

# Wedding Guidelines for Couples

*(Includes a Wedding Agreement between the Couple  
and Grace Episcopal Church)*

*Grace Episcopal Church  
871 Merrimon Avenue  
Asheville, NC 28804  
828-254-1086*

*Information about having a wedding at Grace Church*

*for Grace Church members and members families*

*and for*

*those who are not Grace members, but are having their Wedding at Grace Church*

Thank you for choosing Grace Episcopal Church for your wedding. Please read our Guidelines carefully before you sign our agreement. Then you will be aware of our limitations and restrictions. We believe reading this guideline will prevent any surprises, problems or disappointments later. We will assist you and work with you to provide a wonderful wedding on your special day. Congratulations and May God Bless your Marriage.

Revised  
September 2020

[grace.church.asheville@gmail.com](mailto:grace.church.asheville@gmail.com)

[graceavl.com](http://graceavl.com)

[facebook.com/graceasheville](https://facebook.com/graceasheville)

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
The Wedding Team ~ who will help you with your wedding at Grace	2
Scheduling, Fees, and Financial Arrangements for Booking a Wedding	3
Important Requirements to Note Regarding Ministers and Music	4
NC Marriage License Requirements	5
Seating Capacity and Use of the Church on Your Wedding Day	6
Flowers and Candles for Your Wedding	7
Chancel Furnishings	8
Photographs and Videos	9
Wedding Agreement	10 & 11
Suggestions for What to Do When Planning Your Wedding	12

## The Wedding Team

- **Valerie Heavens, Church Office Manager.** Valerie is your initial contact for booking your wedding. She will help you to reserve your date, and receive your application when you are ready to book your wedding. She is available to be contacted with questions or concerns that are not handled by the Wedding Coordinators. You can contact her by phone or email, and she will return your message during church office hours. (Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. except Holidays.)
- **Cheri Potter and Elaine Potter, Co-Chairs of the Wedding Team.** We will arrange for you to have a tour of the church, including the sanctuary and the rooms available for you to use. We help get information about weddings coordinated between Grace Church and the wedding team. We are also members of the wedding team.
- **Mary Israel, Chair of the Flower Guild.** Mary will handle arrangements for flowers in the Chancel area of the sanctuary for your wedding. Once your wedding is booked, please contact Mary Israel to make arrangements for the Altar flowers. The regulations for flowers can be found under the heading, **Flowers for Your Wedding.**
- **James Cassarino, Director of Music.** Jim must be given the first opportunity to play for weddings at Grace Church if you wish to use the pipe organ. The requirements for music can be found on page 4 under **Important Requirements to Note.**
- **Grace Wedding Team.** Volunteers from Grace Church. We serve as consultants to the bride and groom, and possibly their families. We work with one couple at a time, helping with questions and decisions. Generally, there will be two members of the team helping you, along with the aid of either Cheri or Elaine. One will be designated as the Planning Coordinator and the other is designated as The Day of Wedding Coordinator.

### Wedding Team Contacts:

Valerie Heavens	828-254-1086, ext 10	<a href="mailto:grace.church.asheville@gmail.com">grace.church.asheville@gmail.com</a>
Cheri Potter	828-658-3960 or 828-275-9652	<a href="mailto:cheripotter82@gmail.com">cheripotter82@gmail.com</a>
Elaine Potter	828-989-8125	<a href="mailto:elaine@graylineasheville.com">elaine@graylineasheville.com</a>
Mary Israel	828-263-2167 or 828-230-1396	<a href="mailto:tobarranged@bellsouth.net">tobarranged@bellsouth.net</a>
Clement's Florist	828-274-214	
James Cassarino	802-558-6583	<a href="mailto:jamescassarino@gmail.com">jamescassarino@gmail.com</a>

## Scheduling, Fees and Financial Arrangements for Booking your Wedding

**WE ARE NOT TAKING WEDDING BOOKINGS AT THIS TIME. PLEASE CHECK BACK IN 2021.**

Usually we have an on-line area to see available dates. An "Available Dates" link can be found at <https://www.graceavl.com/worship/weddings/>. If you do not have on-line access, feel free to call the church office at 828-254-1086, ext. 10

*A wedding is not scheduled or booked until the Office Manager receives the signed wedding agreement along with half of the total cost of the facility rental.* The Office Manager handles all the financial arrangements (fees, deposits and funds). **Please note:** Weddings are scheduled on Saturdays, with the rehearsal scheduled on Friday evening. Weddings and rehearsals must be scheduled to begin no later than 5:30.

Once you have requested a date, we will need to receive your **signed Wedding Agreement form and deposit within one month to lock in the date you request.** The remainder of the fee is due 6 weeks before the wedding date. If you decide you are not going to have your wedding at Grace, we would very much appreciate you letting us know as soon as possible so we can release the date and make it available for other couples. Thanks!

\*\*Please talk to us if have special circumstances and need more time. If we have not heard from you, nor talked with you after a month, we will release the date and post it as "Available."

### **Fees for Non-Members**

For the Church: \$2000

**Fees and Special Considerations for Pledging Members:** Members please inquire.

## Important Things to Note:

**Ministers:** Contracting with a minister for your wedding is your responsibility. Your Planning Coordinator can provide names of Episcopal priests available for Episcopal weddings and the required counseling. Weddings held at Grace Episcopal Church must be performed in the Christian faith. Ministers are paid directly by the couple, not through the church.

**Music:** Grace Church has a beautiful pipe organ and an electronic keyboard, which are available for wedding ceremonies. Finding a musician for your wedding is the responsibility of the couple. However, our church Director of Music, James Cassarino, must be given the first opportunity to play for weddings at Grace Church if you wish to use the organ, for a fee of \$300. A separate fee of \$150.00 is required if you want him present at the rehearsal. If he is not available, we have a list of musicians that we can suggest if you would like help choosing a musician.

Because a wedding is a worship service praising God, the music for the ceremony should be selected with care. The following guidelines apply to all weddings in Grace Church:

- All wedding music at Grace Church must be of a sacred or classical nature;
- Text of music may be drawn from the Book of Common Prayer, The Hymnal or Holy Scripture;
- Secular music, popular love songs, and movie themes are neither appropriate nor permitted;
- Confer with your organist before engaging a soloist or additional instrumentalist for the ceremony;
- If a solo is desired the text should have a Christian emphasis;
- The Lord's Prayer is spoken by the congregation as a prayer, not sung.
- All music in a Grace Episcopal Wedding must be approved by the Celebrant.

***The payments to the minister, musicians, organist, etc. are paid by the couple, not the church.*** We suggest these people be paid in advance or the day of the rehearsal.

## North Carolina Marriage License Requirements

By North Carolina state law, each couple must purchase their marriage license themselves at any local North Carolina Registrar of Deeds office. The minister cannot purchase or provide this for the couple. A marriage license is required for weddings taking place in Grace Episcopal Church.

For couples wishing to marry, both individuals must be present when applying. \$60 cash payment is due at the time of application. Immediately upon issuance, the license is valid for 60 days.

Regardless of where the wedding actually takes place, you may use a license issued at any NC Register of Deeds office, but the signed license must be returned to the issuing office for filing.

Both applicants must provide identification:

- 21 years of age or older may use:
  - current driver's license
  - current State ID card
  - current Passport
  - current Military ID
  
- 20 years or younger must have a certified copy of their Birth Certificate and meet all requirements of their county
  
- Both applicants must provide their Social Security numbers with verification through their Social Security Cards or W-2 Forms

## Seating Capacity of the Sanctuary

Grace Episcopal is not a large church. About 155 to 160 people can be comfortably seated in the Sanctuary. If more seating is needed, up to 20 guests may be seated in the choir area. Folding chairs may not be used.

## Use of the Church on your Wedding Day

As stated in the Wedding Agreement, the wedding party's use of the church on the wedding day is limited to 4 hours. Before planning when to arrive, consider what you will need to do after arriving at the church. If you are coming dressed for the wedding, 2 hours may be time enough. If you will be dressing at Grace, you may need 3 to 3 ½ hours. You may, of course, have the entire 4 hours. Keep in mind, participants may become tired and impatient if waiting too long.

You may bring snacks so you will not start the wedding hungry. This does not mean a full lunch party! Snack suggestions: fruit, veggie sticks, yogurt. Consider non-carbonated beverages such as lemonade.

**Please let the Planning Coordinator know when you plan to arrive so the church will be open for you.**

The church is not always open on Saturday mornings unless a time is arranged in advance. Please request that your florist contact the church office during office hours, Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., to arrange a time to bring the flowers to the church.

On Saturday evening, after the wedding and the 30 minutes for photos in the church, the church is prepared for Sunday. Cleaning is completed and the church is closed about 1 hour after the wedding. Please be sure to take all your belongings, including pew marker flowers, etc. when you leave. We would appreciate keeping 3 or 4 of your programs for our file.

It's a good idea to assign someone, a friend or relative, to help gather everything after the wedding, before the church is locked. If you are dressing at church, we suggest you please gather all your clothes, etc. and lock them in a car before the wedding starts.

## Flowers for Your Wedding

All flower arrangements and questions about flowers for the church are handled by Mary Israel, our Flower Coordinator and Flower Guild Chair. Mary can be contacted at: 828-253-2167 or. 828-230-1396 or [tobarranged@bellsouth.net](mailto:tobarranged@bellsouth.net).

**Please do not make any flower decisions before contacting Mary.**

### Altar Flowers

Altar Flowers are required for all weddings. All Altar Flower arrangements must be discussed with Mary before you make any decisions. The Altar Flowers are the two arrangements that are on the wall behind the choir area. These flowers will remain for the Sunday service. There are several options for the provision of the Altar Flowers.



- You may choose to use the flowers the Flower Guild creates for use at our Sunday Service at no charge.
- If you have a specific request for flowers, the Flower Guild will arrange the flowers of your choice for the Altar Flowers for a fee of \$150.
- Clement's Florist only may provide flower arrangements for the two shelves at your cost.
- Any flowers on those shelves will remain at the church for Sunday services.
- Only fresh flowers may be used on the altar.

The following flower decorations are also permitted:

1. Wreaths for the outside of the entry door, south side, off the sidewalk
2. Pew markers may be flowers, greenery or bows. Candles may not be used. Please attach the markers to the end of the pews and without damage to the church pews.
3. The flower guild can provide flowers for the offertory table at the back of the church or you can ask a florist to provide them.
4. Flower petals may be scattered along the center aisle. You do not need to worry about removing them as our cleaning service will clean them up after the wedding.
5. Tossing confetti, rice, birdseed, etc. is not permitted inside or outside the church.
6. We do not allow a runner. Our floors can be slippery, and we don't want anyone getting hurt.

### Candles

The candles on the Altar, the ones by the Lectern and the Paschal Candle will be lighted for the wedding. They will not be moved to another location. White candles, 6 to 8 inches tall, with glass globes, are available to rent from the Flower Guild. These globes will be placed on the window sills. Once they are in place, you may add small flowers and/or greenery around them. They will be lighted before the guests arrive. The fee for the candle globes is \$40. Please let Mary Israel, our Flower Guild Chair, know you want them.

## Chancel Furnishings

Many of the furnishings of Grace Church, especially items within the Chancel area, were memorial gifts and many are old. We do not permit them to be moved without permission and assistance from a Wedding Team member. Please respect our wishes.

Our Altar will not be moved. A fair white linen, or in some seasons, a white satin frontal will be spread on the Altar, with two brass candlesticks placed upon it. With the exception of the church Gospel book, or the minister's own Bible or Prayer Book, or the set-up for Communion, nothing else will be in the altar. White satin hangings will be on the lectern and pulpit.

- The Chancel may be used for groups of two to four musicians and chairs may be rearranged for them. Alternatively, musicians may be seated in the choir area.
- If chairs are moved, please lift them. Please do not drag or push them over the floor
- Readers and soloists may be seated on the bench by the organ.
- Chairs and small tables not being used will remain in place.
- Musicians or readers may not use the Bishop's Chair, nor will it be removed.
- The kneelers, the rug in front of the altar and the church banners may not be moved.
- Hymnals or other books on and under the chairs may be moved to chairs in the choir area.
- As stated earlier under Flowers, no runner may be used.
- The podium and small table in the rear of the church may be moved to the foyer and used for programs or a guest book.

Please discuss any rearrangements with the Wedding Team.

## Photographs and Videos

### Photographs and Videos

We welcome professional photographers at Grace Church. However, a wedding is a sacred ceremony and we strive to uphold the dignity of the ceremony, as well as to avoid disruptions and distractions.

Therefore, your photographer should be aware of these limitations. Please give this information to the photographer well before the ceremony so they can bring the proper equipment to capture the best pictures possible. **We require the photographer/videographer to sign below, acknowledging that our rules will be respected, and photographer/videographer agrees to follow the rules.**

### Rules for Photographer/Videographer

- Flash photos are only allowed as the bride enters the church, and as the bride and groom leave the altar.
- During the ceremony: Non-flash photos may be taken from the rear of the Sanctuary, behind the last pew, or from the 3rd short pew on either side. You can reserve the 4th short pews, if your photographer plans to use them. Photographers are not allowed to use the center aisle or side aisles during the ceremony. Nor are they to use the area in front of the pews. Drones are not allowed.
- Video Recording is permitted, only if out of view from wedding guests and no additional lighting is used. It must be set up ahead of time and not moved during the ceremony.
- Before and After the Ceremony: If you plan to do a "First Look", photos taken in the Sanctuary should be completed before guests begin arriving. Once the ceremony is over and the guests leave, photos may be taken in the Sanctuary for 30 minutes.

Wedding Guests are asked to not take photos during the ceremony, nor as the wedding party are entering or leaving.

By signing below, Photographer and/or Videographer agree to adhere to the rules stated above.

---

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

## Wedding Agreement

This agreement is made between the Couple and Grace Episcopal Church

*Grace Episcopal Church  
871 Merrimon Avenue  
Asheville, NC. 28804  
Email: [grace.church.asheville@gmail.com](mailto:grace.church.asheville@gmail.com)*

**Parish Office Manager:**

Valerie Heavens  
828-254-1086

**Wedding Team Coordinators:**

Cheri Potter                      Elaine Potter  
828-275-9652                      828-989-8125

**Wedding Couple:**

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_ phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_ phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

List one other Contact Person: (Parent or Business, phone and email)

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \* \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \* \_\_\_\_\_

\*Schedule these events no later than 5:00 pm

### Booking your Wedding

Deposit: A 50% deposit is required. The deposit must accompany a signed copy of this Wedding Agreement. Please make check payable to "Grace Episcopal Church."

Confirmation: To indicate your acceptance and to confirm the above services, please sign and return a copy of page 10 and 11 of this Wedding Agreement, together with the required deposit. We also request page 9 be signed and submitted before the ceremony.

All services are considered tentative until a signed copy of this Wedding Agreement and the deposit are received. All services are booked on a first come, first served basis.

Final Payment: The remaining balance must be received 6 weeks prior to the wedding date.

Cancellation: Cancellation less than 30 days prior to the wedding date will result in forfeiture of the deposit.

Questions: If there are any questions concerning fees or scheduling, please contact the Parish Office Manager.

**Use of the Church:**

Your use of the church on the wedding day is limited to 4 hours (3 hours before the ceremony, 30 minutes for the procession and ceremony, 30 minutes after ceremony for photos in the sanctuary.) We allow 1 hour for the rehearsal on the day before the wedding.

It is understood that during the rehearsal and wedding, there will be no serving or drinking of alcohol at or inside the church. The only exception is for wine used for the Communion Service.

**Holy Communion:** Can be provided by the Altar Guild, upon request.

**Flowers:** It is required that you have Altar Flowers on the two shelves behind the choir. These will be left for the Sunday following your wedding.

There will be no other flower arrangements in the chancel area.

1. If you use the flowers previously planned by our Flower Guild for the Sunday after your wedding, there is no charge.
2. If you wish to have certain colors or special flowers, and have the Flower Guild arrange them, the charge is \$150 (check payable to "Grace Church Altar Guild"). For information on these options, **contact Mary Israel at 828-253-2167, 828-230-1390 or [tobarranged@bellsouth.net](mailto:tobarranged@bellsouth.net)**
3. The third option is to have flowers of your choice arranged by Clement's Florist. It is your responsibility to contact them and pay for the flowers, costs vary.
4. Please arrange for a time to have the flowers delivered to Grace Church on the Saturday morning of your wedding.
5. Window candles in glass globes can be rented from the Flower Guild for \$40. The candles will be placed in the windows by the Flower Guild. **Contact Mary Israel to arrange for this.**

**Minister and Musician:** are your responsibility. Please refer to Music Requirements found on page 4 of this Wedding Agreement.

**Wedding Guidelines:** Please read these. If there are any **questions about any issues**, please contact either Cheri Potter or Elaine Potter. Contact information is on the page 2 of this Wedding Agreement.

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Suggestions for What to do When for Planning Your Wedding**

### **9-12 months before the wedding, or as soon as you have booked Grace Church:**

Choose the minister who will be performing the ceremony. If you want to use your own Minister, it's advisable to discuss the date before you book the church. If you need a local minister, we can provide a list for you. We suggest paying the minister at the Rehearsal.

### **5-6 months before the wedding**

Decide what kind of music you want: organ, piano, strings, vocalist. Check the Guidelines, as there are a few requirements on the music. Book the musician or musicians at this time. If you need help finding a musician(s), we can provide you with a list. We suggest you pay the musician(s) at the Rehearsal.

### **4 months before the wedding**

Order your flowers. Be sure to check the Guidelines for the Altar Flowers in this manual. To have your flowers delivered in the morning on the day of the wedding to Grace Church, be sure to arrange to have the church opened to receive them. The florist can contact the Office Manager during office hours which are Monday to Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### **6-8 weeks before the wedding**

Order the programs for your wedding. Having a program is optional, unless the minister requires one. Episcopal Priests expect a program. If the congregation will be participating in hymns or readings, having a program is helpful. It is also helpful to provide page numbers from the Hymnal, Bible or Book of Common Prayer. We can help you with page numbers for our books, just ask your Planning Coordinator.

Remember, we are here to help! Please call your Planning Coordinator for assistance!!