space.

In cases of financial need, some costs can be reduced. Please speak with the officiating clergy person.

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<sup>1</sup> Membership includes regular attendance at worship for at least one year, registration on the rolls of the parish, and being a donor of record.

*For more information, or to set up an appointment  
to begin the marriage preparation process, please  
contact the church office at (707) 579-2604.*

*God bless you in your marriage journey.*

