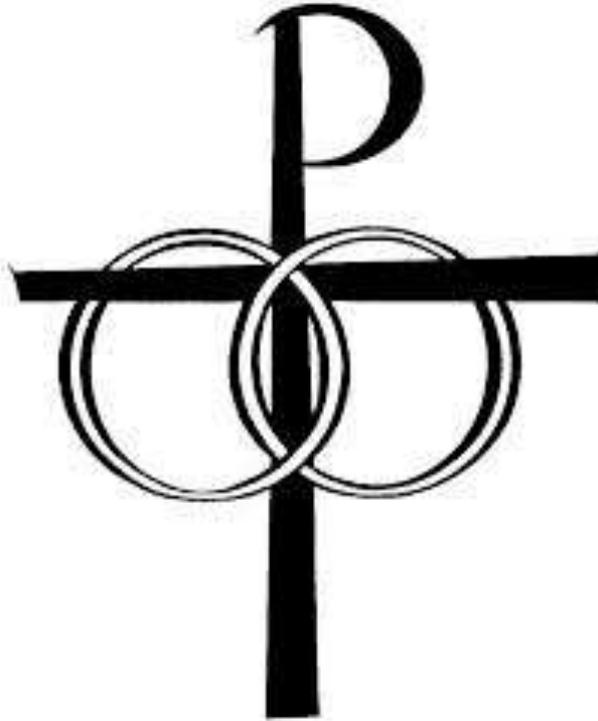


Wedding Planning Guide



Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
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www.htelc.com

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your engagement! What a joy filled time of life! And, there is so much to do in preparation. This guide is designed to assist you in understanding the process of preparation for marriage through Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (hereafter HTELC). We are most honored that you wish HTELC to participate in your journey toward your wedding day and your marriage.

You are encouraged to read this guide carefully and to give a gift to yourself by doing things in a timely manner. By attending to details in a timely and thoughtful manner now, you and your guests will be able to focus on celebrating your union in the presence of God on the day of your wedding.

“Lutheran Christians understand marriage in two ways. On the one hand, marriage is a gift. God intends to bring strength and joy to those who enter into marriage and, through marriage, to promote the well-being of the whole human family. On the other hand, marriage is a human estate. Two people make vows to each other, which are publically witnessed, and society recognizes their status as legally married.” (*The Christian Life: Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, ELW)

HTELC observes weddings as celebrations rooted in God’s love and affirms the guidelines of the New England Synod concerning the celebration of marriage. The wedding ceremony is a time of worship and reflects God’s presence and blessing by proclaiming that God intends the gift of marriage as a sign of both the union of Christ and the church and the joy of the reign of God.

Your choice to work with HTELC in your planning reflects your desire for a Christian ceremony to begin your marriage. As part of this process, you are encouraged to worship regularly with HTELC and to make time for daily prayer in your journey.

Welcome to the planning process for your wedding day!

IMPORTANT FORMS

AT LEAST SIX (6) MONTHS PRIOR TO THE CEREMONY

- Wedding Request Form** – An application that begins the process of planning for your wedding day. Please fill out and return to the Office Coordinator or Pastor.
- Wedding Planning Sheet**- A form that captures all the pertinent information for planning your wedding service. Please fill this out and return to Pastor (who will keep and review this with you often).

THE BASICS

FIRST THINGS FIRST

All who desire to plan a wedding at HTELC (members and non-members) are required to fill out a "Wedding Request" form. This form allows the Pastor and Office Coordinator to learn a little bit about you and to begin the scheduling process. It is highly recommended that you begin the process at least six months in advance of your desired wedding date. You can download a copy of the form at www.htelc.com or request a copy by calling the Office Coordinator at 603-436-1704.

Do not set a date without clearing it with both the Pastor and Office Coordinator.

WHO MAY BE MARRIED THROUGH HOLY TRINITY

Normally one of those seeking marriage should be a worshipping member of HTELC or be related to the congregation. If neither are members of Holy Trinity nor related to the congregation, one or both may take instruction in the Christian faith and join the congregation. Such instruction should be completed before the marriage ceremony date. When neither party has any previous connection with HTELC, a wedding service may be scheduled only through consultation with the Pastor.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Wedding preparation often focuses on all the details related to the celebration, however, this should not overshadow the real preparation for married life. Pastor will work with you through premarital counseling. This will include the administration of a relationship inventory tool followed by counseling sessions reflecting on the results. Couples generally enjoy this process and find it helpful and insightful. You should plan for at least five sessions to work through this process. If you are from out of the area, you will need to negotiate with Pastor how to fulfill premarital counseling at HTELC or how to arrange premarital counseling closer to where you live.

The goal of HTELC in requiring premarital counseling is to help each couple to begin their marriage as strongly as possible.

PLANNING THE WORSHIP SERVICE

Once the premarital counseling has been fulfilled, a final session will be required to plan the actual worship service. This will include the details of the procession, participants, scripture readings, hymns, observance of Holy Communion (or not), and other requests. The Wedding Planning Sheet will help to expedite this process. You can download a copy of the form at www.htelc.com or request a copy by calling the Office Coordinator at 603-436-1704.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

Marriages officiated by the Pastor of HTELC are legally binding. For the Pastor to marry you, you must present a legal marriage license. For information on how to obtain a license in New Hampshire, contact the City or Town Clerk. Expect to pay between \$45 and \$60 cash for the license and know that both parties to be married must be present to request the license.

If the wedding is to be solemnized outside of New Hampshire, contact the similar governmental agency to acquire information for the issuance of the marriage license.

If either participant has been married before, proof will be required to verify the prior marriage has been legally ended and that the person is free to be legally married.

PASTOR AND VISITING CLERGY

The Pastor's Letter of Call and our parish community policy designates that the Pastor of HTELC will be the presiding minister of all weddings celebrated at HTELC. If you desire a visiting clergy person to participate as an assisting minister in the marriage ceremony, please indicate this on the Wedding Request form. The invitation for Visiting Clergy to participate in the marriage ceremony is made by the Pastor of Holy Trinity.

MUSIC

Once the wedding date is set and the plan is for the marriage ceremony to take place at HTELC, contact one of the staff music leaders. The Office Coordinator can assist you by providing contact information for the music staff. If unable to assist you on that date, contact the Pastor for a list of other possible musicians.

The music used in your marriage ceremony, must be in keeping with the spirit of Christian worship. As such, all music selected must conform to at least one of the following principals: it should reflect praise of God, the steadfast love of Christ, a scriptural theme, or the invocation of God's presence and blessing. (Secular music should be moved to the reception.) The music selection shall be worked out between the couple, the musician and the Pastor.

As the marriage ceremony is a worship service, consider selecting at least one hymn/song for the congregation to join in singing.

THE SANCTUARY

It should be remembered that the sanctuary itself with its furnishings and symbols is the proper setting for a Christian wedding. Nothing may be added to the sanctuary that will detract from its function.

LITURGICAL COLORS

HTELC observes the Liturgical Church Year according to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)*. The Liturgical Church Year follows the life of Christ. To emphasize the spirit and purpose of each season of the Liturgical Church Year, paraments are placed on the altar

and ambo (pulpit), and are worn as stoles by the Pastor. These items are changed at specified times of the year and will not be changed for wedding services. Please note the following colors for the seasons of the Liturgical Church Year:

Advent – blue

Christmas – white

Epiphany – white

Time after Epiphany – green

Lent – purple (No weddings are scheduled during this contemplative season.)

Easter – white

Pentecost – red

Holy Trinity – white

Time after Pentecost – green

Reformation – red

All Saints – white

Christ the King- white

CANDLES

There are two oil filled candles situated on or near the altar. These candles are lit for all worship services.

If you plan to use a unity candle, you are responsible for providing the holder, long burning dripless tapers and the actual unity candle. (The use of a unity candle came into vogue in the 1970's but has no tradition before that time.)

FLOWERS

Flowers may be placed on the two flower tables of the congregation or on sturdy/solid holders provided by a florist. Flowers may not inhibit the use of the chancel. Only real flowers may be used in the sanctuary. Please advise your florist that no decorations can be fastened to permanent furniture by means of nails, staples, screws, wires, or adhesives. You should arrange the delivery time of flowers so that a member of the wedding party is present to receive them.

You are invited to leave the chancel floral arrangements in the sanctuary for use on the following Sunday.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY IN THE SANCTUARY

Photographs in the sanctuary are normally scheduled two hours prior to the start of the wedding service and must be completed 30 minutes prior to the start of the service. You are encouraged to have as many photos taken prior to the service so as to assist in movement to the reception following the wedding service. Photos following the wedding service should be planned into the schedule.

No flash photography may be done during the wedding service. Your photographer should speak with the Pastor prior to the wedding day for specific questions.

Photographers are expected to not detract nor inhibit the worship service. The photographer may not move around the front of the sanctuary nor in the chancel during the wedding service.

Video cameras may be positioned prior to the wedding service so as to capture the wedding service. The videographer may not move around the front of the sanctuary nor in the chancel during the wedding service.

MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS

HTELC does not permit the throwing of plastic confetti, flower petals (fresh or frozen), rice, or birdseed inside or outside of the church building. (Though an old cultural tradition, these items leave behind a mess that is not easily cleaned up.) The release of balloons is not permitted as this creates environmental hazards for wildlife. Holy Trinity does not permit the release of wildlife (doves, butterflies, etc.) on its premises. Once the newly married couple is outside, bio-degradable paper confetti may be used or bubbles may be blown.

HTELC does not permit the use of an aisle runner, as it poses a significant safety/fall hazard.

DRESSING ROOMS

Dressing rooms are not available for your use on the day of your wedding service. You may use Sunday School Rooms for the wedding party, but these are not dressing rooms. These and all spaces used by the wedding party are to be left in good condition.

WEDDING SERVICE FOLDER/BULLETIN

If you plan to provide an order-of-service for your guests, you will need to arrange for the production of this with the Office Coordinator. You may provide a standard sized bulletin cover to be used.

BUILDING ACCESS

REHEARSAL

The building will be open 15 minutes prior to scheduled time of the rehearsal unless arranged differently prior to that day. The building will be locked 15 minutes following the rehearsal conclusion.

WEDDING DAY

The building will be open 2 hours prior to the service unless arranged differently prior to that day. The building will be locked following photographs in the sanctuary unless the reception is being held in the Gathering Area.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY

HTELC does not allow the use of alcohol or drugs on its premises. Participants are not permitted to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at HTELC.

Cigarette smoking is not permitted inside the building.

RECEPTIONS IN THE GATHERING AREA OR ON THE LAWN

HTELC has a kitchen and the Gathering Area which may be used for the reception. Another venue available for usage is the lawn. Use of this space is in addition to the Sanctuary usage fee. The use of the Gathering Area includes the use of tables and chairs owned by the congregation and use of the kitchen. The Wedding Party is responsible for the set-up of tables and chairs and for returning them to their proper storage locations following the reception.

The Kitchen may be used; however caterers must provide their own utensils and equipment. The coffee urns of the congregation may be used, but these must be cleaned and put back in their proper storage locations following the reception.

All garbage must be placed in garbage bags and carried to the garbage can bin near the out building at the edge of the parking lot.

An attendant from the congregation will be present on site to help with questions or concerns.

The areas used must be left in clean and good condition.

Liability

The couple will be asked to sign a liability form prior to the marriage ceremony rehearsal.

Damages incurred by HTELC due to misuse of the property will be the responsibility of the couple.

FEE SCHEDULE

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-Member</u>
Sanctuary Usage	No charge	\$250
Reception Space	No charge	\$250
Reception Attendant	\$50 cash	\$50 cash
Custodial Fee	\$50 cash	\$50 cash
With Reception	\$150 cash	\$150 cash
Clergy Fee	No charge	\$350
Organist/Keyboardist	\$150	\$150
Guitarist	\$150	\$150
Audio Attendant	\$50 cash	\$50 cash

Checks should be made out individually as follows:

<i>Church Usage</i>	<i>Holy Trinity Lutheran Church</i>
<i>Reception Space</i>	<i>Holy Trinity Lutheran Church</i>
<i>Reception Attendant</i>	<i>cash</i>
<i>Custodial Fee</i>	<i>*cash in marked envelope</i>
<i>Clergy</i>	<i>Name of Pastor</i>
<i>Organist/Keyboardist</i>	<i>Name of Musician</i>
<i>Guitarist</i>	<i>Name of Musician</i>
<i>Audio Attendant</i>	<i>*cash in marked envelope</i>

***ALL fee payments are to be given to the Pastor at the rehearsal in clearly marked individual envelopes.*

**Adopted August 7, 2014 by Church Council*