



Trinity Church

Newport, RI

Getting Married at Trinity Church, Newport

Congratulations on your decision to make this important commitment to each other in the presence of God and your friends and family. Marriage is a sacrament of the church and as such is meant to be celebrated with those who desire to be part of the Christian community. We commit to a ministry with you that is loving, supportive, and Christ-centered. We will work with you to be sure your wedding at Trinity Church is a happy and holy event, and require that you observe the policies and guidelines outlined below as well as any additional instructions given by the clergy of the parish.

Who may be married at Trinity Church?

In short – anyone. We do require 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 of Rhode Island. Beyond that, we welcome all. We welcome you and your partner, whether same-sex or opposite-sex. We welcome you whether you are active members of Trinity Church, or not affiliated with Trinity at all. (*Do note, though, that your relationship to Trinity does affect which fee structure applies to your wedding, as you will read further on in this document under “Summary of Typical Expenses.”*) Of course, if you reside in the area, we invite you to come and worship with us—if this is where you are to be married, it would be lovely to have you as a member here. If you are not “local,” we hope that you will be a member of a worshipping community where you live. The start of your life together is the perfect time to join a church family, and we would love to include you in ours or help you find one where you are living.

The First Steps to being married at Trinity

1. **Please read this Wedding Policy thoroughly.** We want you to feel comfortable with the way weddings are conducted here. Please feel free to ask questions and let us know your specific situation. While we do have a set format, we also have experience with a variety of family and religious structures, so it is likely that we can find a way to meet your needs.
2. Be in touch with **The Rev. Alan Neale**, our Assisting Priest. (AssistingPriest@trinitynewport.org) Fr. Neale leads our wedding ministry and will be your guide through the wedding process at Trinity. He will answer all your questions, and help you determine whether Trinity is the appropriate place for you to be married.
3. Once there is agreement that this is the right place for your wedding liturgy, we will settle on a date and time for your wedding and rehearsal (generally the evening before the wedding), and will send you a **Wedding Information Form**. Once that is returned to us, and your initial **deposit** is received, you may move forward with your arrangements, knowing that the church is reserved for your wedding. Please note that at least 90 days notice is required for a wedding and that it is the usual custom of this parish not to celebrate weddings during the seasons of Lent and Advent, nor during the week between Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Officiating Clergy

The Rev. Alan Neale normally presides at weddings at Trinity. For those weddings not presided over by him, or other clergy of the parish, an Episcopal priest may be invited to officiate. If you wish to have a visiting priest preside at your wedding, it will be your responsibility to make those arrangements. Please note that he/she will need the permission of the Bishop of Rhode Island to officiate if he/she is not canonically resident or licensed in this diocese.

Please Note: The Clergy Fee is paid regardless whether parish clergy officiate at the wedding.

Pre-marital Counseling

The Episcopal Church requires premarital counseling and leaves to the discretion of each priest the nature of the counseling. Our clergy generally hold three or four sessions, which most couples find extremely valuable in helping them to learn how to use a third party to sort out relational issues as well as to explore the spiritual dimensions of their marriage. In some cases, the couple and priest may mutually discern that a licensed counselor should be consulted as well. When couples live far from Trinity, it is possible to arrange for premarital counseling with a local priest, even if he/she is not officiating at the wedding. The counseling priest must provide the officiating priest with a written assessment of the couple's readiness for marriage no later than one month prior to the date of the wedding.

The Ceremony

All weddings at Trinity conform to the rubrics of *The Book of Common Prayer* or to a denominationally endorsed alternate liturgy. The Prayer Book service, which begins on page 423, provides the basic structure and text. There are currently several other marriage liturgies approved by the Episcopal Church, and we would be glad to share those with you as we plan your ceremony together. Please note that additional, non-liturgical rituals, such as the lighting of a unity candle or performing of a sand ceremony, are not permitted. Regardless of which liturgy you use, there are ample opportunities for friends and family to participate as readers, musicians, and the like. Couples are asked to select one or two Scripture readings. If you decide to include Holy Eucharist, one of your readings must be from one of the Gospels. You can find suggested passages on page 426 of the Prayer Book. *Only Scripture passages may be used as lessons during the liturgy—there are no exceptions to this rule.*

Music at Your Wedding

No later than two months before the date of your service, contact Trinity's Director of Music, about making musical selections. The Music Director will meet with you to help you choose music for the service. Please be aware that if, to accommodate your wishes, Trinity's Organist does not play your wedding, he will still receive his normal fee. The typical service includes a *Prelude* before the ceremony; a *Processional* for the wedding party's entrance; *Service Music* (music during the ceremony) and the *Recessional* for the exit of the wedding party and guests. The customs of the Episcopal Church allow for a wide variety of sacred music, and all musical selections must be approved by the Music Director. *Only sacred music, whether ancient or contemporary, may be used in your wedding liturgy.*

Flowers and Decorations

Consult with the **Altar Society Flower Chair, Christine Pimentel (cap5182@cox.net or 401-683-5188)** as soon as you are in conversation with your florist, and certainly no later than one month prior to the wedding date, about the specifications for flowers and decorations. *For active members of the parish only*, and upon request, a member of the Altar Society can purchase and arrange the flowers. The fee for this service depends on flower selection, and begins at \$100. Customarily, any flowers at the Altar are left in place for Sunday Services, and the names of the wedding couple are listed in the leaflet.

Church Availability

The church will be reserved for your wedding for a total of two and one half hours—specifically for one hour before the service and then for ninety (90) minutes after the published starting time of the service. If you need more time for decorating beforehand or for photographs afterward, or if you have other logistical questions, please contact **our Wedding Coordinator, Wendy Neale (weneale@aol.com)**. The availability of additional time depends on what other events are scheduled on your wedding day.

Seating Capacity

The main floor of the church seats approximately 300 people if every pew box is filled to capacity. Adding the upper level seating increases the total capacity to about 450 people.

Photography and Videography

We want you to have as many beautiful images of your wedding as possible, while at the same time not allowing the photographers or videographers to interfere with the beauty and grace of the liturgy. To that end, flash photography is not permitted during the service, though your photographers and videographers may capture images using available light as long as they remain unobtrusive. If you are planning to have a printed program, you may want to include a note for your guests about permissible photography and a reminder to turn off cell phones before the ceremony. *Detailed guidelines for photography will be provided, and your photographer must follow Trinity's procedures or risk being removed from the church.*

Marriage License

It is your responsibility to obtain a valid marriage license prior to your wedding, being sure to allow enough time in advance of the date to satisfy all legal requirements. For a detailed explanation of how and where to obtain your marriage license, please visit: <http://www.health.ri.gov/records/howto/getamariagelicense/index.php>. Be sure to give your license to the officiating priest no later than the time of your rehearsal. Following the ceremony the priest will send the signed license to the appropriate municipality, from whom you may obtain an official copy.

Remarrying after Divorce

Divorced persons are permitted to marry at Trinity, with the consent of the Bishop of Rhode Island. A copy of the divorce decree(s) must be presented to the officiating clergy to confirm the resolution of the previous marriage and to determine the date the resolution was final. The officiating clergy will take care of obtaining the Bishop's consent and will provide the pastoral care upon which it is based. This process takes a minimum of 60 days. Please alert your priest about any previous marriages as soon as possible.

The Rehearsal

Wedding rehearsals are normally scheduled the day before the wedding and take no more than an hour. It is extremely important that the principles in the service—those in the wedding party, readers, and any other participants—be at Trinity on time for the rehearsal. **If the rehearsal is delayed for more than 15 minutes, the rehearsal is cancelled.** The wedding will go ahead as scheduled the next day, but you will not have an opportunity to rehearse the ceremony. As traffic can be heavy in Newport, especially on Friday afternoons in the summer, we urge you and your participants to allow plenty of time to travel to the church. **Wendy Neale, our Wedding Coordinator**, will assist at the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

Summary of Typical Expenses

Your membership status will be determined during your initial conversations. In general, the following descriptions apply:

- **Member:** A member is someone who is a **regular worshiper**, meaning one who is present more often than absent; who **gives money to support the parish**, whether through a pledge commitment or other regular giving; and who has **participated in at least one parish activity or program outside of worship**. *All three conditions must be met to be considered a member.*
- **Non-Member:** A Non-Member is anyone not affiliated with Trinity Church on a regular and ongoing basis and includes anyone who is an active member of another church community.

Facility / Personnel	Member	Non-Member
Sanctuary	\$0	\$2500 - \$3000
Clergy	\$300	\$300
Organist	\$300	\$300
Wedding Coordinator	\$300	\$300
Police Detail (<i>if > 100 guests</i>)	\$220	\$220

Payment of Fees

We will confirm the wedding date upon receipt of a **non-refundable \$500 deposit** or as determined by the parish clergy. Please note, your date is not secure until the deposit is received. Payment may be made by check written to Trinity Church with the wedding date in the memo line. If you prefer, payment may be made by credit card through the church's PayPal site. Credit card transactions will be charged a service fee equal to 3% of the total amount charged (rounded to the nearest dollar). Please note that, as you will receive services in return for these payments, they are not considered a donation to the church and therefore may not be taken as a charitable donation on your taxes. A month before the wedding we will provide a list of outstanding charges for wedding services, and the remainder of the total fees must be paid to the church office two weeks before the wedding date.

Other Important Details

- Wedding ceremonies take place in the sanctuary of Trinity Church. In addition, upon request and in consultation with the Parish Secretary, the bridal party may prepare in Honyman Hall prior to the wedding. Photographs may be taken in the church immediately following the ceremony, and subsequently inside Honyman Hall or outside in the gardens.
- The wedding couple is responsible for their wedding party and their guests' behavior and observance of the church's customs and rules during all events surrounding their wedding on Trinity Church grounds.
- No food or beverages are permitted in Trinity Church except water bottles during the summer months, and smoking is unacceptable on church grounds or in any church building.
- The use of rice, confetti, rose petals, or balloons is not allowed in Trinity Church or on the church grounds.

Contacts

Trinity Church
401-846-0660

ASSISTING PRIEST – WEDDING MINISTRY LEAD

The Rev. Alan Neale
AssistingPriest@trinitynewport.org

WEDDING COORDINATOR

Wendy Neale
weneale@aol.com

MUSIC

musicdirector@trinitynewport.org

FLOWERS

Christine Pimentel
cap5182@cox.net