

TRINITY CATHEDRAL

A Sacred Place for All People

GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE

Congratulations on your engagement! You have received this document because you are considering wedding dates with Trinity Cathedral's Wedding Guild. In this document you will find the requirements for marriage and weddings in the Episcopal Cathedral of the Diocese of Ohio.

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is a joyful occasion for the couple, their family, and their friends, as well as a sacramental rite of the Church. The choice to have a Church wedding is a statement of faith by the couple, and a dedication of their marriage to God. The Episcopal Church puts that faith statement this way:

"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."

[Canon I.18.4]

All sacraments of the Church are moments when the grace and love of God is uniquely expressed through both word and deed. The sacramental rite of Christian marriage can be a symbol to all of Christ's love for the church and God's love uniquely manifested in human relationships. The Episcopal ceremony is designed to convey these spiritual realities.

To support the spiritual symbolism the service is meant to convey, the Episcopal Church has requirements (also known as canons, in church-speak) that must be followed. Trinity has based the following requirements on those Church canons and outlined them below.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MARRIAGE

1. At least one member of the couple must be a baptized Christian [Canon I.18.3.b].
2. If either member of the couple has been married before and divorced and the former spouse is still living, the Diocesan Bishop must be consulted prior to approval granted for the wedding, with at least six months' notice [Canon I.19.3]. In this instance, no announcement may be made until the Bishop has approved.

3. The couple must sign the contract with at least six months' notice of the wedding date, with approval of date by the officiating clergy, before any announcement can be made [Canon I.18.2]. Exceptions may be made for pastoral reasons at the discretion of the Dean of Trinity Cathedral.
4. A priest affiliated with the Cathedral must officiate the wedding (the couple will make an appointment with a clergy member from a provided list). Clergy not affiliated with the Cathedral may be invited to assist with the ceremony prior approval of the officiating priest. The officiating priest will extend the invitation to any assisting clergy.
5. A minimum of three to four pre-marital counseling sessions with the officiant or an approved clergy person affiliated with the Cathedral. This time also includes ceremony planning and instruction [Canon I.18.3.c].
6. The service must conform to the Episcopal liturgy. There are some options which the couple may elect, but it should be kept in mind that the form of the service itself is prescribed by the Church and neither the priest nor the couple is free to alter the service beyond the permissible options. A bulletin template will be provided to the couple.

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage is an important liturgy in the ongoing worship life of the Cathedral community. Marriage takes its place along with Baptisms, Confirmations, weekly celebrations of the Eucharist, and other pastoral offices of the Church. Clergy reserve the right to decline to officiate any wedding.

MEMBERSHIP

Trinity Cathedral clergy are available to officiate member weddings. For a couple seeking to become members of the congregation at Trinity, please contact a member of the clergy (contact information at the end of this document) for membership requirements, which include Baptism and regular church attendance [Canon I.17.1.a].

DATES AND TIME FOR THE WEDDING

The Cathedral is home to a vibrant congregation with a robust calendar of events, which is why fixed dates of availability for weddings are made available each year. Unless the wedding has received pastoral approval to be a part of Sunday morning worship, Sundays, major feast days, and the season of Lent are unavailable for scheduling. Weddings will be scheduled to begin no earlier than 10:00 a.m. and no later than 4:00 p.m. to facilitate building hours.

MUSIC FOR THE WEDDING

A consultation with the Director of Music should be arranged as early as possible in the planning stages of the wedding. (The contact information is at the end of this document.) The Director of Music will discuss music possibilities with the couple and provide them with a list of suggested organ music, vocal music, and hymns. The following points are to be observed:

1. The wedding is a sacred service, and all music and texts should be appropriate to a church ceremony. Secular music is prohibited.
2. Hymns, while not required, are encouraged as they provide a joyful and communal way for all in attendance to participate. Any texts that are sung must be from the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer or other authorized Hymnals of the Episcopal Church (or be theologically consistent with them).
3. Musicians are available for hire at additional cost. Cathedral musicians hold the right of first refusal for the ceremony. If the Cathedral musicians are unavailable, the Director of Music will arrange a suitable substitute.
4. Should the couple desire to have a vocal soloist or instrumentalist, the Director of Music can assist in finding a soloist from the members of the Cathedral Choir and the local music community.
5. The final decision on the appropriateness of music selections, organists, musicians, and soloists resides with the Director of Music, in consultation with the clergy.
6. The organist and other musicians are normally not present at the wedding rehearsal. The Director of Music will make rehearsal arrangements with the vocal soloists and instrumentalists at least two weeks prior to the service.

SCRIPTURE READING

Lessons should be chosen from the texts recommended as appropriate for the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage in the Book of Common Prayer and in consultation with the officiating clergy. The use of alternative readings must be approved by the officiating clergy. The people reading the lessons are to be chosen by the couple. It is appropriate for members of the couple's family, the wedding party, or guests to read the lessons, as well as clergy.

BULLETINS

Bulletins allow guests to fully participate in the service. The Cathedral will provide bulletins for up to 200 people. Additional bulletins may be ordered from the church office for an additional

fee. The bulletins will conform to the Cathedral template and be submitted to the Wedding Guild one month in advance of the service.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

Flowers are appropriate symbols of joy and life at a wedding ceremony and must meet the following requirements:

1. All flowers in the Cathedral are arranged by the Flower Guild or local florists. Only arrangements in accordance with Cathedral policy are permitted: one urn standing at the pulpit.
2. Plans for decorations should be developed at least one month prior to the wedding in consultation with the Wedding Guild (contact information is listed at the end of this document).
3. Because there is often little time between the end of a wedding and Cathedral service the next day, the flowers placed in the church for the wedding will remain in the church for the Sunday service that follows.
4. If the church is decorated for a special event or season, such decorations and flowers may not be removed.
5. The church provides wedding kneeling cushions.
6. Only the candles normally used at the Sunday services in the church are to be used.
7. Reserved seats may be marked, with ribbons or the rope markers provided by the church.
8. Aisle runners are a safety hazard and may not be used.
9. Rice or bird seed may not be thrown at the church since it creates a hazardous condition on the steps and walkways.

REHEARSAL

Rehearsals are exciting events for the wedding party as friends and family, far and near, gather. Please invite individuals to arrive early to meet and greet one another so that the event begins on time. While the officiant will work with a wedding coordinator, the rehearsal is under the sole direction of the officiating priest. Rehearsals should last one hour. Because this is a dress-rehearsal for a solemn church liturgy, in deference to the nature of the service, please encourage prayerful and reverent participation by all involved.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

The marriage license issued by the State of Ohio must be brought to the church the day of the rehearsal when it will be signed by all parties. A keepsake license is provided by the State and given to the couple. The two official licenses will remain with the officiating priest who will 1) retain one copy for church record-keeping and 2) complete the second copy immediately after the wedding and assure it is submitted to the State for processing.

WEDDING PARTY DRESSING

The Chapter Room is available as a dressing area for the wedding party. The Wedding Guild will be happy to work with the couple if an additional dressing area is needed. If any space at the Cathedral is used for dressing, the room must be returned to its original condition after the wedding, to facilitate the events that follow the wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPING

Because the marriage ceremony is a worship service, Trinity Cathedral does not allow flash photography during the wedding (including the procession into the church). Both professional photographers and members of the congregation may take photographs without use of flash, artificial lights, and shutters, which interrupt the sanctity of the worship and the flow of the service. At the end of the service, it is permissible for the photographer to stand in the narthex (behind the glass door entryway under the organ) and take flash photographs of the couple as they leave the church in the procession out.

Flash photographs may be taken inside the sanctuary (known as the nave) prior to the wedding but must be completed 45 minutes prior to the start of the service. After the service, photographs may be taken in front of the altar for 30 minutes. If the couple desires to include the officiating priest in any photographs, these photographs should be taken first.

Immediately prior to the service, the photographer may consult with the Wedding Guild to make arrangement to take natural light photographs during the service.

The use of a video camera may only be used under the following circumstances if, a) it does not require any artificial lighting, b) it is stationary, and c) it is located in an inconspicuous location.

The couple should send a copy of this policy to the photographer and/or videographer in a contract form to avoid any misunderstandings. Ushers will be instructed to inform guests that no flash photography pictures are permitted during the service.

CONTACT

Wedding Guild

Mr. Eric Travis and Ms. Ginger Bitikofer

216.774.0408
weddingguild@trinitycleveland.org

Church Office

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The Rev. Megan Allen-Miller

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(Please return the consent form on the following page to Wedding Guild.)

CONSENT FORM

Date _____

We have read completely the **GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE** at Trinity Cathedral and agree to abide by all of the policies stated herein.

Signature

Signature