

Declaration of Intention

We,

and

Desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union.

We believe that the union, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity: and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto.

Signature of Spouse #1

Signature of Spouse #2

Dated _____ *A.D.* _____

HOLY MATRIMONY INFORMATION FORM

Wedding Date _____

Fees: _____

Wedding Time _____

Spouse #1 Full Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Work Phone _____

(Circle one) Bachelor Widowed Divorced Number of this marriage _____

Date & Denomination of: Baptism _____ Communion _____ Confirmation _____

Father's Full Name _____ Mother's Full (Maiden) _____

Place of Birth _____

Spouse #2 Full Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Work Phone _____

(Circle one) Maiden Widow Divorced Number of this marriage _____

Date & Denomination of: Baptism _____ Communion _____ Confirmation _____

Father's Full Name _____ Mother's Full (Maiden) _____

Place of Birth _____

Rehearsal Date _____ Rehearsal Time _____

Officiant _____

Organist _____

Best Man _____ Ring bearer _____

Maid of Honor _____ Flower girl _____

No. of Ushers _____ No. of Bridesmaids _____

Permanent Address after marriage _____

Comments & Notes _____

Guidelines and Requirements for Marriage at Grace Episcopal Church

By both tradition and practice the Episcopal Church regards the solemnization of marriage as a sacred, life-long covenant between two persons in the presence of God and witnessed by the community of faith. The support of a faith community, as well as family and friends, is essential to the health of any marriage. Therefore, the following are required of persons seeking marriage at Grace Episcopal Church:

Baptism makes a person a member of the Christian church. The canons (laws) of the church require that at least one member of the couple be a baptized Christian.

Signing of Declaration of Intent

The canons of the Episcopal Church require that couples sign a “Declaration of Intent” which states that they believe marriage to be a lifelong union.

Meeting with the Clergy

In order for a marriage ceremony to be truly personal, the clergy solemnizing the marriage must get to know the people involved. And, in order to give a married couple all the support they need to weather the “for better, for worse” of life together, counseling is required by the national canons (church laws) of the Episcopal Church. Couples are asked to meet four times with the clergyperson, to share their journey toward marriage and their hopes for the future, and to explore the spiritual dimensions of marriage. Couples will be asked to fill out a questionnaire about their relationship to help them focus on areas of discussion such as finances and families of origin. At these meetings detailed plans for the ceremony itself will also be made.

Although these requirements may seem arduous, they are not nearly as arduous as marriage is. Many couples put much effort and planning into the one day of the marriage ceremony, but it is equally important to put effort and planning into the many days of married life to follow. We believe it is well worth investing in establishing a firm foundation for a long and joyful life together.

Getting Married in the Episcopal Church



Answers to many common questions regarding the ceremony of marriage in the
Episcopal Church

The DOs and DON'Ts before you say I DO

during Holy Week or the week after Easter. Any other time is a wonderful time for your wedding. Please contact the church office to reserve the exact day and time. You will want to do this at least six months to a year in advance.

License

You are responsible for obtaining your wedding license from the appropriate authorities. Please bring your license to the wedding rehearsal. After signing it, the clergyperson will mail it in to Norwood Town Hall.

The Service

All weddings at Grace Church will be according to the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer. Please feel free to borrow a copy if you'd like to look over the wedding service. Although there is some flexibility in the prayers and readings chosen, you may not write your own vows. The Episcopal vows are the traditional "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer...until death do us part." (However, they do not contain any clause about obeying!)

We strongly suggest your wedding include a celebration of the Holy Eucharist, since all our ability to share love with one another comes from Jesus first sharing his love with us, which we commemorate in the Eucharist. All baptized Christians, no matter what denomination they are from, are welcome to receive the Eucharist at Grace Church. Thus your guests from other Christian traditions will be welcomed and included. However, if most or many of your guests are from a non-Christian tradition (for example, if one of you is Jewish or Muslim), you may discuss with the clergy not having the Eucharist as part of your wedding.

There are two or three readings as part of the wedding service. You may want to ask friends or family to do these readings. One of two, or two of three, must be from the Bible. If your wedding includes the Eucharist, one must be from the Gospels. A list of readings to choose from is at the end of this brochure. One reading may be from another source of your choice (a poem or passage from a favorite book) as long as it does not contradict a Christian understanding of marriage.

You may also ask a friend or family member to lead the prayers during the service. Or, if you prefer, the clergyperson can do this.

Please see the "Wedding Planning Worksheet" for more decisions to make about the details of your service.

Program

The church office can create a program/bulletin for your wedding service. We strongly suggest a bulletin that includes all the words of the service so that non-Episcopal guests can follow along and know when to join in the prayers. If you would like the church office to produce the bulletin, please let us know at least 6 weeks in advance and give all the information you would like included in the bulletin including:

Your completed "Wedding Planning Worksheet"

- The names of the people in your wedding party.
- The names of the readers and others participating in the service.
- The music you have chosen for the service, including titles and composers
- Any other details you would like included in the bulletin.

There is a charge for this service. See section titled 'Costs' below. You may provide your own paper if you wish. Paper must also be provided 6 weeks in advance.

Please make an appointment with her if you plan to have music at your wedding. Music does not necessarily have to be only sacred music, but must be appropriate for a church context and reflect a Christian understanding of marriage. The music director can help you arrange for soloists and instrumentalists if you wish.

Flowers

It is expected that if you wish to have fresh flowers at your wedding, you will need to provide them. The church can provide silk flowers if you prefer not to buy flowers.

Flowers are usually placed in two brass vases that sit on either side of the cross behind the altar. We call these the “altar flowers” although they do not actually sit on the altar. If you would like to use the brass vases, make sure your florist picks up the metal liners that fit into the vases. They will then be able to arrange flowers into the liners in their shop and then slip the liners into the vase at the church. Without the liners, the brass vases may not be used.

If you choose to have flowers in addition to the altar flowers, you may. However, flowers may not be placed on the altar table and may not obstruct the congregation’s view of the top of the altar, the cross behind the altar, or the wedding party. They must also not obstruct the clergy or wedding party when moving around the altar area.

Pipe cleaners or ribbon are the only acceptable way to attach bows or flowers to the ends of the pews. Tape, tacks, and plastic clips will damage the pews.

If your wedding is on a Saturday, you may choose to donate your altar flowers to the church for Sunday’s services. If you choose to do this, please let us know and let us know how you would like your offering to be noted in Sunday’s worship bulletin (for example: “Flowers offered in thanksgiving for the wedding of Jane Smith and John Jones”).

After the ceremony, please remove your flowers (except the altar flowers if you have donated them for Sunday) and all other decorations from the church.

Candles

The candles on the altar and behind the altar will be lit for your wedding ceremony. Additional candles in the altar area are not allowed. You may, however:

- 1) Ask for the altar guild to put up the pew candle torches to line the aisle of the church. Your florist may also decorate these with ribbons or flowers.
- 2) Put small votive candles in the side windows of the church.

No other candles are permitted.

Guest Clergy

If there is a special clergyperson in your life that you would like to include, guest clergy are welcome to take part in the ceremony. Options for a guest minister might include: preaching the homily, leading the prayers, or pronouncing the final wedding blessing. Episcopal and Lutheran guest clergy are welcome to celebrate or co-celebrate the Eucharist. The Grace Church clergyperson must lead the couple in their wedding vows and pronounce them married in order to be able to sign the wedding license.

Aisle Runner

If you wish an aisle runner, you must provide it, bring it, and take it away after the wedding. Often florists rent these.

Kneelers and cushions

Grace Church will provide a special wedding kneeler for use during the service. Any other cushions (for example, for a ring bearer to carry the rings on) must be provided by you if you wish to have them.

prior to the ceremony. Please make sure an appointment is set for a specific time for your photographer to touch base with the clergy person.

Flash photography is an obvious presence of a photographer or videographer and can be distracting to wedding guests and the wedding party, leading many to lose focus on the wedding as an act of worship, rather than an event to be documented. Therefore, there is no flash photography or videography with lighting allowed during the service. Also, photographers and videographer must not be in the church itself. This includes during the processions in and out of the church. They can stand in the sacristy door near the altar (without entering the church), in the balcony, and/or in the vestibule of the church. If you would like “up close” photos taken with flash, parts of the wedding can be re-staged immediately after the wedding ceremony. In this way the photographer can get a close-up of the giving of the rings, etc.

Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal is an important event in preparing for your wedding. It is a time for your clergy person to get to know the members of your family and wedding party, and for everyone to practice what they are going to do so that the ceremony itself goes smoothly. The rehearsal is usually scheduled for the evening before the wedding, but it can be scheduled at another time if more convenient. Please leave at least an hour for the rehearsal. Please also remind your wedding party to be on time. The rehearsal will run an hour from when the last person arrives, so late arrivals may delay any rehearsal dinner festivities you have planned.

Costs

There is no charge for the sacraments of the church. If you had a simple wedding and no reception, your wedding could be without any cost at all. If your wedding is going to include flowers, music, and so on, there are certain church costs to keep in mind:

- Janitorial services are \$50. We will arrange for our sexton to clean the building before you arrive and after you leave, and to be present during the wedding in case of emergency maintenance needs. This check is made payable to our sexton, Roy McHoul.
- Organist is \$250. Please add \$50 to this fee if organist is requested at your rehearsal. This check is made payable to our organist, Hyunji Kim. Soloists or instrumentalists arranged for by the organist are to be paid directly by you.
- If you have the church office create your wedding bulletin, the cost is \$75. This check is payable to Grace Episcopal Church.
- It is customary to give the clergy person an honorarium for their time in preparing for your wedding. The honorarium is at your discretion, but we suggest 10% of the total cost of your wedding. This check should be made payable to the Rector's Discretionary Fund.

Please note: Do not write one big check to Grace Church for the above expenses. You may wish to bring these checks to the rehearsals or ask the best man or maid of honor to take care of them so you don't have to remember them on your wedding day.

If your wedding is on a budget (for example, if you are not planning a reception) please let us know and many costs can be waived or reduced.

Same-sex unions

Clergy in this parish may sign marriage licenses and pronounce marriages for any couple that is legally eligible for marriage in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



Wedding Planning Worksheet

Spouse 1 _____

Spouse 2 _____

Wedding Date _____

2. Will there be a presentation or giving in marriage?

Yes No

If so, which wording:

Who gives (presents) this man/woman to be married to this man/woman?

or the following

Who presents this couple to be married to each other?

To either question, the appropriate answer is, "I do." If more than one person responds, they do so together.

3. What will the readings be?

First reading (from Bible): _____

Second reading (can be non-Biblical): _____

Gospel reading (required if Communion): _____

4. Who will the readers be?

First reader: _____

Second reader: _____

Third reader: _____

6. Will there be one or two rings?

7. Will there be Communion? Yes no

8. Would you like a friend or family member to read the prayers or prefer the clergy do it? If you choose a friend please print the name here:

9. Would you like the church office to prepare the bulletin or would you prefer to do it yourself?

If you would like the church to do it, there is a small charge to cover the cost of printing ink and paper. You may provide your own paper if you wish. The church office needs to receive all the answers on this worksheet, the names of all in the wedding party, names of the readers, titles and composers of any music, and any additional information to be included in the bulletin at least 6 weeks before your wedding.

If you would like a list of hymns appropriate for weddings, please ask your clergy person.

Prelude: _____

Processional: _____

Between the readings: _____

At the offertory: _____

During Communion: _____

Recessional: _____

Wedding Readings

One or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture is read. If there is to be a Communion, a passage from the Gospel always concludes the Readings.

Genesis 1:26-28 (Male and female he created them)

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24 (A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)

Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7 (Many waters cannot quench love)

Tobit 8:5b-8 (*New English Bible*) (That she and I may grow old together)

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Love is patient and kind)

Ephesians 3:14-19 (The Father from whom every family is named)

Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33 (Walk in love, as Christ loved us)

Colossians 3:12-17 (Love which binds everything together in harmony)

1 John 4:7-16 (Let us love one another for love is of God)

Between the Readings, a Psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said. Appropriate Psalms are 67, 127, and 128.

Gospel Readings:

Matthew 5:1-10 (The Beatitudes)

Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the light...Let your light so shine)

Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock)

Mark 10:6-9, 13-16 (They are no longer two but one)

John 15:9-12 (Love one another as I have loved you)