

WEDDINGS

Guidelines for Weddings

It is a pleasure to make available to you the facilities of our church for the consecration of this important event in your life. The following guidelines are provided by the Session for the assistance of those planning a wedding at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 2200 N Bell Avenue, Denton, Texas (940-382-8815).

Christian Marriage

We believe that Christian marriage is a life partnership based on mutual human love in faithfulness to God, confirmed and witnessed to by a wedding ceremony, and sustained by dependence on God's forgiving and enabling grace in Jesus Christ. This partnership has several important characteristics:

A Christian marriage is a partnership in which both partners freely and gladly decide to marry and are not forced to do so by external or internal necessities.

Christian marriage exists for its own sake, not as a means to some other goal such as the satisfaction of sexual needs or the production of a family. The hope of Christian marriage is that each partner in the marriage will grow more and more to love the other for the other's sake.

Christian marriage, then, is one in which the partners respect, affirm, and encourage the freedom and "otherness" of the other. There can be no expectation that one partner must lose his or her individuality, to become a copy, servant or tool of the other. Christian marriage involves the mutually freeing, mutually enriching fellowship of two persons who affirm the difference between them.

Christian marriage is a covenant relationship that stands in all the periods of life—the good and the bad, the light and the dark, the joyful and the sad, the easy and the difficult. Christians enter marriage with the clear intention and commitment to remain married.

Christian marriage, therefore, is a gift and a task. It is a gift of God to people, a gift to be received joyfully and thankfully. It is also a task that takes diligent, careful, loving work.

The Wedding Service

The Wedding Service is a worship service in which (within a particular context—the marriage of two persons) a congregation is gathered to worship God. The ultimate focus of the service, therefore, is God. It is God whom we worship, and it is embraced by the grace and love of God that the marriage covenant is made and celebrated.

It is our hope that through the preparatory counseling, through the rehearsal, and through the wedding service itself, all participants will be touched anew by the love of God. We hope that the wedding will be an occasion to learn more fully who God is and to learn more fully who we are as persons loved by God . . . and to become more fully committed to living faithfully and lovingly.

General Guidelines for Weddings

THE PASTOR: By virtue of office, the pastor is in charge of all weddings in the church, unless circumstances arise, or alternate arrangements are made with which the pastor is in agreement. It is

possible, with the consent of the pastor, for a minister from another church to participate in the wedding service. The usual procedure is for the pastor of Trinity to extend such an invitation. The fee for members is \$100.00. The fee for nonmembers is \$250.00.

COUNSELING: The Session requires that couples married at Trinity Presbyterian Church complete 10 hours of counseling, 8 hours of which will occur prior to the wedding and 2 hours of which will occur three to six months after the wedding. This counseling is to be done by the Pastor, or by a person approved by the Pastor.

DATE: The wedding date should not be finalized until after the consultation with the minister and organist. The wedding date should not be on a Sunday, on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, or during Holy Week. The date for the wedding will be definite when finalized and placed on the church calendar. Nonmembers cannot schedule more than three months in advance for dates in May through August.

MUSIC: It is expected that the organist at Trinity will play for all rehearsals and weddings. If another organist is desired, the request should be made to the minister and in consultation with the church organist. If another organist is approved, he or she must arrange a meeting with the church organist to check out the operation of the organ.

Since weddings are not a part of the regular duties of the church organist, an honorarium of \$100-\$150 should be provided, depending upon the preparation time required.

Music is an important part of any wedding service. Since this is a service of worship, care should be taken in choosing music that is suitable, reverent, and that directs attention to God. It should be in good taste with what is considered appropriate and acceptable in the church. The minister and organist will be happy to consult with you in choosing music. A list of appropriate and suggested music can also be provided.

If a soloist from the church is provided, that will require an additional fee (\$50-\$75).

DECORATIONS: Elaborate decoration should be avoided. The communion table is not to be changed from its ordinary appearance. The church does not have a kneeling bench, nor does it have candelabra or candle lighters. These may be secured from a florist, they are desired. When candles are used, precautions must be taken so that wax does not drop on the floor. Furniture in the Sanctuary should not be removed or rearranged without approval of the pastor. Please do not use nails, scotch tape, wire or any kind of fastener that adheres to or mars any finished surface. No greenery or floral decorations should be placed on our musical instruments.

RECEPTION: The Fellowship Hall is available for a reception following the wedding, if desired. The fee for use of the Fellowship Hall is \$50. The reception must last no later than 10:00 p.m. No smoking or serving of alcoholic beverages is allowed. The kitchen may be used by caterers. They will need to make arrangements with the wedding coordinator to get into the church to set up before the reception and clean following the reception.

KEYS: A key to church may be picked up at the church office during the week before the wedding. The church secretary is in her office Monday through Friday from 1:00- 5:00 p.m. A \$10 key deposit is requested, which will be reimbursed upon return of the key.

CLEANUP: A custodial deposit of \$75 is required, \$50 of which will be returned to you if the building is left in clean condition. Trinity Church covenants that the building will be clean prior to the wedding

service. If the reception is held in the church, arrangements of setting up and clearing decorations will be the responsibility of those hosting the reception.

Since rice is dangerous to birds (they cannot digest it), we request that birdseed be used. Birdseed should be thrown only in the parking lot area and not in the building or on the porches.

TEMPERATURE: The thermostats are not to be touched. The custodian will set the thermostats prior to the rehearsal and the wedding, and they must remain at those settings.

PHOTOGRAPHS: With the exception of time exposures (no flash) from the rear of the sanctuary, taken by the wedding photographer, photographs are not to be taken during the ceremony. Ushers will be requested to ask persons with cameras not to take pictures during the wedding. There are two exceptions for the wedding photographer: a flash picture of the bride and her escort near the rear of the sanctuary during the processional and a flash picture of the bride and groom during the recessional are permissible.

We do allow video cameras, for those who wish to tape the service. However, the logistics for videotaping the service must be worked out with the pastor, and the camera operator must set up during the wedding rehearsal.

EXPENSES: For members of this congregation and members of the immediate family of congregation members, the only expenses involved are:

- Organist \$100-\$150
- Key deposit \$10
- Custodial deposit \$75 (\$50 refundable)

For those who are not members of this congregation, expenses are as follows:

- Custodial deposit \$75 (\$50 refundable)
- Organist \$100-\$150
- Sanctuary \$150
- Fellowship Hall \$50
- Key deposit \$10 (refundable)
- [Classroom areas are available for dressing at no charge.]

A 10% deposit is required before the wedding date is finalized and secured on the calendar. All fees must be paid in full two weeks before the wedding ceremony.