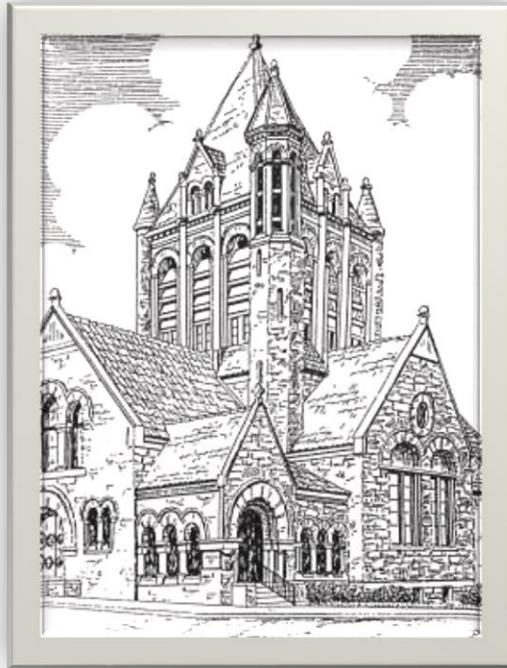


Wedding Policy

Trinity United Presbyterian Church



Introduction

Your marriage will change your life and mark the beginning of a new spiritual adventure. As you plan this new life, remember Christ has given you the freedom to realize new hopes and possibilities, to question past assumptions, and to embrace the joys and challenges which will come.

We are glad you have chosen to be married in the Trinity United Presbyterian Church. Members of the Trinity staff look forward to helping you as you plan this joyous and memorable occasion in your life.

Wedding Policy

The Trinity United Presbyterian Church believes that marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between

a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live together, before God, their lives of discipleship. Trinity Church welcomes all couples who wish to be married in a Christian context. The minister and the staff will assist you in every possible way to make your wedding a worshipful experience. You are urged to make thorough preparations, spiritual as well as material, so that your ceremony may be appropriate in every way. We have prepared these policies to guide you, and we ask that you read them carefully and refer to them frequently as you make your plans.

How to Proceed

First, read these policies and inquire about available dates with the church secretary and pastor.

Second, reserve the date with the church secretary by turning in a completed wedding application form, which must be mailed or delivered to the church office, along with the non-member deposit of \$100.00, which secures your wedding date on the church calendar. Your request is also made to our church session (governing board) for final approval.

Third, there are some restrictions on dates. No weddings will be scheduled on Christmas Eve or on Christmas Day, or from Good Friday through Easter. Two weddings will not be scheduled on the same date.

The Minister

According to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the marriage service is under the sole direction of the minister. Wedding consultants, bridal secretaries and other persons of similar position must confer with the minister for the approval of all plans. Therefore, it is important to make an early appointment with the minister for a premarital conference. No weddings are conducted without this step. The premarital conference(s) is a time when both the bride and groom will talk about the wedding in detail and Christian marriage in depth.

Ministers or Priests from other churches: The minister of Trinity Church will officiate at all marriages which take place at Trinity Church. However, the minister is also prepared to extend an invitation to ministers or priests who have a special relationship with the bride or groom, to join in assisting in the wedding service. The minister of Trinity Church will extend an invitation following the decision to permit the wedding at Trinity.

The Wedding Coordinator

(required for all weddings over 30 guests)

Soon after the bride and groom have met with the minister and scheduled a wedding date, they will be contacted by the Wedding Coordinator. The responsibilities of the coordinator include:

- meeting with the bride and groom;
- coordinating the work with the florist and photographer;
- collecting all member and non-member wedding fees one week prior to the marriage service;
- assisting the minister with the rehearsal and the marriage service;
- placing any special church wedding equipment (candelabra, etc.) in the sanctuary or chapel prior to the rehearsal;
- maintaining the order of the sanctuary and facilities.

The Wedding Coordinator may be contacted through the church office at 724-437-2709.

Photography / Videography

Photography and other visual reproductions of the service are permitted, as long as flash equipment or flood lights are NOT used during the wedding service. Videotaping must be done in good taste without detracting from the solemnity of the service. The photographer may take pictures before or after the ceremony in any part of the building. However, all pre-wedding pictures must be completed 30 minutes prior to the time of the service.

All photographers, ushers and guests must be informed of these guidelines, especially the no-flash picture rule. You are encouraged to discuss these rules with the photographer, and to ensure that the photographer discusses these issues with the minister prior to the service.

The Organist

At least three months prior to the service, the bride and groom must meet with the Director of Music regarding the selection of music for the prelude and postlude, as well as for special music or solos during the service. As in any worship service, the music in a marriage service is never an end in itself, but rather a means to glorify God. Therefore, the choice of special wedding music should always be in keeping with the goal of any worship music. In this regard, the singing of hymns by the gathered congregation is especially encouraged. All music and instruments used for preludes, postludes, and during the wedding service must be approved by the minister and music director. Any music deemed inappropriate for worship will not be permitted. Some music may be more appropriate for the reception rather than the marriage service.

The use of an organist other than Trinity Church staff is not acceptable, unless specially approved by the minister and music director.

If requested, the music director will secure a qualified vocal soloist. A guest soloist is welcome, but is expected to know the music in advance of the rehearsal. In order to avoid any misunderstandings, it is wise to confer with the music director before selecting a solo or soloist. Rehearsals between the soloist(s) and the organist must take place prior to the rehearsal.

Permission to incorporate the use of instruments other than or in addition to the church organ or piano may be granted with the approval of the music director.

The music director may be contacted through the church office at 724-437-2709.

Facilities

For the marriage service, Trinity Church has two facilities available, subject only to prior schedules and limitations. The sanctuary seats approximately 400 people; the chapel seats about 75. Requests for the use of the sanctuary or chapel must be approved by the minister and the session.

The church facilities will be opened fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled beginning of rehearsals, and 2½ hours prior to the scheduled beginning of weddings. All floral deliveries must be made during this time frame, or during weekday office hours (9am-12pm and 1pm-4pm). The facilities will be closed 1½ hours after the scheduled beginning of rehearsals. It is expected that wedding parties will be able to complete their post-wedding activities at the church within two (2) hours of the expected conclusion of the wedding service.

Dressing areas are also available for the wedding parties on the day of the service. Clean-up of these areas immediately following the wedding is the responsibility of the wedding party. The church will also not be responsible for any purses, clothes, wallets or valuables left in the dressing areas.

It is suggested that the bride and groom appoint family members to be responsible for both the dressing area clean-up and the protection of valuables.

Only the areas of the facility listed above are available for use. The wedding party and guests should refrain from entering classrooms or other areas in an effort not to disrupt preparations for Sunday morning worship and church school.

Alcoholic beverages and smoking *are not permitted* at any time in or around the church building. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom and their families to assure that there is no indulgence of alcoholic beverages immediately prior to the rehearsal or wedding service by any of those taking part.

Confetti, rice, bird seed and balloons are NOT permitted to be thrown inside or outside the church building. We ask that the family in charge of the planning so inform the guests.

Wedding dresses and flowers may be delivered to the church on the wedding day, or during the week prior to the wedding; however, they are the responsibility of the wedding party.

The cost of repair for any damages to the furnishings of the church during the wedding or wedding reception must be the responsibility of the wedding party.

Fees

A schedule of fees for facilities and staff has been included in this wedding booklet.

Non-member weddings require a \$100 security deposit when the wedding is scheduled. Make checks payable to the church, adding the bride's name, wedding date, and the words "security deposit" in the memo. **If the security deposit is not received within two weeks following the reservation of the wedding date, it will be assumed that you have made other arrangements, and your wedding date will be removed from the church calendar.**

In case of cancellation of the wedding, the security deposit will be refunded if notice of cancellation is given 30 days prior to the reserved date. The security deposit will be returned in full following the wedding should there be no damage or additional expenses.

It is the responsibility of the Wedding Coordinator to collect all member and non-member fees for wedding services one week prior to the wedding. (It is requested that separate payments in the appropriate amounts be made to the church and to each staff member involved.) No rehearsals will be conducted until all fees are paid.

The Service

What we believe about God takes shape as we worship God.

What we do in worship is a reflection of our faith, and makes a statement about our relationship with God and with each other. The wedding ceremony is a service of worship before God, and like all others, it is a time for reverence and honor.

As mentioned earlier, our denomination's Constitution specifies that the marriage service is under the sole direction of the minister. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has produced an order of service for weddings, firmly grounded in the Christian heritage. Though there is some flexibility to include other actions, the service shall include:

- scriptural sentences and a brief statement of the purpose of marriage;
- a declaration by the man and woman of their intention to enter into Christian marriage;
- an exchange of vows of love and faithfulness by the man and woman;
- appropriate passages of scripture, which may be interpreted;
- prayers for the couple, the community seeking to support them and all who seek to live in faithfulness;
- a declaration of marriage in the name of the triune God, along with a charge to the couple to live in faithfulness;
- a benediction.

Since children of all ages are welcome at wedding services, no child care is available. Children may also participate in the wedding service, but brides and grooms are encouraged to be realistic about abilities and attention spans of younger children. Families of the bride and groom are reminded that it is their responsibility to care for any children participating in the service.

Rehearsal

The date and time for a wedding rehearsal should be scheduled with the minister as soon as the wedding date is confirmed. Rehearsals are normally scheduled the day before the wedding. All members of the wedding party, as well as the parents of the bride and the groom, are expected to be present. You will need to bring the following with you to the rehearsal: 1) marriage license; 2) checks for honorariums (see fee schedule). Since the minister, organist and wedding consultant may have other commitments to which they must attend, it is important that rehearsals start on time. The rehearsal will last 45 minutes to one hour, and the church will remain open only for 1½ hours from the scheduled beginning of the rehearsal. Therefore, since late arrivals may shorten your rehearsal time, you are urged to encourage all participants in the wedding party to make every effort to be on time.

Decorations

A beautiful sanctuary or chapel does not require lavish decorations. Therefore, any decorations should be kept to a minimum. It is the responsibility of the families of the bride and groom to remove all flowers and decorations immediately following the wedding service. However, if the family of a Saturday wedding couple cares to leave any flower arrangements for Sunday service, the arrangements will be used as space and flower sign-ups permit. If flowers have been placed in church containers, those containers must remain at the church. Questions can be directed through the wedding coordinator.

Flowers, candles, and decorations may be placed in the sanctuary or chapel, provided they comply with the following guidelines:

1. Pew markers (greens, flowers, ribbons, etc.) may be tied, rubber-banded or taped (scotch tape only, no duct tape) to the pews. No tacks or glue may be used on any pews, furniture, or other appointments.
2. The church has one pair of table candelabra; others may be arranged through the florists. The church also has available one pair of wrought iron floor vases. Pew candelabra (single candle w/hurricane globe) are also available for candlelight weddings for an additional set-up fee @ \$3 per pole. Candles will be provided by the church (other than “unity candles”).
3. Chancel furniture is part of the setting of the sanctuary and the chapel and cannot be removed for weddings. The movement of any other furnishings requires special permission, which can be requested through the wedding coordinator.
4. We do not allow aisle runners.

Marriage License Information

To obtain a marriage license in Pennsylvania, both individuals must appear in person and apply together at *any* Pennsylvania County Courthouse at the Office of the Clerk of the Orphans' Court, or any District Justice. When applying, you will need:

- your Social Security number;
- if divorced, the copy of your final divorce decree;
- the fee for a marriage license.

Once the application is made, there may be a waiting period until the license can be obtained from the courthouse.

Conclusion

The minister and the wedding coordinator will be glad to assist in answering any questions not covered in this booklet.

Let us again express our pleasure in having you begin your married life at Trinity United Presbyterian Church. We pray God's love be with you through all the years of your life together.

-Session approved 10/2/99