

Trinity Episcopal Church
Marriage Policy Statement

On the Celebration and the Blessing of a 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 the 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.

Book of Common Prayer pg. 423

Weddings in the Episcopal Church are sacramental rites, and celebrated liturgically through the use of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and other authorized texts of the Episcopal Church. The following is a checklist to assist you in your planning.

What is Required to Celebrate the Blessing of a Marriage

1. The Episcopal Church requires at least one of the couple proposing to be married be a Baptized Christian. Couples seeking to have a sacramental marriage should be active participants of the worshipping community either at Trinity or at another Episcopal Church.
2. The priest should be notified *at least* 3 months before any planned marriage date.
3. Marriages are usually not performed during Advent (the four weeks before Christmas) and are ***never*** celebrated during Lent (the days between Ash Wednesday and Easter).
4. Both members of the couple must meet with the Rector for a minimum of three (3) sessions. As the Rector cannot give approval until after the completion of the first two of these sessions, please do not send out invitations until that approval is made.
5. If one or both parties have been previously married, please bring divorce papers to the first session. Once the Rector has agreed to perform the marriage, the couple along with the Rector will send a petition to the Bishop of New York for permission to marry. The Bishop requires 2 months notice for submission of a petition so please plan plenty of time.

FEE SCHEDULE

Pledging Members: (at least 1 year)

Use of the Church: \$150

Rector – to Discretionary Fund: \$200

Altar Guild: \$50 (minimum) for altar flowers; optional

Non Pledging Members:

Use of the Church: \$300

Rector – to Discretionary Fund: \$300

Altar Guild: \$100 plus cost of any altar flowers

Non Members

Use of the Church: \$500

Rector – to Discretionary Fund: \$500

Altar Guild: \$200 plus cost of altar flowers

Minister of Music Fees (for all marriages)

Prelude and postlude plus processional and recessional: \$200

Rehearsal: \$75

Please make individual checks payable to Trinity Episcopal Church for the Rector's Discretionary Fund and for the Altar Guild. Checks for the Minister of Music are made out to the organist. All payments are due no later than seven (7) days prior to the wedding date.

Guidelines for Weddings at Trinity Church

- **Music:** Your wedding is a service of worship so all music must conform to Prayer Book requirements; please do not select inappropriate pop or secular music. All plans for music at weddings held at Trinity Church must be made in consultation with Trinity's Minister of Music. Call the Parish Office at (845) 896-9884 for the Music Minister's contact information. Under the terms of Trinity's contract, the parish organist has the right of first refusal for any service held in this church. Therefore, if the Trinity organist is available and you wish to have organ music for your wedding and/or rehearsal, she will be the organist. If Trinity's organist is available, and you desire another organist or musician(s), the parish organist is still paid her full stipend. If you wish to have musicians in addition to an organist, you must consult with the Minister of Music.
- **Church decoration:** The Altar Guild should be consulted as soon as a date is set with the Rector. The name and phone number of the Altar Guild Director may be secured from the parish office at 896-9884. Flowers, bows, pew candles and other decorations are under her/his direction. Two bouquets in front of (not on) the altar or on the retable are usually sufficient. Please do not use tape of any kind for bouquets, etc., at the ends of the pews. Aisle runners are not to be used. No rice, bird seed, flower petals or confetti are to be thrown inside or outside of the church. You will find the Altar Guild very helpful in answering any questions you may have about your wedding decorations.

- **Photographs:** No photos or videos with flash are allowed during the service for anyone. Professional photographers may use a non-flash camera during the service, but are to remain out of the Chancel area and must not in any way obstruct vision of the ceremony by anyone in attendance. Video taping may only be done with previous consultation with the Rector. All photography must be completed within 45 minutes of the end of the liturgy; there are no exceptions.
- **Other clergy:** Please consult the Rector if you are considering having other clergy present. Within the Episcopal Church, an Episcopal Priest is the only person permitted to bless a marriage.
- **Rental of Building:** Trinity does not normally rent its buildings for weddings of other traditions.

Exceptions to these requirements and guidelines are granted rarely and only under very unusual circumstances totally at the discretion of the Rector. If you have further questions or concerns please contact the Rector.

As you plan your marriage, I hope that you will also use this time to deepen your faith and open your lives to receive God’s blessing on this most sacred occasion. The focus of marriage preparation is on your individual lives and on your future life together as husband and wife. While it can be a joyous time of sharing in preparation, it is also a time of serious candor and discussion. I enter into this preparation with you trusting that you will be frank and open with each other and with me as we three prepare together.

May God grant you hope, peace, and joy as you prepare to celebrate the sacramental rite of Holy Matrimony.

We have read these guidelines and agree to abide by them in the course of preparation for our marriage.

Bride-to-be

Groom-to-be