

# *Guidelines for Weddings at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church*

## ABOUT THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY

The Catechism of *The Book of Common Prayer* defines Holy Matrimony as a sacramental rite, "In which a woman and man enter into a life-long union, make their vows before God and the Church, and receive the grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows" (pg. 861). All persons who desire to be married in the Episcopal Church are required to sign a Declaration of Intention, in which the couple "solemnly declare that they hold marriage to be a lifelong union of husband and wife as it is set forth in *The Book of Common Prayer*," and they pledge, "so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto." (Title I, Canon 18, Sec. 3 (d))

The above affirmations, as well as the content of the marriage service itself, make clear that Christian marriage is a public (as opposed to private) covenant, undertaken within the community of faith and in the presence of God. The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage asks the congregation to promise "to uphold these two persons in this marriage," thus making explicit the role of the Christian community in nurturing and supporting the individuals and their marriage. The prayers and intercessions in the service continually hold up the mercy, forgiveness, and steadfastness of God's love for us in Christ as the source of and model for the couple's promises of mutual love and fidelity.

## WHO MAY BE MARRIED AT HOLY TRINITY?

In order more faithfully to live out the teaching described above, and better to uphold Christians engaging in the covenant of marriage, Holy Trinity has the following policy:

A person desiring to be married in this parish must be (for at least one year prior to the wedding) a member who is a communicant in good standing, the child of a member who is a communicant in good standing (for at least one year prior to the wedding), or transferring in as a communicant in good standing from another Episcopal parish.

"All communicants of this Church, who for the previous year have been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in working,

praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God, are to be considered communicants in good standing." (Title I, Canon 17, Section 3)

Anyone who is not a "communicant in good standing" at Holy Trinity is invited to talk with one of the parish clergy about our membership classes which are usually held once a year (beginning in January), and to begin the journey of becoming an active participant in the life of the parish. It is possible for persons who are not "communicants in good standing", under certain conditions and after consultation with clergy, to be married at Holy Trinity.

#### WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR MARRIAGE AT HOLY TRINITY?

- Because of the seriousness of the marriage commitment, The Episcopal Church requires that a couple be given instruction in the nature of this commitment. Every couple is unique and every relationship is unique; therefore, the length and nature of this premarital instruction may differ with each individual couple. In the course of the instruction, the priest will make some specific requirements, and will also encourage a serious exploration of some of the crucial issues affecting a marital relationship.
- Any person who has had a previous marriage terminated by annulment or divorce can be married in the Episcopal Church only under certain conditions and with permission by the Bishop of the Diocese. This should be discussed immediately with the officiating priest who will explain the necessary conditions and procedure.
- The marriage must conform to the laws of the State and the canons of the Episcopal Church. The couple must bring their marriage license to the rehearsal.

#### FIRST STEPS

- After it is determined that the marriage can take place at Holy Trinity, confirm date and time for the rehearsal and the wedding with Holy Trinity's Liturgical Coordinator, Annie Slaughter, and with officiating clergy (272-6149).
- Arrange for pre-marital counseling with officiating clergy.
- Contact wedding organist, Mr. Toney Yancey (274-3822; [toneyyancey@triad.rr.com](mailto:toneyyancey@triad.rr.com)) to arrange for an organist for the desired date.

## PRACTICAL MATTERS IN PLANNING FOR THE WEDDING CEREMONY

### **Facilities at Holy Trinity**

- The church will seat 400 persons (including balcony) and the chapel will seat 80 persons.
- There is an appropriately furnished Bride's Room in the undercroft. The bride's attendants also may dress there. Several mirrors and hangers for dresses are provided.
- The Haywood Duke Room, Broome Hall or the Courtyard may be reserved for wedding receptions; catering service must be provided by our staff caterer, Walter Henry (cell 601-4325). Should you wish to have your reception in the parish hall, you must get approval for the date from both Mr. Henry and the parish administrator.
- The church nursery may be used for children of wedding guests during the wedding. The use of this room must be arranged through the parish administrator so that the sexton knows to have the room open. The wedding couple is responsible for arranging for babysitters.

### **Who directs the wedding?**

In the Episcopal Church, the wedding ceremony and the rehearsal are conducted by the officiating priest. Members of the Holy Trinity Wedding Guild assist the priest with the wedding, lining up the bridal procession, giving cues about when to process, etc. Members of the Wedding Guild also will meet with the bride and/or her mother to help with details of the actual ceremony. Three to six weeks before the wedding, a Wedding Guild member will call to arrange an appropriate meeting time to discuss the "Holy Trinity Wedding Information" sheet. *Please refer to the enclosed "Holy Trinity Wedding Information" sheet.*

### **Music**

Music for the wedding ceremony is coordinated through the wedding organist, Mr. Toney Yancey, who should be contacted as soon as the date for the wedding is chosen and confirmed by the priest. If Mr. Yancey is unable to play on the desired date, he will recommend to you other organists whose musical tastes and playing proficiencies are known and acceptable to the Rector of Holy Trinity. A CD of suitable music has been prepared which is available from the parish office. Your organist will assist you in selecting appropriate music from the CD as well as from

other sources to be played before and during the marriage service. **All music for the ceremony, regardless of who is the organist or the clergy, must be approved by Mr. Yancey.**

*Please refer to the enclosed information, "Music for the Wedding Service."*

*Please return the CD to the parish office.*

### **Flowers and Appointments**

The only flowers permitted in the church (other than those worn or carried) are flowers placed in the vases on the altar or, if used, pew markers for the families of the bride and groom. Should you wish to have flowers on the altar, arrangements should be made promptly with your favorite florist. **Flowers must be brought to the church the day of the wedding before 10:30 a.m.**

Altar Guild members are at the church on Saturday mornings and will make sure the flowers are properly placed on the altar. Only linens, hangings, and candles belonging to the church may be used in the sanctuary.

*Please review the enclosed information, "Flowers for the Wedding Service" and share with your florist.*

**Photography** – *Please share this information with your photographer and make sure that all wedding guests understand there are to be NO photographs taken in the church during the service.*

As is the case with all liturgies of the church, the worship of God is the primary intention of the wedding ceremony. Picture taking can distract from that intention, and so we strictly limit how it may be done.

Prior to the ceremony. Pictures may be taken in the sanctuary up to 45 minutes before the service begins. The church doors will remain closed until pictures are completed. Pictures in other parts of the church complex may be taken up until the time of the wedding.

During the ceremony. The OFFICIAL wedding photographer may take non-flash pictures from the balcony or from the narthex if no noise is made.

After the ceremony. In order for the Altar Guild to have time to carry out their work of preparing the church for the Sunday services, picture taking must be limited to 20 minutes after the conclusion of the service. Strict adherence to this policy is requested.

Videotaping may be done from the balcony, provided that the camera is set up in advance and no distracting movement is involved. Videotaping may be arranged through Annie Slaughter in the church office.

## **Fees and Donations**

- Use of the Church – \$500 for communicants in good standing; \$750 for communicants in good standing of other Episcopal parishes in Greensboro; \$1500 for all others. These fees should be paid at the time of scheduling.
- Use of the Chapel - \$400 for communicants in good standing; \$1200 for all others. These fees should be paid at the time of scheduling.
- Use of the Haywood Duke Room for Receptions – There is no fee for communicants in good standing. For all others, a donation of \$350 is required. This fee should be paid at the time of scheduling.
- Organist – The organist’s fee is determined by the organist according to time required in preparation for the ceremony and is paid directly to the organist at the rehearsal. If there is no rehearsal, the fee is payable prior to the day of the wedding. Generally, a fee of \$250 - \$350 can be expected.
- Acolyte – If the church provides an acolyte, there is a fee of \$30. This should be given to the acolyte at the rehearsal.
- Priest – While no fee is required, most couples choose to give an honorarium of \$350.
- Should the start of the wedding be delayed more than 15 minutes, there will be a late fee charged at the discretion of the officiating clergy.

## **Contact Information**

The Rev. Tim Patterson, Rector, 272-6149 x 228, [tim@holy-trinity.com](mailto:tim@holy-trinity.com)

The Rev. Ginny Inman, Associate Rector, 272-6149 x 232, [ginnyi@holy-trinity.com](mailto:ginnyi@holy-trinity.com)

The Rev. Stewart Tabb, Associate Rector, 272-6149 x 220, [stewart@holy-trinity.com](mailto:stewart@holy-trinity.com)

Toney Yancey, Wedding Organist, 274-3822, [toneyyancey@triad.rr.com](mailto:toneyyancey@triad.rr.com)

Annie Slaughter, Parish Liturgical Coordinator, 272-6149 x 223, [annie@holy-trinity.com](mailto:annie@holy-trinity.com)

Jean Cornwell, Wedding Guild Coordinator, 272-7450, [jcornwell1@triad.rr.com](mailto:jcornwell1@triad.rr.com)

Tammy McElroy, Parish Administrator, 272-6149 x 229, [tammy@holy-trinity.com](mailto:tammy@holy-trinity.com)

Patty Jennings, Parish Secretary, 272-6149 x 236, [patty@holy-trinity.com](mailto:patty@holy-trinity.com)