



*Wedding
Protocol Booklet*

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We've set the date...now what do we do?

This booklet contains helpful information regarding the wedding protocol at The Tabernacle. Please read over it carefully and direct any questions that you may have to the church wedding coordinator.

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Facility Fees

Fees for use of the Sanctuary or World Prayer Center should be paid 4 ~ 6 weeks prior to your wedding ceremony. (See enclosed fee schedule.) Please mail to the Director of Pastoral Care.

Marriage License

A marriage license is required by law. It is very important that your marriage license be brought to the rehearsal and given to the wedding coordinator. It is also important that the honor attendants see the wedding coordinator either during or after the rehearsal to complete one portion of the license. Honor attendants must be at least 18 years of age to sign the marriage license. If not, another bridesmaid may be chosen to sign the document.

A marriage license can be applied for at any town hall, or from the downtown City Hall. It must be obtained in the state in which you are being married at least 24 hours before the scheduled time of the wedding. A marriage license can be obtained any time within thirty (30) days prior to the date of your wedding and is valid for 60 days. The State of New York does charge a fee. If you need to have a copy of your marriage license for your health insurance carrier, etc., please inform the wedding coordinator, and she will make a copy for you immediately after the wedding ceremony. You will receive your official copy from the state approximately three months after the ceremony.

Choosing the Officiating Minister

The Tabernacle is privileged to host your wedding ceremony. We want you to feel comfortable when inviting the minister of your choice to officiate or to co-officiate your wedding. Each member of our pastoral staff is here to serve you.

If you have chosen a priest and/or licensed minister from somewhere other than The Tabernacle to either officiate or to co-officiate, we ask that you provide us their name and address so that we can send them a confirming letter, welcoming them to The Tabernacle as a participant in your wedding ceremony.

Clergy Invitations

If you wish to have the officiating minister and his/her spouse, attend your wedding **reception**, a formal invitation should be mailed to them. The officiating minister will not assume that you are expecting him/her to attend your reception unless invited. An invitation should be mailed with a reply card enclosed at the time you invite your guests. With no obligation, your decision should be based upon you and/or your family's relationship with the minister.

Appreciation Gifts

It is customary to give the minister a monetary gift for officiating your wedding ceremony; it should be presented after the ceremony by either the father of the bride, the best man, or sometimes the groom. Appreciation gifts **are not** included in the fee you pay for the use of the facility.

Changing Your Time

If it becomes necessary to change the time of your wedding or rehearsal, please notify the wedding coordinator as soon as possible so that she can check with the officiating minister to make sure his/her schedule allows for the change. Please keep in mind that it could be difficult to change the time for a rehearsal as the Sanctuary is in use after 6:00pm on Thursdays and sometimes on Fridays.

The Rehearsal

Wedding rehearsals are typically scheduled as follows:

Saturday Weddings - Rehearsals are **Friday at 5:30 pm**

Friday Weddings - Rehearsals are **Thursday at 4:00 pm**

Please note: Saturday weddings may also have a Thursday rehearsal.

Please make sure your wedding party and parents arrive on time, and remember to bring the marriage license with you. The wedding coordinator will begin rehearsals by placing the wedding party in their places on the platform. The minister will then go through certain portions of the service with the bride and groom. After the minister has completed his/her portion of the rehearsal, the wedding coordinator will cover all the necessary details such as the parent's entrance, ushers and groomsmen instruction, processional, etc.

The average time for a rehearsal is about an hour and a half. There is much to be covered, and we do try to keep the time down to a minimum so as not to interfere with your plans for a rehearsal dinner/party. Usually, the larger the wedding party, the longer it takes. Your rehearsal should be a pleasant experience, and we try to make it fun while getting the job done at the same time.

Music

The Tabernacle has a collection of wedding music which you may choose from, i.e., processionals, recessionals, parent's music, communion music. If you are providing your own CD's, please bring them to the rehearsal. Our sound technician will return them to you after the wedding ceremony. Vocalists and live musicians should provide their own accompaniments and/or tracks.

The Tabernacle has vocalists and musicians who are sometimes available to perform for weddings. Ask the wedding coordinator for suggestions. Please make any arrangements for financial compensation directly between you and the vocalist or musician you have invited to participate in your wedding.

Sanctuary Decorations

Because the sanctuary is in use on Thursday evenings after 6:00pm, it can not be decorated after the rehearsal. If you would like to decorate after a Friday rehearsal, you will have to clear this with the wedding coordinator. Please assign someone to handle decorations before the ceremony. Traditional decorations would include the candelabra and candles provided by the church, a centerpiece for the unity candle (optional), pew bows, and an aisle runner. Some pew bows are available through the coordinator. See her for more information.

Centerpiece / Unity Candle

Some brides prefer to use their unity candle set as the only centerpiece on the altar. If that is your choice, please bring your candles and their special holders to the rehearsal. If your unity candle is being arranged with a fresh floral centerpiece, take your candle set to your florist, and have it delivered to the church. If you are having a separate fresh floral centerpiece, and the unity candle set will not be included, please advise your florist to make the centerpiece (at the very center) no higher than six inches, so the flowers do not hide the candle set.

Flowers

All fresh flowers, including boutonnieres and corsages, should be delivered by your florist to the church about an hour before the wedding. Please note that any flowers that might be needed for pictures before the ceremony do not need to be delivered to the church. Please provide the wedding coordinator with the name and phone number of your florist.

If you are not using fresh flowers, we ask that you bring them to the rehearsal. Remember to label each of the corsages and boutonnieres with the name of the person who will be wearing them. If your flower girl is to drop flower petals on the aisle runner, they **must** be artificial because real petals can stain the carpet.

Aisle Runner

When ordering your aisle runner, you will need 100' length. Please do not purchase plastic. We recommend "French Lace" or something similar.

Arrival of the Bride/Bridesmaids

The Bride should arrive at the front entrance of the church under the canopy. Unless the bride is dressing at the church, the recommended time of arrival is about **20 minutes** prior to service time. When dressing at the church, please arrive **at least one hour** before the ceremony begins. Prior arrangements will need to be made with the wedding coordinator. When everyone is dressed, the coordinator will advise your photographer, and he/she will be able to begin taking pictures.

Arrival of the Groom/Groomsmen

On the day of your wedding, the men should arrive at the church at least one hour before the scheduled service. This will give them a chance to run through their specific duties again so that they are comfortable knowing "who is doing what". The best man does not typically have any responsibilities other than staying with the Groom. All the other groomsmen are responsible for seating guests, lighting candelabra's, escorting mothers, etc. Please advise our coordinator with the name of your tux rental place and phone number.

Arrival of Photographers/Videographers

We request that all photographers arrive at the church at least 45 minutes prior to the service. The wedding coordinator will brief them regarding a rundown of the service so that no important pictures are missed. Your photographer(s) should feel free to use his/her creative abilities throughout the ceremony. If they are planning to photograph the men before the service, we request that they arrive at least one hour early so that the groomsmen are not kept from their responsibilities when guests start to arrive.

If you consider using **The Tabernacle Video Service**, please make your arrangements personally by contacting the media department at 712-1724. It is suggested that you make these arrangements eight to ten weeks prior to your date.

Wedding Vehicles

Limousines and/or any vehicles the wedding party plans to depart in should be the only vehicles parked at the front entrance of the church. Please note that extra long limousines may be unable to make the turn and will have to park on the opposite side of the grassy area away from the front doors. Also, wedding trolleys and any coach type vehicles are too high to fit under the canopy at the front entrance and must park a little farther away from the entrance. Please advise the wedding coordinator if any special parking is required for physically impaired family members.

Late Arrivals

We prefer not to wait longer than 10 minutes past the scheduled starting time. To help the guests arrive on time, we suggest that the bride enclose a small map with her invitations to accommodate those who are not familiar with the area.

Special Seating

If you would like to have your grandparents /great grandparents seated just before the mothers, please advise the wedding coordinator. If needed, she can provide special seating for them while they wait and will also introduce each of them to the usher whom the bride has designated to escort them. We will need the names of each grandparent (or set of grandparents), and which side of the family they represent. Only the ladies are escorted, and their spouses will follow just behind them. Once they are all seated, it is time for the mothers to enter.

Showering the Bride and Groom

Birdseed, flower petals, and bubbles are the most popular items used when showering the bride and groom as they leave the church. With so many items to choose from, please advise the wedding coordinator on what you will be using. To make things a little easier, please bring the items in a suitable container such as a basket, for distribution. Birdseed should be in individual packets. Also, you might consider using The Tabernacle's beautiful glass walk way as an exit point for showering the couple.

Alcoholic Beverages

Alcohol is not permitted in the church facilities. If your limousine service provides champagne or other drinks for the wedding party, please advise the driver(s) that it must be kept in the limousine(s).

