

INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES  
FOR  
WEDDINGS



CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION AND SAINT AGNES



# INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS

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## THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF MARRIAGE

“The bond and covenant of marriage was established by God in creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ adorned this manner of life by his presence and first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. It signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, and Holy Scripture commends it to be honored among all people.

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. Therefore, 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.”

*1979 Book of Common Prayer, p. 423*

## INITIAL REQUIREMENTS

### **Membership in the Parish**

At least one member of the couple must be a member of this parish. Membership in the parish entails formal enrollment, presupposes Baptism, and includes active contributions of time, talent, and treasure to the parish community. The celebration and blessing of a marriage “is a solemn and public covenant in the presence of God” (BCP, page 422) in the Body of Christ, the Church. Although uniquely intimate, it is never simply a private affair. Moreover, marriage is a sacrament of service, that is, it sends the couple into the heart of the Church and into society to witness to the love between Christ and us, His Church.

### **Declaration of Intention**

The couple is required to sign the Declaration of Intention. In so doing, they express their intention faithfully to receive and live the sacrament of marriage.

*We, N. and 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 that the union of husband and wife, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for our 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.*

### **Premarital Counseling**

The couple typically must have premarital counseling with a professional counselor suggested or approved by the Priest. The couple must meet at least twice with the counselor, after which the counselor will submit a written report to the Priest indicating whether or not he or she thinks the couple may move forward or if further preparation is needed.

The Episcopal Church also requires that “both parties have been instructed as to the nature, meaning, and purpose of Holy Matrimony.” The Priest will provide this sacramental instruction. Our rector will typically meet two or three times with a couple. At

any time during the counseling, and at any time before the wedding, the Priest reserves the right to decline to solemnize the marriage.

### **Scheduling**

Weddings may not be scheduled on Sundays, on Christmas Eve, on Christmas Day, or in Lent. It is preferable that weddings not be scheduled during Advent.

### **Marriage Rite**

All weddings will be according to the customary rites of the Parish and must conform to the guidelines of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington (the most recent *Bishop's Guidelines for Marriage and Remarriage* are accessible at [www.edow.org/marriage](http://www.edow.org/marriage)). The terms and requirements of the Bishop's Guidelines are incorporated here by reference. At the discretion of the Priest and the couple, the liturgy may include a Mass and may also draw upon other approved liturgical resources in addition to the Book of Common Prayer.

### **No Pre-Nuptial Agreement**

The couple may not have a pre-nuptial agreement. God intends marriage to be a life-long covenant. A pre-nuptial agreement introduces conditions into what is to be a journey characterized by unconditional love.

### **Marriage License**

The couple is responsible for obtaining a marriage license from the District of Columbia. There can be no wedding without a valid civil marriage license.

DC Marriage Bureau  
500 Indiana Ave., NW, Room 4483  
Washington, DC 20001  
(202) 879-4843  
<http://www.dccourts.gov/dccourts/superior/family/marriage.jsp>

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONS DIVORCED**

The Episcopal Church “affirms that committed relationships are life-long and monogamous, but also recognizes that there is grace after divorce.” It is understood that “God, in infinite mercy and redeeming love, creates new life in death, gives hope where there is despair and forgives our sins”. To be remarried, in addition to the above, the following requirements must be met:

### **Member of the Parish**

At least one of the couple must be a member of this parish. (see above)

### **Divorce Decree**

The Priest is required to see a copy of the divorce decree.

### **Ongoing Pastoral Relationship**

One or both persons seeking remarriage must have an ongoing pastoral relationship with one of the parish clergy.

### **Professional Counselor**

The Priest will typically refer the couple to a professional counselor if the couple has not already received such counseling.

### **Obligations to Former Spouse and Children**

Obligations to the former spouse and/or children have been or are being fulfilled responsibly. An amicable relationship with the previous spouse is encouraged.

### **Bishop’s Permission**

The Priest must obtain permission from the Bishop for the marriage to take place. The Bishop requires the following:

1. A signed copy of the Declaration of Intent; and
2. An Application for Episcopal Consent to Officiate at a Remarriage, completed by the Priest.

## **WEDDING REHEARSAL**

A wedding rehearsal is required and normally takes place one or two days before the wedding:

1. The rehearsal date should be reserved with the Administrative Assistant at the same time the wedding is scheduled.
2. Members of the wedding party should be present for the rehearsal and should arrive at least fifteen minutes early.
3. The marriage license must be presented at the rehearsal. No wedding can be performed without the license being provided at the rehearsal.
4. A typical rehearsal lasts one hour.
5. Musicians do not attend the rehearsal.

## **SERVICE**

1. There must be at least two (2) witnesses to the wedding and who will be expected to sign the Parish Register as witnesses.
2. The Priest must approve the participation of any other clergy.
3. The readings at the wedding must be from Holy Scripture (The Bible).
4. It is encouraged to appoint one or more persons to read the scripture passages and the Prayers of the People (if included) during the wedding.
5. Hymns should be liturgically appropriate (see guidelines below).
6. Candles will be used in keeping with the parish's liturgical custom.
7. Recorded music, given its lack of sacredness, is not used.
8. No rice or confetti is to be thrown on church premises.
9. Any person in the wedding party who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony.

## **MUSIC AND FEES**

### **Organist**

Organ music at the service will be played by the parish Organist / Choirmaster. If necessary, the Organist / Choirmaster may approve of a visiting organist with appropriate professional credentials. Nevertheless, the parish Organist / Choirmaster will still receive the fee of \$400. The fee includes the service itself and one consultation on the music, either in person at the church, or by telephone. The Organist / Choirmaster does not attend the wedding rehearsal.

### **Vocalists or Choir**

Vocal music, if any, will be sung by the professional singers who comprise the parish choir. Three options are possible: a soloist (in any of the voice ranges), a quartet, or a full choir (defined as eight or more regular professional singers of the parish). These musicians must be booked through the Organist / Choirmaster. Outside singers are typically not engaged; special permission may be granted where appropriate.

The fees are: soloist, \$200; quartet, \$800; octet, \$1,600.

### **Instrumentalists**

Any instrumental music, in addition to organ, must be booked through the Organist / Choirmaster. Visiting musicians are typically not permitted. A wide range of options are available. We engage professional orchestral musicians. These include, but are not limited to, brass and strings. Fees vary significantly depending on the instrumentation. Contact the Organist / Choirmaster for details.

### **Repertoire**

Repertoire to be performed at weddings traditionally comes from the wide-ranging repertoire of the Church. It reflects the high aesthetic standards for which the Church is known. The music is not an ornament to the liturgy but an integral part of the service. Organ music will be indigenous to the instrument. Adaptations of popular music and similar idioms are not permitted. Likewise, choral repertoire will be drawn from the motet and anthem literature regularly sung at the parish. In other words, "If we would not typically do it on a Sunday, then we ought not do it for the wedding." Additionally, the repertoire must fit the wedding liturgically, sacramentally, and scripturally, and not simply reflect sentiment or preference. Specific titles of works played and sung will be discussed with the Organist / Choirmaster at the initial consultation. The final decision on the appropriateness of repertoire rests with the Priest and Organist / Choirmaster. Once decided, these titles may not be changed.

## **CHURCH AND FEES**

How much does one donate to the church? This is an important question that merits being considered thoughtfully. It sometimes becomes an unfortunate afterthought for a couple. The question is perhaps best answered by considering the centrality of the sacramental service in the church in comparison with the other parts of the overall celebration. The reception, for example, is not the wedding *per se* and follows the wedding. One might ask such a question as “Am I spending more on flowers or the limousine or musicians than I am on the church?”

There is a long-standing, Biblical principal of giving, worth consideration. Tithing (from the Old English for “tenth”) is the practice, common among many Christians, of giving 10% of their income to the church community. Some couples tith (i.e., give an amount equal to 10% of) the overall cost of the wedding as a contribution to the church. The contribution is a gift above and beyond any expenses incurred by the parish.

Please bear in mind that the parish does not request fees for:

- Sacramental counseling provided by the Priest;
- use of the church;
- custodial services and utilities;
- preparation and printing of the wedding bulletin;
- Priest’s honorarium for officiating (directed to discretionary expenses for ministry).

The fees for the Organist / Choirmaster, soloists, choir, or instrumentalists are not included in the amount tithed to the church and are paid to them directly.

### **Payment schedule**

One-third of the total must be paid in advance at the time the date is reserved. The balance is due at least two weeks prior to the wedding ceremony.

## **SEATING**

The church, in its current configuration of pews, seats 190 comfortably. Chairs can be added to accommodate as many as another 100 people.

## **WEDDING BULLETIN (PROGRAM)**

A wedding bulletin may be prepared and printed by the parish. All materials for the bulletin, such as: names of readers, bridesmaids, groomsmen, etc., must be in the parish office at least seven days before the wedding rehearsal.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY**

The marriage ceremony is a sacred rite of worship. Photographers (and guests), therefore, may not use flash and are to be very discreet during the ceremony. They are typically not allowed in the sanctuary during the service. Photographs may be “staged” after the service. The Priest will discuss these guidelines with the photographer.

## **RECEPTION IN THE SOCIAL HALL (UNDERCROFT)**

The social hall may be available for a reception for a donation of \$500. Contact the parish office to discuss this. Alcoholic beverages may be served in moderation. Nonalcoholic options must be provided as well in an equally attractive and available way.

## **TIPS FOR READERS**

Readers at the wedding must plan to rehearse their reading with the Priest in the church at the time of the rehearsal. They are to become intimately familiar with the text prior to this rehearsal. The space is large and resonant. If you would like the wedding to be beautiful and meaningful, then you want your readers to be heard and understood.

Here are a few tips to be communicated to the readers:

1. When you take your place at the lectern to read, remember that you are among friends. Do not rush into your text: stand there silently for a few seconds to get comfortable, getting a sense of the congregation, how far your voice must project, and when people are settled and ready to listen.

2. Breathe deeply, keep your chin up (do not speak into the book), and speak loudly. Use your “playground” voice! Project your voice over the lectern, all the way to the choir loft!
3. Speak slowly, but not mechanically, much more slowly than you otherwise ever would – as if reading a book to a little child. If you do not, then the reverberation will completely muddle the sound of your voice.
4. Articulate all the words carefully, even little words like “and”.
5. Emphasize consonants, especially final consonants.
6. Use pauses for purposes of interpretation and emphasis.
7. There is no need to rush. Speak slowly and steadily all the way to the end of the text.

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

The following passages from Holy Scripture elucidate the meaning of the sacrament of Marriage, and thus lend themselves particularly well to the celebration. Please read the passages and select one from each section. You must choose a Gospel selection even if you choose to reduce the total number of readings to two (2). If you have other passages in mind, please explore them with the Priest.

### **OLD TESTAMENT**

#### **Song of Solomon 2:10-13, 8:6-7**

*(Many waters cannot quench love)*

My beloved speaks and says to me:  
"Arise, my love, my fair one,  
and come away;  
for now the winter is past,  
the rain is over and gone.  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
the time of singing has come,  
and the voice of the turtledove  
is heard in our land.  
The fig tree puts forth its figs,  
and the vines are in blossom;  
they give forth fragrance.  
Arise, my love, my fair one,  
and come away.  
Set me as a seal upon your heart,  
as a seal upon your arm;  
for love is strong as death,  
passion fierce as the grave.  
Its flashes are flashes of fire,  
a raging flame.  
Many waters cannot quench love,  
neither can floods drown it.  
If one offered for love  
all the wealth of his house,  
it would be utterly scorned.

## **Genesis 1:26-28**

*(Male and female he created them)*

God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

## **Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24**

*(A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)*

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up— for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one shall be called Woman,  
for out of Man this one was taken."

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

## **Tobit 8:5b-8**

*(That she and I may grow old together)*

Tobias said:

"We praise thee, O God of our fathers,

We praise thy name for ever and ever.

Let the heavens and all thy creation praise thee for ever.

Thou madest Adam, and Eve his wife

To be his helper and support;

And those two were the parents of the human race.

This was thy word: 'It is not good for the man to be alone;

Let us make him a helper like him.'

I now take this my beloved to wife,

Not out of lust  
but in true marriage.  
Grant that she and I may find mercy  
and grow old together."  
They both said "Amen."

**Additional Old Testament Readings:** *Ruth 1:16–17; Ecclesiastes 4:9–12;*

*1 Samuel 18:1b, 3; 20:16–17; 42a or 1 Samuel 18:1–4;*

*Micah 4:1–4*

## PSALMS

### PSALM 67

May God be merciful to us and bless us, \*  
show us the light of his countenance and come to us.  
Let your ways be known upon earth, \*  
your saving health among all nations.  
Let the peoples praise you, O God; \*  
let all the peoples praise you.  
Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, \*  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide all the nations upon earth.  
Let the peoples praise you, O God; \*  
let all the peoples praise you.  
The earth has brought forth her increase; \*  
may God, our own God, give us his blessing.  
May God give us his blessing, \*  
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of him.

### PSALM 127

Unless the LORD builds the house, \*  
their labor is in vain who build it.  
Unless the LORD watches over the city, \*  
in vain the watchman keeps his vigil.  
It is in vain that you rise so early and go to bed so late; \*  
vain, too, to eat the bread of toil,  
for he gives to his beloved sleep.  
Children are a heritage from the LORD, \*  
and the fruit of the womb is a gift.  
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior \*  
are the children of one's youth.  
Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them! \*

he shall not be put to shame  
when he contends with his enemies in the gate.

### **PSALM 128**

Happy are they all who fear the LORD, \*  
and who follow in his ways!  
You shall eat the fruit of your labor; \*  
happiness and prosperity shall be yours.  
Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house, \*  
your children like olive shoots round about your table.  
The man who fears the LORD \*  
shall thus indeed be blessed.  
The LORD bless you from Zion, \*  
and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life.  
May you live to see your children's children; \*  
may peace be upon Israel.

**ADDITIONAL PSALMS:** *Psalm 65; Psalm 85:7-13; Psalm 98; Psalm 100, Psalm 126, Psalm 133;  
Psalm 148; and Psalm 149:1-5*

## **THE EPISTLES**

### **1 Corinthians: 13: 1-13**

*(Love is patient and kind)*

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will

cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

### **Ephesians 3:14-19[20,21]**

*(The Father from whom every family is named)*

I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. [Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.]

### **Colossians 3:12-17**

*(Love which binds everything together in harmony)*

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

### **Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33**

*(Walk in love, as Christ loved us)*

Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. In the same way, husbands should love their

wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

### **1 John 4:7-16[21]**

*(Let us love one another for love is of God)*

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

[The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.]

**Additional Epistle Readings:** *Romans 12:9-18; 1 Corinthians 12:31b-13:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 5:14,22-26; 1 John 3:18-24*

## **THE GOSPELS**

### **Matthew 5:1-10**

*(The Beatitudes)*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

### **Matthew 5:13-16**

*(You are the light...Let your light so shine)*

Jesus said to the crowd, "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

### **Matthew 7:21, 24-29**

*(Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock)*

Jesus told the crowd, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell-- and great was its fall!"

Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

### **John 15:9-12**

*(Love one another as I have loved you)*

Jesus said to his disciples, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

### **Mark 10:6-9, 13-16**

*(They are no longer two but one)*

Jesus said, "From the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'For

this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

**Additional Gospel Readings:** *Matthew 5:1-16; Mark 12:28-34; Luke 6:32-38;*  
*John 17:1-2, 18-26*



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## CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION AND SAINT AGNES

*A Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington*



Shield of  
The Episcopal Church



Compass Rose of  
The Anglican Communion



Shield of  
Ascension and St. Agnes Parish

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