



Weddings at Trinity Episcopal Church

Thank you for considering Trinity for your wedding. Please read this booklet carefully to help you understand our processes and ensure things run as smoothly as possible.

We should begin with a word about our understanding of marriage. We believe that marriage is a lifelong, spiritual commitment. As the Book of Common Prayer says, *“Marriage is intended by God for mutual joy, for the help and comfort they give to one another in prosperity and adversity and, when it is God’s will, for the procreation and nurture of children.”*

We are eager to help make your wedding a joyful and meaningful experience. As you plan your wedding, we want to be clear about what we believe and practice at Trinity to help you decide where and how your wedding will be celebrated. We know the wedding can sometimes eclipse the marriage during the planning stage, so we encourage you to consider what is essential to you for your *marriage*.

The Episcopal Church requirements: At least one of the parties to the marriage must be a baptized Christian, and the wedding ceremony must be attested by at least two witnesses. The couple must also agree to and sign the Declaration of Intention. If either of the parties is divorced, the member of the clergy must see that several conditions are met. These conditions are outlined in the Guidelines portion of this booklet.

The State of Oklahoma requirement: The state requires that a couple being married in Tulsa obtain a Marriage License.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT OF US

- We will help you keep sight of the “real stuff” of your marriage relationship and your future together, encouraging you to separate the inevitable crises of flowers, cakes, and photographers from the sacred nature of this commitment.
- This is one of the most significant moments in your lives. We share with you a belief in its importance. We want to help you bring depth, meaning and joy to this occasion.
- We will guide you through the liturgy and choices for music.

Relying on our vast experience in planning weddings, we will help you make decisions along the way.

- Once you have read this booklet, agreed to its terms, and initiated your first appointment, we will be prompt and clear in our responses to you.
- As preparations proceed, anxiety and tensions inevitably mount. By choosing to be married in this church, you are supported by the ongoing prayers and support of this community.

OUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOU

- If you are interested in continuing marriage discussions with us, please notify us at least three months before the date you are considering for your wedding. Please be aware that a wedding date cannot be held until the deposit is received.
- You must meet at least three times with the officiating priest during your preparation. Marriage is described in the Prayer Book as a solemn and public covenant. While great joy surrounds the event, it is not something to be taken lightly, so we take the time to prepare. We believe you will find that this is a gift, because at a busy time it allows you to focus on the heart and soul of the event.
- We believe that marriage is not just a ceremony in our building; it is part of the community of seekers and believers here. Consider worshipping regularly with us on Sunday or weekdays at Trinity.
- During the time of your marriage preparation, we suggest joining the class called **Life at Trinity**. This class informs participants how the Christian faith is lived out at Trinity and in the wider Episcopal tradition. Our aim is to provide a welcoming and affirming environment where people can make connections with one another and explore the question. "Can Trinity be a place for me to worship where my faith can grow?"
- The class meets on Sundays from 12:15-12:45 and meets for

approximately six weeks on a rolling basis. You may join at any time. Convened by Mother Cheryl Harder, this short-term class will enrich your individual spiritual journeys and your marriage journey. You can contact Mo. Cheryl at 582-4128 or CHarder@trinitytulsa.org.

PLANNING THE DATE AND TIME OF THE SERVICE

- The date will be chosen after your initial meeting with one of Trinity's clergy. As we deal with our busy schedule, the longer the lead time, the more choice we will all have in setting the time and date.
- Weddings are celebrated on weekdays and Saturdays. Weddings are not performed in Lent, because of the penitential nature of that season. If you are not sure of the dates of Lent, the clergy will be glad to let you know what they are. Throughout the year, priority goes to scheduled worship services.
- Please understand that Trinity is a large, complex building in a busy, urban location. Fees (including a surcharge for evening weddings) are set to include maintenance and security requirements.
- Rehearsals usually take place the day before the wedding. Both the wedding and the rehearsal dates and times are scheduled by the officiating priest with whom you are working. As you plan, please consider that you may arrive up to two hours before the service (see section on Photography) and stay up to 30 minutes after the wedding. Please take responsibility for seeing that both rehearsal and wedding start times are adhered to.

IF ONE OR BOTH PARTIES HAVE BEEN DIVORCED

In the Episcopal Church, we observe the following procedure if you are seeking to be remarried:

- Clergy, in consultation with the couple, are asked to determine that there is evidence that the prior marriage has been annulled or dissolved by a final judgment or decree of a

civil court of competent jurisdiction.

- That continuing concern is being shown for the well-being of former spouse, and any children, and that the Bishop of Oklahoma gives written consent to the proposed solemnization of the marriage.

OBTAIN A MARRIAGE LICENSE

To get a license, both of you will need proof of identification (example birth certificate, passport, driver's license).

- Fees are \$50.00 payable in cash at the office of the Court Clerk. However, the fee is reduced to \$5.00 if the applicants present a letter from the clergy that they have completed at least 4 hours of pre-marital counseling. The license will expire after 10 days.
- The County Clerk is located at 2nd floor License Division, 500 South Denver, in the Court House building. The phone number is 918-596-5478.
- Your marriage license needs to be delivered to the church office by the Thursday prior to the wedding.

PLANNING THE SERVICE

- The clergy and Trinity staff look forward to working with you to shape the service. We find that the time spent in planning is a wonderful way to keep focus on the heart of the service.
- Our Wedding Coordinators will be present at the rehearsal and ceremony to assist the officiating clergy and can also help you with planning the ceremony.
- We follow the service for the "The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage" from *The Book of Common Prayer*.
- Give some thought to the Biblical readings suggested for the service. We encourage participation of friends and family members in the reading of lessons and offering of prayers (found on p. 429 of the Book of Common Prayer).

- A celebration of the Eucharist is a wonderful way to start your life together and to celebrate the blessing of a marriage. Our custom is to include all persons, of whatever denominational background, in the invitation to receive Holy Communion.
- Clergy of other parishes or traditions are welcome to assist in the service, but the invitation comes from, and after consultation with, our priest. Please do not ask a priest from another church until you have discussed it with the Trinity priest officiating your wedding.
- At Trinity, the entire wedding party follows the cross into the Nave. In some churches half the wedding party enters in through the side of the church and are not part of the formal procession. This may be viewed as a less important entrance. This goes against the principle that the couple come to the church to be blessed as equals.
- We do not use unity candles or other non-liturgical symbols of union. The sacrament of marriage *is* the union between people.

PLANNING YOUR MUSIC

- Once you and the officiating priest have agreed to go forward with the ceremony, you will need to contact the Organist & Choir Director, Casey Cantwell, 582-4128 x129 or CCantwell@TrinityTulsa.org.
- Music at Trinity Church is some of the finest in Oklahoma. Our musicians will be creative and flexible when helping you choose the best music for your wedding. Pre-recorded music will not be used.
- Because of the sacred nature of the Marriage Rite, music outside of the sacred repertoire (popular songs, show tunes, etc.) are not permitted and would best be used at the reception.
- The traditional "Here comes the bride" by Wagner and Mendelssohn and "Midsummer Night's Dream" wedding

- marches are secular pieces and are not used at Trinity.
- If you desire a soloist for the wedding, we recommend the Organist & Choir Director chooses one of Trinity's staff singers to sing. You are also welcome to use a soloist of your choosing – please schedule a rehearsal in the sanctuary with the Organist & Choir Director.
- We do not require that you use Trinity musicians, but the Organist & Choir Director must be consulted and give consent if other musicians are to be invited. If another Organist is chosen, Trinity's Organist will still receive full payment.
- Please keep in mind that the primary instrument to be used for weddings is our magnificent pipe organ. The piano may also be used if necessary.
- The music for the service is at the discretion of the Organist & Choir Director, and ultimately the officiating priest.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Please read this section carefully. It is our experience that these next two areas often cause needless misunderstandings and conflicts. We require you to have your photographer and florist, read, sign and return the enclosed agreement.

- We work to maintain a joyful and dignified atmosphere in the wedding service. We ask that all photographers and videographers respect the sacred nature of the building and the liturgy.
- The best way to photograph wedding participants is before or after the service. If you and your photographer would like to arrange this, we will schedule a reasonable time, in consultation with the officiating priest. But once this schedule is set, it must be adhered to.
- When pictures are taken prior to the service, *all shooting must be completed, and equipment removed at least 30 minutes before the service.*

- NO FLASH photographs may be taken once the service begins. Service begins with the entrance of the cross.
- In the main church, available light (no flash) photography with a *quiet shutter*, is permitted during the service from the balcony only.
- Videotaping is permitted during the service, with available light only. The priest or Altar Guild wedding coordinators will show you where to place equipment.
- Once the service has started, the photographer and/or videographer must remain stationary and not move about the nave.**

FLOWERS AND OTHER DECORATIONS

- Our high altar is a stunning setting for your vows, with or without flowers. However, flowers add the beauty of the occasion and we strongly encourage you to use Toni's. They are very familiar with making arrangements for Trinity. Mary Murry's may also suffice. Other establishments tend to make arrangements that are too small and are lost in the vast and ornate space. Trinity has two liners for the urns on the altar which can be given to your florist. Whichever florist you use, please be sure that your florist is aware of the opening and closing times of the church for delivery purposes.
- Please do not remove the flowers from the high altar; they will remain in thanksgiving for your wedding. All other flowers and greens must be removed within two hours of the wedding. Flowers may be used to decorate the pews but must be hung, rather than taped or nailed, to avoid any damage to the pews.
- "Unity Candles" are not used at Trinity. The service itself provides the union.
- Aisle Runners are a tripping hazard and may not be used at Trinity.

- Flower petals (real or artificial) may not be scattered in the aisle as they slipping hazards.

THE REHEARSAL

- Please remember that the rehearsals usually take place on the day before the wedding. **We request that you take responsibility for seeing that both the rehearsal and wedding start times are adhered to.** Because we want the rehearsal to be relaxing and to reduce anxiety, please come prepared to walk through the service and to honor the solemn, yet joyful, mood of the occasion.

ON THE DAY OF THE WEDDING

- The wedding party should plan to arrive one hour before the wedding. The Wedding Party room in the undercroft is available for your use during this time.
- Have ushers in place a half hour before the service. Our Altar Guild wedding coordinators will advise them of their duties. A good rule of thumb is at least one usher per 50 people in attendance. Some of the ushers should be persons other than those in the wedding procession, to help seat latecomers and help with miscellaneous small crises.
- A guest book may be placed on the podium in the nave (the rear of the church). It's appropriate to have a guest book attendant if you choose.
- There should be **absolutely no alcohol consumption** before the wedding. The wedding may be cancelled if the wedding party is found to have consumed alcohol. A wedding demands the full attention of the wedding party.

GETTING STARTED

If, after reading this booklet, you find that you would like to continue talking about a wedding at Trinity, please fill out and return the enclosed form. At that time you may also contact the front office coordinator, Angela Tilley, at 582-4128 x112 or ATilley@TrinityTulsa.org. She will make an appointment for you to visit with one of the clergy and you may tentatively set your

chosen date.

Within two weeks of the initial meeting with the clergy, we ask that you make your deposit and confirm the date for the service. *Please note that the deposit must be received to hold your wedding date.*

CELEBRATING A MARRIAGE

Enclosed with this brochure is a copy of the liturgy that we use for weddings. The opening address, "Dearly beloved..." sets forth our belief that marriage is fundamental in creation. Christians see marriage as a "sacrament" or sign of the mystery of Christ's living relationship to the Church. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you about the sacramental nature of this event.

The Church has a variety of marriage and wedding customs, representing different cultures and times in history. In our time, a wedding is both a civil and an ecclesiastical rite. Because of these two dimensions, both church and civil requirements must be met, and we believe it will be helpful to spell those out for you as you begin this process of preparation.

FEES

Your date is set once you have met with the clergy and we have received your nonrefundable deposit. You will receive an invoice with the balance of fees remaining that is due two weeks prior to the ceremony. This invoice must be paid two weeks prior to the wedding. Failure to do so will result in the cancellation of the wedding.

Please contact the church for a list of fees associated with the use of Trinity for your wedding.