

Your Wedding



Wedding Policies & Procedures Holy Trinity Episcopal Church

Our Mission is...
Bringing the clear message of the
transformational Gospel of Jesus
Christ to the congregation and to
our community.





Your Wedding

The staff at Holy Trinity wants to help make your wedding a memorable and joyous occasion. We hope that the information provided in this booklet will be of assistance to you in planning your wedding day. If at any time you have any questions you may call the Parish Secretary at 843-556-2560.

A wedding is a service of worship. In order to be married at Holy Trinity, the Rector must give permission. Members are encouraged to hold their wedding service here. Consideration is also given for couples whose parents or grandparents are current active members of Holy Trinity. Nonmembers may arrange to be married here with the permission of the Rector.

According to the Book of Common Prayer:

“Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in the presence of God. In the Episcopal Church it is required that one, at least, of the parties must be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested by at least two witnesses; and that the marriage conform to the laws of the State and the Canons of this Church.”

Setting the Date

The Parish Secretary can set your initial appointment with the Rector and advise you of the church's availability for the dates you are considering. At the initial appointment, the necessary paperwork will be completed and the dates for the wedding and the rehearsal will be set and put on the church calendar. Canon law requires a minimum 30 days notice.

However, the Rector must grant permission for the ceremony for a date to be reserved. Until permission has been received and a date and time have been established, no plans should be made with other organization or persons for other aspects of the ceremony.

Reservation of the Facilities

Reservations for the use of the church facilities for the rehearsal, wedding, and, when desired, a reception using the parish hall and kitchen will be made through the Parish Secretary after approval of the Rector; a completed Facilities Use Request form is required.

Weddings are normally scheduled between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No more than two weddings will be scheduled on the same day and must be four hours apart to enable the church staff to properly prepare the buildings for each wedding and to give each wedding party ample time for their event.

No alcoholic beverages may be consumed and no smoking is allowed anywhere in this facility.

Receptions are approved based on availability considering other church functions on the calendar. Alcohol is not permitted and your reception should not last longer than two to three hours.

The caterer and the sexton will be responsible for clean-up.

Wedding Fees

There is no charge to members for the use of the church. There is a \$600 fee for nonmembers who wish to use our facilities.

Fee Minimums:

Music Director	\$200	If the music director obtains soloists or extra musicians, those costs are extra.
Sexton	\$75	For the wedding only
	\$175	For the wedding & reception
Acolyte	\$15	If Holy Trinity supplies an acolyte
Clergy		There is no "fee" for officiating at any sacrament of the church. The bridegroom may wish to follow the custom of presenting the officiating clergy with an honorarium; the amount is always discretionary.
Programs	\$50	If Holy Trinity provides a simple program.

Clergy

Normally, one of the clergy of Holy Trinity will officiate at the ceremony. Should you desire to have another priest or minister officiate or assist, this must be discussed with the clergy and an invitation extended by the Rector. The permission of the Bishop must be obtained for an out-of-state or non-Episcopal minister to officiate.

Remarriage after Divorce

Holy Matrimony is understood by the Episcopal Church to be a lifelong union of husband and wife. The provision for remarriage after divorce is based on God's promise of grace and forgiveness to those whose sins are confessed and repented.

The Canons of the Episcopal Church make provision for marriage of divorced persons (If either party is divorced) after counseling with the parish clergy and written consent of the Bishop. In every case, a divorce must have been final for 1 year prior to application to the Bishop. You will need evidence of your divorce decree. The normal time required for counseling is 3 months. The Bishop may require 30 days to consider the application. The Bishop will only consider an application for a third marriage if there are extenuating circumstances.

Premarital Instruction

Holy Trinity requires premarital instruction for couples planning to be married. After the initial appointment with the clergy, arrangements will be made with the appropriate parties to set up future counseling sessions. There is an online test which is required; the cost of the test is about \$30.

It is advised that these sessions begin at the earliest possible date. The time for these meetings will be determined by the couple and the Rector. This instruction covers the Christian understanding of marriage, the concept of family, and the simple details of the marriage ceremony. It also deals, with the practical issues of taking two lives and histories and putting them under one roof.

Scripture readings are chosen by the couple and the Rector.

Legal Documents

A marriage license must be obtained from one of the county clerk's offices in the state of SC. Please contact one of these offices regarding fees and requirements. Couples must apply together and there is a 24-hour waiting period before the license may be picked up. Your license should be brought to Holy Trinity at least three business days prior to the rehearsal. This insures that all of the proper documents are completed at the church prior to your wedding. The bride, bridegroom, priest and two witnesses are required to sign official documents either before or after the ceremony. This includes the license and the church marriage register. At Holy Trinity this is usually done after the rehearsal, but please be certain not to leave the church following the wedding until this has been done.

The state license will be signed by the priest immediately after the ceremony, a copy given to the bridegroom or best man, and 2 copies mailed to the appropriate authorities.



Music

Please consult the Music Director before making any firm decisions about the music you would like. He and the Rector will determine the suitability of music suggested by the couple. Vocal soloists, other musicians or another organist may participate with permission of the Rector and the Music Director. Additional fees may be required to compensate for soloist rehearsals or extra consultations.

The Decoration of the Church

Holy Trinity encourages simplicity of decoration. The church will in no way be defaced. No nails or tape will be allowed in any way to affix anything to the structure of the church outside or inside. Bows should be affixed with an oasis hook on pews and shutters. Flower petals may be thrown by the Flower Girl as she processes down the aisle. The throwing of rice, bird seed, or confetti is not permitted inside or outside the church buildings.

Flowers

You may use any florist you wish. However, the Altar Guild Representative should be notified to let her know who the florist will be to answer any questions you or the florist might have. All arrangements, vases, and any window treatments must be approved.

When more than one wedding takes place on a given day, it may be possible to coordinate the floral decoration of the church with the other couple. The Altar Guild Representative will be happy to assist in this process. Holy Trinity has two brass vases that are the only containers that may be used. Your florist may already have liners for these vases. If not or, if they are not familiar with Holy Trinity, it would be wise to suggest that a visit be made to view the church. Flowers should not be higher than the cross on the Altar. Artificial flowers are not permitted on the Altar.

The florist should contact the Altar Guild Representative to schedule a time for delivering flowers and decorating.

Candles

The Altar Guild will place the candelabras on the Altar. Nothing may be attached to them. No other candles should be used behind the altar rail. Candles used on the pews or in the windows must be approved by the Altar Guild Representative.

Hangings

The church provides white hangings on the altar, reading desk, pulpit, etc. for weddings. No other hangings may be used in the church.

Aisle Runner

Holy Trinity does not provide an aisle runner. Private arrangements may be made for the use of an aisle runner.

The Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal is usually held the day before the wedding and includes the officiating clergy, the musicians, the parents, and the entire wedding party. A rehearsal is necessary to enable the participants to know in advance where they are to stand and what they are to do during the ceremony. The number of nonparticipants should be kept to a minimum.

Rehearsal should begin promptly at the hour selected. All participants should plan on meeting at the church 10 minutes prior to the time of the rehearsal.

Dressing for the Wedding Party

Holy Trinity has limited space for dressing. If the bride and attendants plan to dress at Holy Trinity, please notify the Altar Guild Representative of the time you need the church available if you are dressing at the church. Arrangements for dressing space for the groom and his attendants can be made if necessary.

Please make arrangements for the belongings of all attendants to be picked up as you leave for the reception. The church can not be responsible for any articles left at the church or in the dressing areas.



Photographer

You may select the photographer and/or videographer of your choice. Please inform them of the following regulations concerning the taking of photographs at Holy Trinity as soon as you make your arrangements. The clergy will insure their compliance during the wedding ceremony.

1. The empty, decorated church may be photographed before any guests are seated.
2. Photographs of the bridal party may be taken in the church, or outside, before the ceremony with permission of the Rector as long as it does not interfere with or delay the start of the wedding ceremony.
3. Professional videography and non-flash photography are permitted during the ceremony with the permission of the Rector. Movement about the church during the ceremony should be kept to a minimum.



The Wedding Ceremony

The Altar Guild Representative serves as the Wedding Director. She will assist the ushers in the timing of seating the bridal couple's parents. During the service, the Officiant will prompt the congregation about when to sit or stand.

Acolytes

Holy Trinity will provide an acolyte to carry the processional cross and/or assist the clergy if you wish. It is not necessary, however, to have an acolyte for the sole purpose of lighting the candles. If you prefer to provide your own acolyte, please advise the clergy. Your acolyte must attend the rehearsal to receive training and be fitted with proper vestments.



Lay Readers

During the Ministry of the Word, one or more passages from Holy Scripture is read. (See p. 426 of the Book of Common Prayer.) You may provide one or two lay readers or you may ask one of the clergy to read the passage(s). It is suggested that lay readers attend the rehearsal.

Wedding Programs

Programs are provided by Holy Trinity for members. A draft copy should be presented to the Rector for prior approval. You may have your program printed elsewhere if you like. There is a charge for nonmembers if Holy Trinity provides the program. Please bring several to the rehearsal for distribution.



Wedding Checklist

- Contact the Parish Secretary at 843-556-2560, as soon as you begin to plan for your wedding, for your first appointment with the Rector.
- Make arrangements for counseling sessions with the appropriate parties.
- Complete premarital counseling sessions.
- Complete any divorce paperwork and submit to the Bishop, if either party is divorced.
- Discuss music selection with the Music Director 1 - 2 months before your wedding.
- Notify attendants of date and time for the wedding and the rehearsal. Remind them to be there 10 minutes before the rehearsal time.
- Obtain a marriage license.
- Submit the marriage license, scripture reading selections and required fees to the Parish Administrator at least 5 days before your rehearsal.
- Contact the church's Altar Guild representative about floral arrangements.
- Have your program bulletin approved by the officiating clergy.
- Attend the rehearsal with the clergy, music director, and all members of the wedding party.
- Relax so that you may enjoy this special time in your life.

