

# Marriage Preparation at Grace Episcopal Church Madison, Wisconsin

## Procedure for Reserving a Wedding Date at Grace Church

1. Couples interested in reserving Grace Church for a wedding will begin by calling or emailing the church office.
2. The staff will check the date on the church calendar and give the prospective wedding couple the contact information for the Wedding Coordinator.
3. The Wedding Coordinator will make initial contact with the couple over the phone to go over preliminary information and to answer questions that arise in the phone conversation. The procedure for reserving the church will proceed if the Wedding Coordinator is available to work on the wedding date.
4. If the couple decides they are interested in getting married at Grace, a meeting will be scheduled with her to give the bride and groom a tour of the facility and this wedding packet. At this meeting, additional questions are addressed and more detailed information and guidelines for getting married at Grace is provided.
5. In order to confirm a wedding date and time, the completed and signed Wedding Reservation Form, along with a \$125 (Episcopalian)/\$375 (non-Episcopalian) security deposit AND a \$125 damage deposit, must be submitted to the church office. (Total Amount Due: \$250 Episcopalian/\$500 non-Episcopalian)
6. The couple will schedule a meeting with one of the priests at Grace if they are having an Episcopal wedding. If you are renting the facility and plan on using your own priest, minister or justice of the peace, please check with their availability before scheduling a wedding date at Grace Church.

*Please note:* Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays, or during Lent, Easter, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

## Cost

### *Deposits:*

A **\$125 (Episcopalian)/\$375 (non-Episcopalian) security deposit**, which is applied towards the cost of the Wedding Coordinator's fee, must be sent with the Wedding Reservation Form when reserving the wedding date. Once the couple begins the wedding process and has turned in their security deposit and forms, if the couple decides not to be married at Grace Church, the security deposit is **not** refundable.

An additional **\$125 damage deposit** will be required when submitting the Wedding Reservation. The damage deposit will be returned after the wedding if there is no damage to the facility or equipment caused by the florist, photographer, videographer, wedding party or guests. Additional costs may be incurred if the cost to repair the damage is more than \$125 and an itemized bill will be submitted to the wedding party for reimbursement. The damage deposit will be refunded if there is a cancellation before the wedding day.

### *Facility Fees:*

The church building is available without a fee to Episcopalians. The fee non-Episcopalians pay allows them to rent the church facility and includes the required fee paid to the Wedding Coordinator and the Church Sexton for custodial services.

### Sanctuary or Chapel

Episcopalian- No fee for pledging members of Grace Church

Non-Episcopalian- **\$1500** (*Fees for the Wedding Coordinator and Church Sexton is included in price.*)

### Guild Hall and Kitchen

Episcopalian- No fee for pledging members of Grace Church

Non-Episcopalian- Requires a separate rental reservation form and fee

### *“Minister” Fees:*

The fees itemized below are a break down of services provided.

Priest, Minister or Justice of the Peace	To be discussed with Officiant
Grace Church Wedding Coordinator ( <i>services required</i> )	\$250
Church Sexton- custodial service ( <i>services required</i> )	\$100
Organist from Grace Church	\$200
Vocalist and Instrumentalist	fees vary with musicians

### *Payment Due:*

The balance of all fees should be paid two week prior to the wedding, but no later than the rehearsal. The wedding ceremony will not begin until all fees are paid in full. **Please make out separate checks** to the Officiant, Wedding Coordinator, Church Sexton, organist, vocalist and/or instrumentalist. All checks, except the \$125 (Episcopal)/\$375 (non-Episcopal) security deposit, will be held until after your wedding.

## Definition of Episcopalian and Non-Episcopalian:

To be considered a Member of Grace Episcopal Church you must meet the criteria listed below:

1. Bride, groom, their parents or grandparents are registered members of the parish and regularly worship at Grace Church.
2. A pledging member of the congregation that gives financial support to Grace Church.
3. A member who actively participates in the life of the Church, volunteering time and talents.
4. The couple is in the process of joining Grace Church as active members, as defined above, and has already been attending Grace Church on a regular basis with the intent to remain a member of Grace Church.
5. At least one party must be a baptized Christian.

### **An Episcopalian who is requesting the use of the Grace Church:**

An active member of another Anglican Church using the criteria listed above for members of Grace Church.

*Please note:* These conditions do not automatically insure a wedding at Grace Episcopal Church. No presumption should be made until after meeting with one of the clergy.

**A Non-Episcopalian is defined as:**

A couple interested in renting the church facility that does not fulfill the criteria listed above. The couple will provide their own minister or justice of the peace to perform the ceremony at Grace Church.

## Rules and Guidelines for Using the Church Facilities:

### *Sanctuary and Chapel:*

1. The Sanctuary has a seating capacity of 350.
2. The small Chapel seats a maximum of 20.
3. There are 38 rows of pews in the sanctuary.
4. The sanctuary and chapel are not air-conditioned. In the summer, the church fans may be used in the side aisles. There are handheld fans available for guests to use.
5. No food, drink, or smoking is allowed in the sanctuary.
6. The oriental carpet in front of the altar may not be removed.
7. The communion rails may not be move.
8. The lectern eagle may not be moved.
9. The piano may not be moved.
10. Furniture may not be moved, with the exception of the choir chairs in the nave.
11. The pews in the chapel may not be moved.
12. The church property must be left in the condition in which it was found.

### *Scheduling a Wedding Time:*

Grace has two 3½-hour time blocks available for weddings on Saturdays: 12:00–3:30 p.m. and 4:00–7:30 p.m. When reserving a time block, you must be in and out of the building during that time, but you are not required to use the whole time. The half hour between each time block is reserved for the Wedding Coordinator to do general housekeeping between weddings to put the sanctuary back in order; therefore the time block cannot be extended. (If you would like to reserve the sanctuary for a longer period of time you may rent two consecutive time blocks at the regular price.) Weddings during the week can be scheduled if the building is available. The time block for a Friday wedding will be worked out with the Wedding Coordinator.

Couples choosing a wedding date on a Saturday between the last Saturday of April and the first week of November should take into consideration that the Madison Farmers' Market is located on the Square across the street from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., but most vendors are beginning to pack up by 1:00 as the crowd begin to wane. Although the farmers' market will not interfere with your wedding, parking for your guests could be a problem. Therefore some couples should consider scheduling the ceremony at 1:00 p.m. or later to avoid parking problems. This also gives them an opportunity to take pictures after the wedding on the Capitol grounds without the congestion of market shoppers.

## ***Wedding Officiant:***

### For Episcopalians

The clergy of Grace Church will officiate the weddings of Grace members. If the couple desires a priest from another parish or a minister of another denomination, he or she may assist with prior approval of the clergy of Grace Church.

The order of the wedding ceremony will be co-created by the couple and the priest, using the liturgy of the Episcopal marriage ceremony found in *The Book of Common Prayer*. A form called “The Grace Episcopal Church Wedding Worksheet” includes the words from the wedding ceremony for you to read. This worksheet will help you make decisions about personalizing the service. A list of appropriate scripture readings and hymns are included as well. A copy of the wedding worksheet should be provided to the Wedding Coordinator before the rehearsal.

Each couple will be required to receive marriage counseling before the wedding by either the priest or a marriage counselor. If the couple chooses a marriage counselor, they will be asked to waive the right to confidentiality, so the counselor may speak with the priest. The priest will also encourage each couple to complete these documents:

1. Last Will and Testament or a Living Trust
2. Medical Power of Attorney

### For Non-Episcopalians

Other ministers or justice of the peace may officiate weddings of non-members renting the church facility. Those officiating the service may dress in the sacristy or the chapel before the wedding.

## ***Grace Church Wedding Coordinator:***

We have found that it is helpful to both your wedding party and to Grace Church, if there is a Wedding Coordinator. The job of the Wedding Coordinator is to answer all wedding inquiries and questions via phone calls, emails and/or appointments set up with her. She will meet with the prospective wedding couple to give them a tour of the facility, showing them what rooms are available to use, and go over this wedding packet of information with them. She will keep track of each wedding couple and will make sure all forms are filled out and fees are paid before the wedding day. She is available to help the couple coordinate the details of the ceremony leading up to the wedding day. The Wedding Coordinator will be on site to open the doors and prepare the building for use during the wedding rehearsal and the ceremony. She will assist the Officiant and will help orchestrate the flow of the rehearsal and will be available for any questions or support needed by the wedding party during the rehearsal or wedding day. On the wedding day she is available to troubleshoot any problems that might arise for the wedding party or guests and will help make sure the ceremony run as smoothly as possible. After the wedding, she will walk through the building to make sure the facility has been picked up by the wedding party and will determine if the security deposit will be returned to the bridal couple. All wedding parties getting married at Grace Church MUST use the Grace Church Wedding Coordinator. The \$250 fee for the Church Wedding Coordinator is not optional. The \$125 security deposit is a partial payment for her services. The second \$125 portion should be paid no later than the wedding rehearsal.

### ***Rehearsal:***

A Saturday wedding typically schedules the rehearsal on the Friday evening before the scheduled wedding date. The three allotted times for rehearsals are from 4:45--5:45 pm, 6:00--7:00 pm, or 7:15--8:15 pm. You will be asked to select and prioritize two different time slots on the Wedding Reservation Form. The rehearsal time will be determined on a first come, first serve basis. There may be instances, such as a Friday wedding or other conflicting Friday events, where you may be asked to have your rehearsal outside of these times. (The Wedding Coordinator will then schedule your rehearsal individually.) The Wedding Coordinator will make the final decision and will confirm the time with you once she knows it.

During the rehearsal, details of the wedding are reviewed and practiced. The rehearsal is to be attended by the Officiant, bride and groom, all members of the wedding party, ushers, parents of the bride and groom (grandparents are optional), readers, organist, Wedding Coordinator and anyone else with a specific role in the service. The rehearsal will take approximately one hour.

### ***Wedding License:***

A valid marriage license, issued within the state of Wisconsin, and acceptable for use in Dane County, may be brought to the church office the week prior to the wedding date, but no later than the rehearsal. The license is not valid and you are not legally married until the Officiant and witnesses have signed it.

For information on marriage license, for those living in Dane County, call 608-266-4452. The office for a marriage license is located at the County Clerk's Office, City-County Building, 210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Madison, WI. Their office is closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

### ***Dressing Rooms:***

Dressing rooms are provided for the bride, groom and their attendants in the Sunday school classrooms found in the undercroft/lower level of the sanctuary. We encourage the bride and her attendants to arrive at the church "ready", except for gowns. The groomsmen are encouraged to arrive dressed in wedding apparel. Dressing rooms must be cleared of clothing and personal items immediately following the wedding

### ***Security:***

For your security and ours, only the doors approved by the Wedding Coordinator are to be used by your group. This will protect your personal property. Encourage your wedding party to keep valuables (purses, gifts, cameras, etc.) with them, give them to someone in your party for safekeeping, lock them in the trunk of your car, or the Wedding Coordinator can also lock the Sunday School classroom before the wedding for you. She will unlock the door after the ceremony. The church is not responsible or liable for personal items such as gifts, dresses, wraps, purses, cameras, and other personal property brought to the church and left unattended.

### *Food and Beverage:*

If a couple chooses to bring food and drinks, such as water bottles, sandwiches or snacks, for their wedding party, it must be cleaned up before the ceremony starts. All food and drinks must remain in the Sunday school classrooms.

### *Clean Up and Maintenance:*

It is the couple's responsibility to restore the church facility back to its original state after the wedding is over. Take all of your belongings with you when you leave. Dispose of any containers, hangers, flower boxes etc. A double-check of the church is always a good idea. It is helpful to assign this task to a friend or family member. Any extra clean up needed after your wedding party leaves will be taken from your damage deposit. The Wedding Coordinator determines and has final say on what she considers excessive cleaning.

### *Wedding Party Rules:*

1. All scheduled meetings, rehearsal and wedding service must begin promptly on time.
2. Alcoholic beverages and illegal substances are forbidden anywhere on the premise.
3. The ceremony will postpone the wedding if the bride or groom is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
4. Members of the wedding party will conduct themselves at all times in a manner acceptable to a place of worship. If anyone in the wedding party is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, they will be asked to sit down and will not participate in the ceremony. It is the obligation of the bride and groom to make certain that these rules are made known to the members of the wedding party.
5. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the premise. Please advise all members of the wedding party and your guests of this policy.

### *The Choice of Music:*

Since a wedding is a service of worship, we ask you carefully consider both the lyrics and style of music when you make your selection. The music should be consistent with the religious character of holy matrimony in the Episcopal Church. Popular love songs and Broadway show tunes, more appropriate at the rehearsal dinner and reception, are discouraged as part of the Episcopal wedding ceremony. "Secular" music that is chosen should be in good taste, complimenting the sacredness of the ceremony and help support the flow of the liturgy.

It is appropriate to include orchestral instruments as part of the wedding. Trumpet, violin, flute, and harp are the instruments most commonly used. Grace Church does not provide soloists or instrumentalists, although we have a list of vocalists in our choir that might be interested in singing and could help identify instrumentalists you might contact.

The church organist is available to play for weddings. His fee includes a consultation meeting to help select music, and be present to play at the rehearsal and wedding. It is the couple's responsibility to contact the organist, vocalist and any other musicians whom you wish to play or sing at your wedding.

## ***Bulletins:***

It is helpful, but not necessary, to have bulletins printed to inform people of the order of the ceremony and the names of the participants in the wedding. A form called, “The Grace Episcopal Church Wedding Worksheet” has been included in this packet of information to help in personalizing the details of the marriage ceremony found in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Printing bulletins are the responsibility of the wedding party, however before the final draft is printed, please show it to the clergy for their editorial approval.

## ***Decorations:***

### Florists and Rental Equipment

Arrangements for flowers are the responsibility of the couple. The florist or wedding party is expected to remove all decorations and equipment promptly following the wedding. No equipment may be left at the church. It is the family’s responsibility to take them home with them if the florist or rental company is unable to pick them up after the wedding. Leaving rental equipment at the church will forfeit the \$125 damage deposit.

The couple is responsible for coordinating the delivery of the flowers arrangements and the scheduled time needed for set up. We request that you consider leaving the altar flowers for the church service on Sunday. We will acknowledge the bouquet from the bride and groom in the church bulletin. (For example: The flowers on the altar are given in celebration of the marriage of Joseph and Mary Carpenter.)

### Hanging Decorations

Nothing may hang on the frontal screen behind the altar. The screen is extremely old and fragile. No tacks, staples, nails, wire, glue, sticky tape, screws, pins, or gum may be used on the walls, floor, screen, pews or any furnishings in accordance with policies for the preservation and maintenance of a historical landmark. Any damage must be corrected at the expense of those decorating to the satisfaction of the proper representative of the church. The most common method of attaching flowers to the pew candles is to use “pipe cleaners”. They hold the flowers securely, and make it easy to attach and remove the flowers. The pipe cleaner can be covered up with a bow or ribbon. If there are any questions regarding what is appropriate for hanging decorations, the Wedding Coordinator should be consulted.

### Placement of Flowers

Flowers may not be put on the crosses, altar or any religious images. These religious objects must be treated with respect and may not be removed. Flowers may be place behind or in front of the altar, on the steps leading up to the chancel, on the pews, any area in the back of the church or in the flower urn in the courtyard. We encourage you to keep the decorations simple. The church has much beauty and charm as it is.

If the couple would like to use the flower urn that sits behind the altar, the florist or wedding couple may pick up the liner from the Wedding Coordinator up to two weeks before the wedding. If the couple would like to use their own flower vases, two round flower stands are available for use.

The sanctuary is decorated during the season of Advent. Christmas greenery, poinsettias, advent wreath and crèche are used. Once these decorations are in place, they are not to be removed until after Christmas.

### Candles

The church will provide candles for the altar and pew candleholders. The candlesticks on the altar may not be removed. All candles must be snuffed out after the service. The florist or wedding party is responsible for cleaning any wax from the floor, oriental carpet or furniture that may have resulted from wedding decorations that do not belong to the church. Candle wax not cleaned up will automatically forfeit the damage deposit.

### *Altar Linens and Vestments:*

The altar linens may not be replaced or removed. If something, such as candle wax or wine, is spilled on the altar cloth, the Altar Guild will charge a \$25 cleaning fee, which will be taken out of the damage deposit. Seasonal vestments, such as the Bible markers and pulpit falls, may not be removed. Only the white wedding set may replace the current seasonal set and needs to be requested ahead of time with the Wedding Coordinator.

### *Rice, Birdseed, Flower Petals and Confetti:*

Rice, birdseed, real flower petals and confetti may not be thrown in and around the church. Rice, birdseed and flower petals are slippery and could cause people to fall. Confetti and other materials are difficult to clean up. Ushers are asked to inform guests of this policy should they see guests distributing materials to be thrown. Releasing balloons is also prohibited for environmental reasons. A flower girl may drop artificial flower petals down the center aisle. You may blow bubble, light sparklers, release butterflies or doves, or anything else that has been pre-approved by the Wedding Coordinator ahead of time. The couple can ask the organist to ring the tower bells following the ceremony.

### *Aisle Runner:*

Grace Church has a heavy linen aisle runner. If a couple requests the use of the aisle runner, an additional \$150 will be charged to get the aisle runner cleaned and delivered. Please write a separate check to Grace Church for this additional expense.

### *Welcome Table:*

The Wedding Coordinator will make sure that the overall appearance of the church is in order. She will remove the literature on the two welcome tables at the back of the church. These two tables may be used for gifts, bulletins and signing the guest book.

### *Photography:*

Photographs may be taken before and after the ceremony. The church can be opened for taking pictures before the service is scheduled to begin, but the wedding party should finish taking pictures at least 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.

The best place to photograph at Grace Church is in the back of the church, along the side aisles, and up front along the side of the chancel. The rules are that the photographer may move around and take pictures anywhere in the sanctuary, but are not allowed to interfere

with the ceremony and should remain unobtrusive. Please check with the Officiant who will be conducting the service for their personal guidelines on flash photography.

### *Sound System:*

Two portable microphones may be borrowed from the church, but should be left on the altar when the visiting Officiant is finished using it after the service.

### *Handicap Accessibility:*

Grace Church is handicap accessible on West Washington Avenue through the courtyard and up an elevator to the sanctuary. A section of a front pew has been removed to accommodate a wheelchair.

### *Parking:*

There is limited parking available on the West Washington Avenue. To reserve parking for your wedding party, family members or special guests, you may request bags for the meters from the Madison Transportation Department. Call the Department of Transportation at 266-4761 before picking up the bags at 215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room 120. It is the couple's responsibility to pick up the bags and bag the meters. It is helpful to bring the bags to the rehearsal and then bag the meters after the rehearsal so that the parking stalls will be reserved and available the next day for the wedding.

### *Guild Hall Use for Receptions or Rehearsal Dinners:*

Receptions and rehearsal dinners are infrequently held at Grace Church, but the Guild Hall, kitchen, reception area next to the church office, and courtyard are available. It is free of charge to Grace Church parishioners and at an additional fee for non-members.

The Guild Hall is approximately 1700 square feet and has 6 large round tables, 12 rectangular tables- 8 feet long, 5 square card tables and 125 chairs available to use. It also has a piano and sound system.

Persons planning a reception or rehearsal dinner should remember that many dance groups and other organizations use the Guild hall throughout the week and weekends, therefore a separate reservation needs to be made with the church staff to check for availability at least three months in advance.

1. The church does not allow alcoholic beverages of any kind on the premise.
2. Catering service is not included. The caterer must leave the kitchen as clean as they found it.
3. The church janitorial service is responsible for setting up and taking down the chairs, tables and sound system for the event.
4. The clean up of the room, food and decoration are the responsibility of the wedding party and caterer. An additional cleaning fee of \$20/hour will be charged and taken from the damage deposit if extensive custodial services are needed after the rehearsal or reception.
5. Any left over food must be taken out of the building after the event is over.

6. The caterer, bride or responsible party are required to meet with the Wedding Coordinator to see what is available to use and to go over the guidelines for using the kitchen and Guild Hall.

*Housekeeping:*

The members of the wedding party and guests are responsible for seeing that all rooms used in the church facility are left in clean and orderly condition.

*Cancellation:*

In the unfortunate event of a cancellation, a partial refund will be considered on an individual basis, with the exception of the \$125 (Episcopal)/\$375 (non-Episcopal) security deposit, which becomes non-refundable once a couple begins the process of reserving Grace Church for their wedding.