

# WEDDINGS

OLD DONATION EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
(since 1637)



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Parish Office Hours: Mon.-Thurs., 9am-5pm  
Fri. 9am-1pm

## SOME INITIAL THOUGHTS ABOUT YOUR WEDDING: YOUR MARRIAGE – AND OLD DONATION

So you're thinking about a wedding. We want to offer you our heartfelt congratulations and our hopes and prayers for this to be the beginning of a wonderful life together. If you are normal and have been in relationship for a while, you have probably experienced already some of the things most long-time married folk experience. There have been mostly good times we suspect, but your relationship may have been sometimes for worse and for poorer. Welcome to marriage. Although marriage is a joy, it is also from time to time work, even hard work. Perhaps you know that as well.

As if you did not know it already, certainly by now you are learning afresh that here is so much more to marriage than a wedding. But with your wedding in mind, and your hope for a blessing of what God is already accomplishing in you, we are honored that you have asked us to help. Our society today sometimes makes the wedding a huge, complicated and, too often, stress-filled event. We agree the day should be filled with beauty and all the elements that make it a true celebration for you, your families and friends. However, we believe even more strongly that the wedding should be a day of celebrating God's wonderful act of bringing the two of you together, making commitments before God, and asking for God to bless your relationship from this day until the day you are parted by death. We hope the day is filled with joy and thankfulness. Our part in that will be to help prepare you for marriage, to help design the actual service and direct the event of the wedding service.

We will also be happy to tell you that everything else is wonderful, but PLEASE do not make the details and competing ideas you will hear from family and friends drive you into an early grave! Often, couples planning their weddings are overly stressed by well-meaning and loving friends and family, who will all have suggestions or things you just "must do" the way they've seen or heard or dreamt about. Please remember this will be a day of joy, thankfulness and beauty if it is *your* wedding, done as you wish, with God and you at the center of the day. All else is fluff.

*After reading through this document, **if you are interested in continuing to inquire about celebrating your wedding at Old Donation, please call the clergy** of Old Donation as soon as possible. Our phone number is: (757)497-0563*

**We want to get to know you. And in response, you might also want to know something about Old Donation.** We are a church community with roots stretching back more than 375 years. Our first building, and some of our graveyard, is underwater just off the shore at Church Point, roughly two miles from here. When that first church was threatened by water, we moved to the headwaters of Cattail Creek (Cattayle Branch on old maps), and we have crowned these headwaters ever since. Our ancestors are buried in our graveyard, and many of us will one day lie there as well. We

have been baptized within these old walls, we have celebrated marriages and ordinations within the walls, and we have lain to rest our family and friends from these walls. Old Donation is home to us. We hope you are finding it a home as well, as we expect you to.

**If you are an active member** of Old Donation, that is, you involve yourself in the life of this congregation with affection, there is no question that this is just the place for you to celebrate your marriage with a wedding. Just speak to clergy about it. And get on the calendar.

**If you are not an active member**, but you have family who is, or you have a connection with Old Donation, perhaps you are a graduate of our Old Donation Episcopal Day School, you, too, are to be treated as a member of this family. Unless geography is an issue, we also hope you will honor us with your presence and affection by becoming an active member. If you live out of town, you will need to make plans to converse with another Episcopal member of clergy about what might be called pre-wedding conversations, as required by our Canon Law. More on this below.

**If you are not active in Old Donation**, and don't meet the description just given, we hope you will consider joining our common life, to worship Christ and grow in faith, to laugh with us at coffee hour, to allow us to introduce you to others who will enjoy meeting you, to attend our occasional concerts and other events - just give us your email address. It will be important for you to speak with clergy as soon as possible, and it will be important that you give assurance to them that Old Donation is as important to you as you are asking Old Donation to be for you. If you are a member of another Church and wish to be married here because of its historic roots in the community and its beauty, there is special accommodation and opportunity for you to use our Church. Please speak to our Parish Administrator for details and a description.

Like you, we know a wedding doesn't make a marriage. It is simply the beginning. In the Wedding Liturgy in our **Book of Common Prayer**, the folk of Old Donation are asked (page 425):

*Will all of you witnessing these promises do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their marriage?*  
And the people respond: *We will.*

We want to support you as your marriage grows. That's the Episcopal Church way.

On the evening of your wedding rehearsal, you will need to present your license and sign the following declaration. The Episcopal Church is a community with community expectations related to the Gospel, and with expectations about marriage. These expectations are presented on the next page.

The pledge to be signed follows:

*“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 lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. We believe that the union of husband and wife, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God’s will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. And 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.”*

**Not unexpectedly, there are a few donations and obligations** attached to wedding celebrations at Old Donation. They are noted on a later page. There is no donation for clergy assistance, but for flowers, for the organist or other special music, for coordination and planning, for janitorial services, etc., there are expectations, as noted. And in the Episcopal Church, those who are planning to celebrate their marriage are also expected to meet with clergy as they examine more closely the relationship they are bringing to the altar of God’s church. As our Book of Common Prayer puts it, marriage is ***not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God*** (Book of Common Prayer, page 423).

There is a wonderful community of Christians at Old Donation waiting to welcome you. Become part of our worship. Lift a cup of coffee at our after church coffee hours. Expect to be met by our parishioners. We are delighted you are among us, and hope you find a home here. And please be assured that we will make our best efforts to help that happen.

## CANON 18

### Of the Solemnization of Holy Matrimony in the Episcopal Church

Sec. 1. Every Member of the Clergy of this Church shall conform to the laws of the State governing the creation of the civil status of marriage, and also to the laws of this Church governing the solemnization of Holy Matrimony.

Sec. 2. Before solemnizing a marriage the Member of the Clergy shall have ascertained:

- (a) That **both parties have the right to contract a marriage according to the laws of the State.**
- (b) That **both parties understand** that Holy Matrimony is a physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman, **entered into within the community of faith**, by mutual consent of heart, mind, and will, and with intent that it be lifelong.
- (c) That **both parties freely and knowingly consent to such marriage**, without fraud, coercion, mistake as to identity of a partner, or mental reservation.
- (d) That **at least one** of the parties has received Holy Baptism.
- (e) That **both parties have been instructed** as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony by the Member of the Clergy, or that they have both received such instruction from persons known by the Member of the Clergy to be competent and responsible.

Sec. 3. No Member of the Clergy of this Church shall solemnize any marriage unless the following procedures are complied with:

- (a) The intention of the parties to contract marriage shall have been signified to the Member of the Clergy **at least thirty days before the service of solemnization**; Provided, that for weighty cause, this requirement may be dispensed with if one of the parties is a member of the Congregation of the Member of the Clergy, or can furnish satisfactory evidence of responsibility. In case the thirty days' notice is waived, the Member of the Clergy shall report such action in writing to the Bishop immediately.
- (b) There shall be present **at least two witnesses** to the solemnization of marriage.
- (c) The Member of the Clergy **shall record in the proper register** the date and place of the marriage, the names of the parties and their parents, the age of the parties, their residences, and their Church status; the witnesses and the Member of the Clergy shall sign the record.
- (d) The Member of the Clergy shall have required that **the parties sign** the following declaration:
  - (e) *"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 lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.*
  - (f) *"We believe that the union of husband and wife, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.*
  - (g) *"And 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."*

Sec. 4. It shall be within the discretion of any Member of the Clergy of this Church **to decline** to solemnize any marriage.

## THE WEDDING LITURGY

Old Donation is the church and spiritual home of a contemporary Christian congregation. It is home to us. When we gather for worship, we do things in a certain way, in a certain fashion, just as most families also value a certain way of doing things when they sit down to dinner. Clergy are happy to consult about such.

**ORDER OF SERVICE:** All weddings in Old Donation Church will be celebrated according to order for “The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage” in the Book of Common Prayer, pg. 423ff.

**BIBLE READINGS:** Bible readings for the service may be selected from the list on page 426 of the Book of Common Prayer. Up to three lessons and a psalm may be used, if desired. At least one reading must be included. If you would like a friend or family member to read, please invite them to do so and have them attend the rehearsal.

**HOLY EUCHARIST (Holy Communion):** A celebration of the Holy Eucharist is encouraged, although not necessary. The most suitable time for this celebration is during the wedding service. Whenever the Holy Eucharist is celebrated all baptized Christians who are present will be invited to receive the sacraments of bread and wine.

**PRAYERS:** The prayers for your marriage (pp. 429-30, BCP) are written as a series of intercessions. The prayer regarding the gift and heritage of children is optional.

**MUSIC:** The parish organist will play at all in-parish weddings if he is available. Please contact him as soon as you have a wedding date.

**Parish Organist: Paul Hudgins, 757-621-0539**

If the parish organist is unavailable for your wedding, we will assist you in arranging for a qualified substitute. If you wish instrumentalists or vocal soloists, please consult with the parish organist. The singing of congregational hymns during the service is highly encouraged. Since a wedding is a sacramental rite of the church (a worship service), the music should reflect a reverent atmosphere. The parish organist must approve all music selections. “Popular” music and recorded music are prohibited.

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**OLD DONATION EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**PLANNING GUIDELINES FOR YOUR WEDDING**

**WEDDING COORDINATOR:** A member of Old Donation's Altar Guild will assist you in planning many details of your wedding. They will attend your rehearsal and wedding, will help arrange for the altar flowers, will reserve family pews, will direct the ushers in their duties, and will assist in getting mothers seated and the procession started down the aisle. In addition, they will be able to answer numerous questions relating to use of the church, wedding etiquette, and planning details - especially those related to the information that follows in this hand-out.

Other wedding consultants (commercial or family friends) are not necessary. Naturally, you may invite anyone you wish to help with details at home or at the reception.

**FLOWERS:** The only flowers permitted for weddings (other than those carried or worn by the bridal party) are the altar flowers, which are placed in the windows behind the altar. There are flowers ordered through the Church Wedding Coordinator, who may redirect you to a member of the Flower Guild. They will then be used for worship services on the Sunday after your wedding. This will save you money, will assure that the flower arrangements will be properly sized and shaped (since our in-house flower guild knows through experience what looks best), and will also help the church (flowers are taken to the sick after Sunday services). Most requests for certain colors or types of flowers can be accommodated; however, sometimes there is a modest extra charge. Please note that during the season of Advent (between Thanksgiving and Christmas) only greenery is placed on the altar. During the six (6) weeks prior to Easter the church has no flowers on the altar. During these seasons you are welcome to provide your own flowers.

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**DECORATIONS:** The simplicity of the architecture and decoration of Old Donation Church is part of its unique charm. Bows are placed on the ends of pews reserved for the family and candles with hurricane globes may be placed in the windows for evening weddings. These items are supplied by the Church. Additional decoration is not permitted.

**NUMBER OF GUESTS AND SIZE OF BRIDAL PARTY:**

**Guests:** The church comfortably seats 180-220 guests for a wedding.

**Bridal Party:** The number of groomsmen and bridesmaids should be discussed with the wedding coordinator.

**WEDDING PROGRAMS:** You are welcome to have a program, and we will supply a bulletin which meets the needs of most couples. If you wish something other than our standard design, we ask you to take full responsibility for its design, proofing, and printing. We have several samples used at previous weddings. If you would like to see them, please email the church office ([odec@olddonation.org](mailto:odec@olddonation.org)) for a convenient time to come in.

**MARRIAGE LICENSE:** A Virginia Marriage License must be obtained from the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the City in which you reside. Licenses are currently valid for 60 days after their issuance. Photo IDs are required; blood tests are not. Please bring the license to the clergy at one of your counseling sessions, but no later than at your rehearsal. After your wedding, he/she will sign the license and return it to the Clerk's Office. Copies can be obtained at the Clerk's Office and are usually available within three (3) weeks from the wedding date.

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Please see "*Photography Requirements for Weddings in Old Donation Church*", page 11, and provide a copy to your photographer, as well.

**PARISH HALL RECEPTION:** Old Donation's Parish Hall may be used, if available, for your reception. It is important that you call the church office (497-0563) as soon as possible to reserve this facility. Champagne or wine punch may be served, if all state laws regarding alcohol use are observed, and an equally attractive non-alcoholic alternative is served. An open bar or kegs of beer are not permitted. Smoking is not permitted inside the building. Please see "*Catering Requirements for Receptions in Old Donation Parish Hall*", Pages 9 and 10, and provide a copy to your caterer, as well.

**Contact information for 2017:**

Altar Guild: Martha Wilson, [laughingvolcano@yahoo.com](mailto:laughingvolcano@yahoo.com), cell 310-430-2306

Parish Organist: Paul Hudgins, [pghudgins@aol.com](mailto:pghudgins@aol.com) 757-621-0539

Parish Administrator: Gretchen Hood, [odec@olddonation.org](mailto:odec@olddonation.org) 757-497-0563

OLD DONATION PARISH HALL  
CATERING GUIDELINES FOR RECEPTION

1. The caterer(s) **must identify themselves** to the Parish Administrator with **Name, Address, Telephone number, and contact person (a business card will do)**, and with a **signed copy** of these guidelines in the parish office **before the parish hall will be released for the reception.**
2. **Our buildings and grounds are special to us.** Tucker Hall, in which the reception is likely to be held, is named in honor of a former rector. We have been at this site for more than 300 years, and although the parish is relatively new, in terms of the breadth of our history, the grounds on which it stands have been ours since this area was the first county seat of what was then Princess Anne county. The following rules and guidelines are given voice so that you, the Caterer, might treat our buildings as if you were us. And in advance, thank you.
3. **Caterer must furnish** own tablecloths, candelabra and table decorations and any cookware which is required.
4. Caterer **may use kitchen facilities** for the serving of beverages and refrigeration of refreshments previously prepared elsewhere.
5. Caterer **may serve champagne or wine punch, as well as equally attractive non-alcoholic beverages** are served as an alternative. Per regulations from The Episcopal Church, alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks must be served on separate tables with clear signage indicating “Alcoholic” and “Non-Alcoholic”. Open bars or kegs of beer are prohibited. Caterer must be familiar with, and in compliance with, State and Federal Law regulating the serving of alcoholic beverages. Caterer should be alert to possible abuse and be prepared to act responsibly. ***Transportation shall be provided for anyone judged unable to drive.***
6. **Smoking is prohibited** in all Church buildings; cement urns are provided outside for cigarette butts.
7. Caterer should see that **only birdseed is used** to shower the bride and groom.
8. Caterer may use the parish’s flatware, dishes, bowls, sugar & creamer servers, plates, bowls, glasses, cups and saucers, serving bowls, etc..., provided that all such items are **washed, dried and returned** to their respective storage cabinets.
9. Caterer **may use Parish Hall tables and chairs**, provided we are advised in advance.
10. Caterer is **responsible for clean-up** after use of kitchen facilities and Parish Hall.
11. Caterer is responsible for making sure that all **appliances are turned off** before leaving.
12. Caterer is **responsible for any damage** to church property during his/her use.
13. Caterer should **consult with Wedding Consultant** and should schedule a date and time to view the facilities with the Wedding Consultant.
14. **A \$100.00 security deposit** will be required of Caterer, to be returned to Caterer if the facilities, appliances, etc. are left clean, items used have been properly washed, dried and stored, and no damage has resulted.
15. Caterer will **not hold Old Donation Church liable** for any accident or injury incurred during use of the facilities. \_\_\_\_\_ **Initials**

**OLD DONATION EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**DONATIONS FOR WEDDING, RECEPTION:**

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is a sacrament of the Church and therefore there is no "fee" for getting married for those who are active members of the Church. There are some options for the worship that you may choose which do have cost if you wish to include them in your planning, such as special flowers, use of the Parish Hall, or a musician.

Most families also ask about making donations to the parish in thanksgiving for the occasion. The following are amounts of typical donations. Be assured the parish is happy to receive your generous offerings, but there is NO expectation or rule. We are more than pleased to celebrate with you as you begin a new life with God's blessings.

**CHURCH BUILDING DONATIONS:**

1. Use of Church \*
  - a. **Members** (including their children and grandchildren) – suggested donation: \$200.00.
2. Altar Flowers (two sprays) \* – \$120.00 if you wish to specify flowers for the service.

**DONATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED:**

*(Please make checks directly to the person involved)*

1. Clergy – *No charge for members.* Making a donation to the discretionary fund, which is used for support of our ministry to the poor and those in need, is appreciated. A customary donation would be between \$150 - \$250 or more.
2. Organist \*\* – \$300.00
3. Altar Guild Wedding Coordinator \* – *No charge for members.* A customary donation would be \$125.00

**PARISH HALL USAGE FOR RECEPTIONS, ETC...**

1. Use of Parish Hall
  - a. Members (including their children and grandchildren): – \$250.00
  - b. The parish hall is not available for non-member receptions.

**The check(s) for use of facilities and services for weddings** should be made out to ODEC (unless different payee specified below) and sent to the Parish Administrator no later than two (2) weeks prior to the wedding date.

\* Please write a separate check to Martha Wilson if you wish to make a donation.

\*\* Separate check payable to the Organist, or to substitute/alternate.

**OLD DONATION EPISCOPAL CHURCH:**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS**

1. A wedding celebrates a **private affair made public**. It celebrates the first step a publically covenanting couple makes when entering the public square. The main criterion for photography before, during, and after your wedding is that it **not be distracting or obtrusive**.
2. **No flash** photographs may be taken by anyone (commercial photographer or guests) **during the wedding ceremony**.
3. **Non-flash** photographs may be taken during the service from the back of the church or balcony **as long as** there is no disruptive noise or movement.
4. The photographer **may not come down the center aisle** any farther than the balcony pillars before or during the service.
5. **Formal poses** may be taken at the altar after the service, **re-enacting** what actually took place. All other poses - family members, etc. - should be taken prior to the wedding, at the reception or outside.
6. Please **limit your photo session** after the service to 20 minutes. (This is desirable both out of respect for your reception guests and so that altar guild members may prepare the church for subsequent services.)
7. **Videotaping** is permitted. This may be done by a friend or a professional service. Photography from the balcony turns out very nicely. Please **consult with the wedding coordinator**.
8. The photographer must consult with Clergy and the Wedding Coordinator and is encouraged to attend the rehearsal.

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## OLD DONATION CHURCH WEDDING FEES FOR MEMBERS

| FEE   | AMOUNT DUE   | PAY TO  | DATE DUE  |
|---|--|---|---|
| Use of Church                                   | \$200.00 suggested donation  | ODEC  |   |
| Old Donation Episcopal Church Priest            | \$150.00-\$250.00 suggested donation   | ODEC  |   |
| Altar Flowers                                   | \$0 if using altar flowers provided. \$120.00 if you specify color or type of flowers. | ODEC  | Not later than 2 weeks prior to the wedding date. |
| Organist  | \$300.00   | Paul Hudgins<br>(please use a separate check made out to him) | Not later than 2 weeks prior to the wedding date. |
| Altar Guild Wedding Coordinator                 | \$125.00<br>If you wish to make a donation   | Martha Wilson<br>(please write a separate check)              | Not later than 2 weeks prior to the wedding date. |
| Sexton's Fee<br>(only if using the Parish Hall) | \$250.00   | ODEC  | Not later than 2 weeks prior to the wedding date. |
| Parish Hall (Rector's permission required)      | \$250.00   | ODEC  | Not later than 2 weeks prior to the wedding date. |

\*please see Music section above for information on substitute/out of parish organists.

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If you wish to be married at Old Donation and are willing to follow these guidelines, please sign this document and return it to our Parish Administrator so that we can reserve the date and time for your wedding. **Please Note:** We do not allow Old Donation Episcopal Church to be used as a back-up or rain date location for weddings.

\_\_\_\_\_ Initials

**Contact information for 2018:**

Altar Guild: Janet Forbes, [laughingvolcano@yahoo.com](mailto:laughingvolcano@yahoo.com) , cell 310-430-2306

Parish Organist: Paul Hudgins, [pghudgins@aol.com](mailto:pghudgins@aol.com) 757-621-0539

Parish Administrator: Gretchen Hood, [odec@olddonation.org](mailto:odec@olddonation.org) 757-497-0563

We have read the document *Wedding Guidelines for Members at Old Donation Episcopal Church* and agree to observe all guidelines.

| Name | Signature | Date |
|------|-----------|------|
|      |           |      |
|      |           |      |

Date and time of rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time of wedding: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact information for the Bride and Groom:

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_ Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE

| Received By | Date |
|-------------|------|
|             |      |