

Wedding Instructions



Episcopal
Church of the Ascension

701 Orange Ave.
Clearwater, FL 33756
(727) 447-3469 office
(727) 446-5170 fax
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WEDDING INSTRUCTIONS

These guidelines are for those planning to be married at Church of the Ascension. May Jesus bless your love with the power of His Holy Spirit!

The initial contact about marriage should be with the Rector. You or your fiancé must be an active Episcopalian with a personal family history or association with Church of the Ascension. "Active" church members are those who are regular in attendance at services and who make a pledge of record to the financial support of the parish.

Weddings held in the Episcopal Church are governed by Canon law and traditions of long-standing at Church of the Ascension. A church wedding is any wedding solemnized by a priest of the Episcopal Church.

It is the tradition at Ascension that all weddings take place in the church building or on the grounds of the church. Home weddings are discouraged except in extenuating circumstances.

Please Consider the Following When Planning Your Wedding

-The Rector must have a minimum of 30 days notice of your intention to be married. This requirement is a Canon law of the Episcopal Church. The wedding date is subject to his approval.
-If the bride or groom has been divorced, it is then necessary to obtain the consent of the bishop of this diocese before a priest of the Church can marry a couple. The process of making application to the bishop's office takes four to six weeks to complete. The Church does bless a civil marriage. It is a brief form containing a blessing and reaffirmation. If you wish to know more about this service, please contact the Rector.
-The couple must have three (3) counseling sessions with the Rector, or a priest on staff. It is your responsibility to call and arrange for these meetings. If either party to the marriage is unavailable for counseling here at Ascension, we will help you to make arrangements to obtain counseling from another Episcopal priest who may be located closer to you.
-It is within the discretion of the Rector to decline to solemnize any marriage for good reason.
-The Rector cannot give consent to solemnize the marriage of any couple whom he has not met. He must meet the couple before the wedding date can be made final on the church calendar. Invitations should not be ordered nor plans made involving the clergy of this parish or the use of church facilities before the Rector places it on the official church calendar.

As soon as the date has been approved, please fill out and return the Wedding Information Form with a deposit of \$100 to hold the wedding date.

- The marriage license is the priest's authority from the State of Florida to perform a marriage. The marriage license must be in the parish office before the date of the rehearsal. No ceremony can be conducted until the license is in the hands of the Rector.
- Clergy and musicians, other than staff of this church, should not be invited to participate without first consulting with the Rector or the Organist.
- No weddings may be scheduled for Christmas Week or Holy Week.
- To assist in your planning, it is helpful to contact the Clergy, Organist and Wedding Coordinator at least 90 days prior to the wedding.

Wedding Coordinator

- After the Rector, the next step in planning your wedding is the Wedding Coordinator. She will tell you about church customs, and will ensure the smooth flow of your ceremony by coordinating with the Altar Guild, the sexton and other church staff. The Wedding Coordinator is also present at the rehearsal and the wedding to assist the clergy and the wedding party in preparation for the ceremony. The Wedding Coordinator is a member of the staff and is an integral part of your wedding. Please make an appointment --- by emailing drinam@yahoo.com --- as soon as your wedding has been scheduled on the church calendar.

Decorations in the Church

- The church has final approval of all decorations. It is essential that the bride or her representative consult the Wedding Coordinator before making arrangements with a florist. The church is responsible for placing the flowers on the altar.
- There may be two small vases of flowers on the altar.
- Simple flower decorations may be used on the ends of the front pews; they cannot be put in place with tacks or nails.
- A runner is not permitted down the center aisle.

Music

- Many musical options are available to enhance the religious nature of the wedding ceremony. The organist is to be consulted for the selection of music, and hiring of soloists. Lee Cobb may be reached through the church office, 447-3469, or by emailing leec@churchofascension.org.

The Marriage Vows

-The only form of marriage service authorized by the Episcopal Church is found in the Book of Common Prayer; the clergy are not at liberty to make any changes in that service. Please see the Book of Common Prayer, pages 423-438.

Photographs and Videotaping

-Photographs of the wedding party may be staged before and after the marriage service only. Lights will remain on and the candles lighted for 30 minutes after the service for the purpose of taking pictures. Photos of the wedding procession may be taken with a hand-held flash camera only from the cross aisle in the center of the church.
-No flash photographs may be taken from the start of the wedding to the end of the recessional. Flashes and clicks are distracting to the wedding party and especially to the bride and groom. Photographs taken with available light may be taken throughout the ceremony from the choir loft only.
-The wedding may be videotaped using available light with a camera located in the choir loft only.
-Photographers and videographers must contact the Wedding Coordinator about the rules for taking pictures.

Wedding Rehearsal

-The rehearsal is traditionally held early in the evening of the day before the wedding, usually between 4 and 6 p.m. The rehearsal takes about an hour, depending upon the number in the wedding party. The rehearsal itself involves several members of the church staff and will begin at the time scheduled whether or not all of the wedding party is present.

If either the bride or groom is more than 30 minutes late, the rehearsal will be cancelled. If you know you will be late because of an emergency, please call the parish office, 447-3469, before 3 p.m. In addition, please email office@churchofascension.org.

Before the Ceremony

-The bride and bridesmaids may dress in the Lambert Room, located across the street from the church in the Parish Hall.

After the Ceremony

-To prevent congestion, receiving lines are not permitted at the church door as guests are exiting. Please reserve the receiving line for the reception.
-Rice and birdseed are not permitted to be thrown on church property because they create a hazard for walking.



FEES

Deposit to Secure Wedding Date	\$100 _____
Church and Clergy Fee	\$300 _____
Music Fees	
Staff Organist	\$200 _____
Staff Soloist	\$150 _____
	TOTAL _____

*The above fees should be paid a month prior to the wedding.
Please make checks payable to Church of the Ascension
and return this form to the Financial Secretary with your payment.*

*If you have been referred to an outside agency for
pre-marital counseling, those fees must also be paid in full
prior to the wedding.*

Early in your wedding planning, please contact the head of our
Wedding Coordinators' Team
Drina Meyer
through the church office, 727-447-3469
or at drinam@yahoo.com

WEDDING INFORMATION FORM

Date of Application _____

DATE OF WEDDING _____

BRIDE'S FULL NAME _____

Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Maiden Widow Divorcèè

Number of Previous Marriages _____

Baptized _____ Denomination _____

Confirmed _____ Denomination _____

Communicant__ Denomination _____

Father's Name _____

Father's Address _____

Mother's Name _____

Mother's Address _____

GROOM'S FULL NAME _____

Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email _____

Bachelor Widower Divorcè

Number of Previous Marriages _____

Baptized ___ Denomination _____

Confirmed ___ Denomination _____

Communicant ___ Denomination _____

Father's Name _____

Father's Address _____

Mother's Name _____

Mother's Address _____

Couple's address after wedding _____

Home phone _____

Wish to remain on church's Active List _____

DATE OF CEREMONY _____ Time _____

Number of guests expected _____ Celebrant _____

Date and time of rehearsal _____

Photographer name and phone _____

Florist name and phone _____

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