

Wedding Guidelines and Information

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
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Congratulations! You are about to enter into a relationship that is one of God's most beautiful gifts to humankind. Christian marriage is a holy estate ordained by God. It is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman who are already in covenant with God through Christ. A Marriage Service is primarily a sacred worship of God and secondarily a wedding. The ceremony is not a social event. The Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and all of its members desire that your marriage be a beautiful and sacred occasion. We want to extend every possible courtesy and consideration. In order to establish a uniform and regular practice, with regard to weddings held in Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, the following procedures have been adopted. Please read through and follow these guidelines carefully.

Early Preparations and Reserving Church Facilities

As soon as possible, and before any dates and times are set, the couple should make an appointment with the Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. The Pastor will discuss the anticipated marriage with the couple to be assured that he can properly perform the marriage in accordance with the following requirements: the union contemplated will be in accordance with the Word of God, the laws of the State of South Carolina, and that God's blessings may be properly asked upon it. The Pastor will, with the couple, set the date and the time of the wedding. Please do not make any plans incurring financial commitment (e.g. print wedding invitations, contract with caterers, florists, etc.) until you have consulted with the Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

Weddings shall not be scheduled during Holy Week and are discouraged during the entire season of Lent. While there is no official rule against weddings during Lent, Lent is a season of Penitence in the Church's calendar, and it is not considered an appropriate time for the social events that usually accompany a wedding.

Weddings may begin no later than 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

At the initial meeting with the Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, the bride and groom shall arrange for pre-marital conferences with the Pastor as far in advance of the date of the wedding as possible. The Pastor will not officiate at any wedding without a conference.

The Presiding Minister

Except by special arrangement, the Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church will preside at all wedding ceremonies conducted at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. The Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church officiates at weddings of members of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church as part of his regular responsibility as Pastor of this congregation. If the Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church is asked to officiate at a non-member wedding, a minimum fee of \$250, paid directly to the Pastor, is suggested.

Couples who desire the services of a Pastor from another church, whether to officiate or assist, will consult with the Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and let him join in inviting the other Pastor to handle the wedding service or assist in this service. When another Pastor is invited to officiate or assist at a wedding, his expenses plus an honorarium negotiated between said Pastor and couple being married shall be paid.

The Marriage Service

In the Lutheran church, a wedding is not a ceremony; rather, it is a service of worship of the congregation. The Order of Marriage from the ELW is normally used. Other services or variations may be used if approved by the presiding minister. Congregational hymns may be included, and if Holy Communion is included in the marriage service, the entire congregation will be invited to participate.

Wedding Music

The Music Director/Organist of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church is not obligated to play for weddings. However, we strongly encourage that you request her to serve as the organist for your wedding, and that you contact her as soon as possible after the date and time for the wedding has been determined. If scheduling prevents the church organist's playing, the substitute must be approved by the church organist. The organist's fee is paid directly to her and covers the initial consultation as well as the rehearsal and actual wedding ceremony. The use of additional instrumentalists and/or vocalists should be done in consultation with the organist and may necessitate additional rehearsal time and thus, additional charges to be paid to the organist. In addition, you are responsible for negotiating fees and paying any additional musicians directly. Use of taped music is not allowed.

Careful consideration should be given to the type of music used within the context of the marriage service. Only sacred texts in appropriate musical settings are allowed. Some music traditionally associated with weddings including, "Bridal Chorus"/Here Comes the Bride by Richard Wagner (Processional) and "Wedding March" by Felix Mendelssohn (Recessional), is not permitted at Holy Trinity. The use of popular, secular "love songs" is also not appropriate during the wedding service. Save these for the reception. The Music Director/Organist of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church will be happy to guide you in the selection of suitable music for your wedding.

Wedding Director/Rehearsal

There is really no need for a wedding director to direct the rehearsal. The Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church prefers to direct the rehearsal himself. The procedure for the rehearsal involves positioning everyone in place at the altar. The Pastor will then go over the details of the service. The wedding party then practices leaving the church and entering so that everyone is familiar with the procedure. The person responsible for seeing that members of the wedding party enter at the appropriate time during the ceremony should also be present at the rehearsal. When the couple desires to use a wedding director, it should be understood that the Pastor is in charge and prior to the date of the rehearsal, a consultation should be made with him/her regarding acceptable procedures and practices.

Decorations and Sanctuary Policies

Decorations for the church nave and chancel should be kept at a minimum and within the bounds of simplicity and good taste. No decorations of any kind will be tacked, glued, stapled, pinned, or wired to walls, woodwork, or furniture of the nave or chancel.

The cross is the focal point on the altar, and no objects should be placed so that the cross is hidden or obscured. Holy Trinity Lutheran Church reserves the right to modify decorations/flowers that interfere with viewing the cross.

Altar flowers, if used, will consist of two arrangements placed on the far-left and far-right sides on the upper level of the altar. If the arrangements are placed in the church brass vases, they should extend no more than 24" above the lip of the vase. The total height of the arrangements (flowers plus container) should never be higher than the top of the cross nor should they extend in front of the cross. Arrangements should never be placed on the white linens on the lower level of the altar. **Artificial flowers are never appropriate on the altar and should not be used.**

The areas on either side of the altar (behind the rail) should not be used for seating of soloist or musicians. Nobody except the Presiding and Assisting Ministers are allowed behind the rail.

The pulpit is a place from which God's word is proclaimed. It may not be used as a stage for soloists or readers. Scripture readings may be read from the Lectern with permission from the presiding Minister.

Only dripless candles may be used. Adequate mats or cloth must be placed beneath all candelabra to protect the carpet and furniture. Exits must be left free of decorations.

The color of the paraments may not be changed. The color appropriate for the season of the church year must be used.

Bulletins

If bulletins are to be used for your ceremony and you plan to order them through the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church office, bulletins must be selected and ordered at least 2 months prior to the wedding date. If obtained through the church office, bulletins will be ordered through the Augsburg/Fortress catalog at the current price (note: bulletins must be ordered in multiples of 100 per package). You may use another source for bulletins if desired. If you plan to have the bulletins prepared by the church secretary, the information for inclusion in the bulletin should be at the church office at least 2 weeks prior to the wedding. There is an additional charge if the office staff prepares the bulletins.

Publication of the Banns

Although not a requirement, the Publication of the Banns may help indicate that the forthcoming wedding is a congregational event and not a private observance, a service of worship and not a time of display. A simple statement in the parish newsletter or weekly worship bulletin is sufficient. "(name) and (name) have announced their intention to marry on (date) and ask your prayers."

Photographs/Videos

There will be no photographs taken during the wedding service nor will anyone be allowed to "roam around freely" to videotape the service. All wedding bulletins should include the request that no photographs be taken during the ceremony. Please have your photographer contact the Pastor to determine what is acceptable and what is not. Also, if you should desire to video tape the service, please have the person who is to do this contact the Pastor before making any decisions relative to where and how the taping will be done.

Receptions

The Fellowship Hall is available for a reception. (Also, if desired, this facility may be used for rehearsal parties, etc.) The same policies regarding decorations for the church nave and chancel are applicable. Silk floral arrangements may be used in the Fellowship Hall.

Equipment (tables, chairs, etc.) belonging to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church may be used. Those responsible for the reception are also responsible for leaving all furniture and equipment as it was found.

Church members have access to a crystal punch bowl, plates, and cups. If these are used, the member is responsible for washing and putting away any items used.

If a private caterer is used, he/she will furnish all equipment except that specified above.

Smoking and alcoholic beverages are not permitted.

Other Guidelines

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church is not responsible for articles that are lost or stolen. Valuables should be secured during the rehearsal, ceremony and reception.

The family of the bride or contracting applicant for use of the church facilities is responsible for notifying all persons assisting with the wedding of the church's policies. This includes but is not limited to: the Pastor officiating or assisting with the wedding (if other than the Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church), a wedding director (if you choose to use one), the Organist (if not the Organist of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church), other musicians, caterer, florist, photographer, and videographer.

The family of the bride or contracting applicant for use of the church facilities assumes responsibility and agrees to pay for any damage to the church property.

The bride and her attendants may use designated church facilities for dressing before the ceremony. Furniture may not be rearranged and all personal belongings must be removed. Gentlemen should arrive in wedding attire.

Absolutely no rice, bird seed, confetti, balloons, or flower petals are permitted either inside of or outside of the church because these items create safety, maintenance, and insurance problems for the church. Flower girls are not permitted to throw petals down the main aisle of the church. Likewise because of concern for the environment, the release of helium balloons is not allowed. Please inform your friends and family of this policy.

Fees for use and cleanup of facilities

Understandably, the fees for those who are members and have participated in the financial support of the congregation will be different from those of non-members. For the purposes of determining fees, the wedding is considered a member wedding if anyone listed in the "**Family Information**" section on the Wedding Reservation Form at the end of these guidelines is a member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. All other weddings will be subject to the non-member fee schedule.

A wedding is not considered "booked" until the deposit and signed Wedding Reservation Form has been received. All fees are to be paid in full no later than two weeks in advance of the wedding date. Make checks for church fees payable to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and note "wedding: (names)" on the memo line. A separate check should be paid for the key deposit. This check will be returned to you when the key is returned.

Fees for the Pastor, organist, and other musicians are arranged with these individuals and checks should be made out and paid directly to them.

If church, organist, or pastoral fees are not paid by the required date or if checks are returned for insufficient funds, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church reserves the right to cancel involvement in your wedding ceremony.

Fees for use and cleanup of facilities are as follows:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Member Fee</u>	<u>Non-member Fee</u>
Use of the Sanctuary (capacity=130)	No charge	\$500
Non-refundable deposit*	\$50	\$100
Pastor	**	\$250
Organist (rehearsal/ceremony)	\$150	\$250
Extra rehearsal time	\$50/hr	\$50/hr
Additional musicians	TBA	TBA
Use of Fellowship Hall (capacity=200)	No charge	\$250
Custodian		
Ceremony	\$100	\$150
Reception	\$100	\$150
Bulletins (optional)		
Cost per 100	Current rate	Current rate
Printing charge (black & white)	\$25	\$50
Key Deposit (refundable on return of key)‡	No charge	\$25

*The non-refundable deposit is required to secure both member and non-member wedding dates. The deposit will be applied to fees.

**Honorarium/donation at member's discretion. Many couples do gift the pastor. It is customary that these gifts range from \$150-\$250, which acknowledges the time spent in pre-marital counseling, wedding rehearsal, planning and the wedding itself.

‡A separate check should be paid for the key deposit. This check will be returned when the key is returned.

Wedding Reservation Form

Family Information

Bride's Full Name _____ Birth date _____

Groom's Full Name _____ Birth date _____

Bride's Parents _____

Bride's Grandparents: Maternal _____

Paternal _____

Groom's Parents _____

Groom's Grandparents: Maternal _____

Paternal _____

Wedding Party Information

Maid/Matron of Honor _____ Best Man _____

Bridesmaids 1) _____ 4) _____

2) _____ 5) _____

3) _____ 6) _____

Flower Girl _____ Stand-in Bride _____

Ushers 1) _____ 4) _____

2) _____ 5) _____

3) _____ 6) _____

Ring Bearer _____ Acolyte _____

Others _____

Officiating Minister(s) _____

Organist _____ Soloist _____

Ceremony/Reception Information

Place of Wedding _____ Date _____ Time _____

Rehearsal Date _____ Time _____

Place of Reception _____

Do you have your license? _____ (Please give to Pastor at or before rehearsal.)

Wedding Reservation Form (pg 2)

Bride

Groom

Name _____

Name _____

Address _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell _____

Phone _____ Cell _____

Email _____

Email _____

Contracting Party

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone number _____ Cell phone _____

Email _____

I have read the Wedding Guidelines and agree to abide by the conditions set forth therein.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Office Use Only:

Date to be reserved: _____ Member wedding Non-Member wedding

Deposit received Date: _____ Amount paid: \$ _____

Received by: _____ Pastor's Confirmation: _____

Due two weeks prior to the wedding (Date: _____)

Balance due to church: \$ _____ Received by: _____

Pastor's Fee Received Yes No

Organist's Fee Received Yes No