



Grace Church Wedding Guide and Policies

Holy Matrimony in the Episcopal Church and at Grace Church

Marriage is an amazing gift and adventure for two people who are prepared to make a lifelong commitment to one another. These days, many marriages are done in courthouses or sometimes a friend gets an online certificate to officiate the service and sign the civil marriage license. But the decision to be married in the church adds a spiritual and religious dimension to the service that adds depth and beauty to the ceremony. Holy Matrimony, or Christian Marriage, is understood as a spiritual union, a mutual consent of the heart, mind, and will of the couple. While the priest does sign the civil marriage license, their primary role is to impart the sacramental blessing of the marriage and ask God's blessing on the union. We, at Grace Church, are honored to be a part of your marriage and your life together!

In the Episcopal Church, it is required that at least one of the parties 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 Canons of the church (church law). A priest or bishop must preside in order to pronounce the nuptial blessing, and to celebrate Holy Eucharist (Communion) if desired as part of the service. But a deacon or assisting clergy person of another tradition may help with several parts of the liturgy.

The Canons of the church require that a couple meet with the officiating clergy for pre-marriage preparation and instruction. Couples must formally meet with a clergy person prior to announcing the date and planning the service. Ideally this initial meeting is done **six months prior** to the intended date, though special circumstance may warrant an exception. Clergy typically meet with a couple for 3-5 hours total as part of marriage preparation and planning the service together.

The liturgy for Holy Matrimony will be according to the Book of Common Prayer 1979 and other authorized liturgies by The Episcopal Church. The traditional vows of the liturgy and the blessing of the marriage by the priest must be included. Other additions to the service should be discussed with the officiating clergy person. A wedding consultant may be helpful for plans surrounding the wedding, especially the reception, but the clergy person is in charge of all things pertaining to the service.

If one or both parties wishing to be married are previously divorced, the clergy person should be notified at the initial meeting. The intent of this notification is pastoral in nature. Our clergy want to make sure that both parties understand the solemnity of the sacrament of marriage and are well equipped for a healthy and thriving union. Counseling or other resources may be encouraged or required by the priest. In accordance with the canons of the church, a petition to solemnize a marriage after a divorce will be sent to the bishop by the clergy person.

Our clergy reserve the right to not officiate a service if concerns for the couple's readiness exist.

Non-member Weddings and Renting the Sanctuary

Grace Church, like most churches, has a member and non-member fee structure. It is assumed that a couple who are members or family of members are contributing financially to the ministry of the church. For non-members, fees are higher to help offset that difference. Grace Church is open to having non-Episcopal officiants conduct services for non-member weddings, as long as the officiating clergy are duly licensed and authorized to legally conduct marriages in the State of Oklahoma and are respectful of the church setting of our sanctuary. An initial meeting with a Grace Church clergy person is still required to schedule the wedding and rental of the sanctuary.

Scheduling a Wedding

Scheduling your wedding will be completed with the clergy and Grace Church event coordinator directly. Morning, afternoon, or evening weddings are allowed most days of the week, except Sunday morning. Typically, weddings are not done during Advent (Dec), Lent (50 days prior to Easter), or Holy Week (week prior to Easter). Special exceptions may be made in coordination with the clergy. Signing this agreement and making the deposit by the proper time assures the wedding is scheduled.

Wedding Service Details

All of the items below can be addressed with the clergy, who will work with you to coordinate with the various people who may need to be involved with your service.

Floral arrangements in the sanctuary are typically reserved for the altar area alone (not on chairs or rows). Grace Church has two chalice shaped vases that are typically used. The Arrangement in Yukon is our usual florist and is familiar with our set up, but another florist may be used. Flowers may be placed in the Gathering Space or entryway, but should be removed after the service. You are responsible for ordering your own flowers.

Candles in the sanctuary should be limited to the altar and lectern candles. Please do not bring in any additional candles. Unity candles are not part of the Episcopal liturgy.

Music should be coordinated with Grace Church's music minister. Outside musicians may be used, but should be coordinated and approved with our music minister for logistical reasons associated with using our piano and gear.

Communion is not required, but may be included in your service. All in attendance will be invited to participate if the sacrament is included. The couple typically receives first and can even help distribute the wine.

Audio Visual assistance should be coordinated with Grace Church's technical director. The clergy can help assess your needs. Extra charges may be needed to cover more than one A/V person (such as for live streaming your service).

Photography & Videography is welcome during the service, but should be done respectfully and should not impede the view of the congregation or distract from the solemnity of the service. No flashes are permitted during the ceremony.

The Rehearsal is typically held the night before your service, and all readers, wedding party, parents, or anyone involved in the service should be in attendance. If a wedding planner has last minute details to address with the clergy, this should be done before the rehearsal. The clergy person will preside over the rehearsal itself.

Seating Capacity – Grace Church's Sanctuary can easily hold 325 people.

Service Bulletins – The church staff will help make a service bulletin of the liturgy for your service, which will include any congregational responses. A printing charge will be included based on the size of your wedding attendance.

Opening and Closing the Church – A staff person or authorized keyholder for the church will be responsible for locking and unlocking the doors. Arrival times of the wedding party, photographers, the couple, etc. should be coordinated with the clergy person.

Security can be contracted through Grace Church for your service. It is not required. Please know that our facility has a strict no-firearm policy. The exception is for uniformed contracted officers or an off-duty officer known and approved by the clergy in accordance with Diocesan Policy of the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma.

Receptions in the Gathering Space or a small reception in the multipurpose room can be arranged. Kitchen rental for a cater can also be arranged. The costs associated are on a separate document.

Alcohol policy – Prior to your wedding service, the priest will not marry you if you have been drinking on campus or are impaired by any substance. Beer and wine are permitted in the reception agreement, but not prior to a wedding.

Marriage License – You are responsible for obtaining your marriage license from the County Clerk (Oklahoma or Canadian County) the week prior to your wedding. It is \$50, or \$5 if you completed pre-marriage preparation with a clergy person. The marriage license should be given to the officiating priest no later than the wedding rehearsal. If you do not have your marriage license, the clergy cannot legally complete your ceremony.

Deposit – The deposit is due 60 days in advance of your wedding date. The remainder is due at the wedding rehearsal.

Rice and Confetti are not allowed as part of the service exit. Bubbles outside or sparklers outside are allowed.

Your Next Steps

- Make an appointment with the priest
- Schedule your wedding (bring two options just in case)
- Sign this agreement with the priest
- Schedule marriage preparation sessions
- Bring your deposit 60 days prior to date, remainder due at rehearsal

Wedding Donation & Honorariums

	MEMBER	NON MEMBER
Wedding Service	\$500	\$1200
Musician Honorarium	\$175	\$175
Audio Visual	\$125	\$125
Security	\$125	\$125
Grace Clergy & Pre-marital prep	Your discretion	\$300
Deposit - 60 days advance	\$100	\$300

Wedding Information Form

Your full legal name: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email:** _____

Address: _____

Baptized: Y / N **Confirmed Episcopalian:** Y / N **Divorced:** Y / N **Widowed:** Y / N

Denomination/Affiliation: _____ **Children in home:** Y / N

Member of Grace Church: Y / N **Family of Member at Grace Church:** Y / N

Fiancé full legal name: _____

Phone Number: _____ **Email:** _____

Address: _____

Baptized: Y / N **Confirmed Episcopalian:** Y / N **Divorced:** Y / N **Widowed:** Y / N

Denomination/Affiliation: _____ **Children in home:** Y / N

Member of Grace Church: Y / N **Family of Member at Grace Church:** Y / N

Desired Date Option 1: _____ Option 2: _____

Wedding Party Size: _____ **Ring Bearer:** Y / N **Flower Girl** Y / N

Expected Wedding Attendance: _____ **Rehearsal Attendance:**

Notes:

Wedding Agreement

I have read the above policies and agree to follow them and the wedding donation/honorariums. I certify to the accuracy of my information above. (*Sign below*)

Person 1: _____ **Date:** _____

Person 2: _____ **Date:** _____

Clergy: _____ **Date:** _____

For weddings officiated by Episcopal Clergy, please also sign the Declaration of Intent on the next page.



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 life-long union of husband and wife as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

We believe that the union of spouses, 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.

Spouse 1 Signature

Spouse 2 Signature

Date