

NA IVITY CA HEDRAL

THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY

**“Therefore marriage is not to be entered into
unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately,
and in accordance with the purposes for which it was
instituted by God.”**

321 Wyandotte Street
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18015
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610-865-0727

NA IVITY CATHEDRAL

Cathedral Church of the Nativity

321 Wyandotte Street † Bethlehem PA 18015-1527

Phone: 610.865.0727 – Fax: 610.865.0447

Dear Friends in Christ,

When we come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the joining together of two persons in a covenant of marriage, it is an occasion of real joy in the life of the parish.

The decision to enter into this most sacred, rigorous and rewarding covenant is an opportunity for great spiritual and emotional growth and well-being! The Cathedral Church of the Nativity and the clergy want to be part of this spiritual journey and for that reason we invite all who are pondering marriage at this Cathedral to enter into and prepare for a marriage that is the journey of a lifetime. The pages that follow describe our protocols about preparation for marriage and also protocol about wedding ceremonies at the Cathedral. Please see in the pages that follow as tools for pastoral support for an important journey and less as rules or regulations about weddings.

In this booklet you will find the Cathedral's protocol for marriage. This includes the application for marriage at the Cathedral and the *Declaration of Intention* which each couple must sign. Please read over the information carefully. All applications are reviewed by a member of the Cathedral clergy staff before being approved. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Cathedral secretary or clergy.

Update December 15, 2021

The Blessing of Same-Sex Couples

We are delighted to invite and welcome the blessing of same-sex couples. It has been the practice of this Cathedral under the Pastoral direction of our Bishops to joyfully embrace and bless same-sex couples desiring to make a covenant before God and the Church. We have done so since 2010.

The legal recognition of marriage in the state of Pennsylvania now makes it possible for clergy to also sign marriage licenses for same-sex couples, something we were unable to do before! We are grateful.

Our focus here of course is to invite you to find grace in a commitment supported by the deep values of Christian teaching; love, grace, fidelity, and we pray in such a covenant you find deep joy and an abiding strength in God's care and nurture, and blessings that abound.

SOME THINGS TO DO AND THINK ABOUT

- Before finalizing a date for your ceremony, please contact the Cathedral office and let the office know what dates you are considering. They will check the calendar and with clergy for availability. Once the date is made available to you, the date will be placed on the Cathedral calendar **ONLY AFTER YOUR APPLICATION AND DEPOSIT ARE RECEIVED.** Please be sure to confirm receipt of your application with the Cathedral office before making any announcements about the date and time.
- To allow for proper planning and preparation, the clergy need to be notified at least six months prior to the desired wedding date.
- We are happy to include clergy from other parishes and traditions in the ceremony. Please make that request to the officiating clergy at your first contact.
- In order to preserve the dignity of the worship service we are firm in asking photographers and videographers to adhere to our protocols for these professionals.
- Please be sure to acquire the marriage license and plan to bring it to the office two weeks prior to the ceremony.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on Cathedral property unless previously approved as part of the rental of Sayre Hall for a rehearsal dinner or wedding reception.

Contact Information

Canon Missioner	The Rev. Canon Dale T. Grandfield dgrandfield@nativitycathedral.org
Organist and Director of Music Ministries	Canon Stephen Williams swilliams@nativitycathedral.org
Cathedral Secretary	Ms. Peggy Bankowski pbankowski@nativitycathedral.org
Flower Guild Chair	Mrs. Kit Hower khower@ptd.net 610-751-3560
Cathedral Office Telephone	610-865-0727
Cathedral Office Fax	610-865-0447
Marriage License:	
Northampton County Courthouse	610-559-3776
Lehigh County Courthouse	610-782-3173

Wedding Protocol for the Cathedral Church of the Nativity

1. Marriage is a sacrament of the church and therefore finds its meaning in the context of Christian community. Therefore the sacrament of marriage is for members or those making intentional commitments to become members of the Cathedral. Individuals making application for a wedding as a member must establish membership one year prior to the application. We encourage and welcome you to become a member and find a spiritual home at the Cathedral. Honoring our commitment as the Cathedral of the Diocese of Bethlehem, members of parishes in the diocese may celebrate the sacrament here. These arrangements must be made by their parish priest who is expected to preside unless other arrangements are made by the parish priest.
2. Marriage for non-members is invited and welcomed.
3. The “rubrics” (guidelines) of our Book of Common prayer indicate that at least one person of the couple getting married must be baptized. Regular attendance in weekend worship is expected and is an essential part of your spiritual journey.
4. Pre-marital work with a member of the clergy or designate is required. (Please see “Pre-Marital Preparation” section.)
5. The Book of Common Prayer and other approved resources provide us the breadth and beauty of ceremonies for Blessings of Marriage, Blessing of Same-Sex Couples/Marriage, as well as an order for Marriage. Any of these that apply may be used in consultation with the officiating clergy.
6. The officiating Priest is ably supported by the “Wedding Belles”, lay people of the Cathedral who are here to support you at the wedding rehearsal and on the wedding day. Outside consultants or bridal consultants are not necessary to this Sacramental Rite.

7. The Cathedral's organist and choir master will ably assist you in the choosing of all music for the ceremony. The final decisions on the music and liturgy are made by the Priest in cooperation with the Cathedral's organist.
8. Because of the Cathedral's Saturday service schedule, we are not able to schedule a ceremony any later than 3 p.m. or on the last Saturday of the month. There is a limit of two celebrations of marriage in the Cathedral or its chapels on any given Saturday. Sunday ceremonies are possible but must not conflict with regular services scheduled.
9. We are obligated of course to be in adherence to Pennsylvania State Law.
10. The canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Bethlehem shall be adhered to in the case of marriage after divorce. If one or both members of a couple have been divorced, the canons of the Church require that the clergy receive permission from the Bishop to celebrate and bless the marriage. Final divorce decree(s) must be at least one year old before the Bishop will consider the petition for permission. Please bring a copy of the final decree(s) to your first meeting with the clergy for his/her records.
11. The Cathedral Church of the Nativity as the Cathedral of the diocese is open for the celebration of a marriage for members of other congregations of the Diocese of Bethlehem which are celebrated by the clergy of those congregations. Local parish clergy must coordinate this event with the clergy of the Cathedral. We appreciate your respect and adherence to the protocols of the Cathedral and the canons of the Diocese and the Episcopal Church.
12. Because of the penitential nature of Lent, this is not an appropriate time for the celebration of Holy Matrimony; however, the clergy may give consideration for pastoral reasons.

Pre-marital Preparation

- We are delighted to support you in your decision to enter into marriage and take the responsibility of preparing as best we can those who desire to live together in Christian marriage by providing an opportunity for a fine pre-marital preparation experience. The church values marriage so highly that our canons (our by-laws) require clergy to provide such an experience.
- All couples seeking matrimony then participate in pre-marital preparation experience by contacting either Ms. Lauren Churchill, MA, LPC (lchurchill@rcn.com or 610-248-5190) or Ms. Jill Knerr, MSW (jbknerr@rcn.com or 610-691-2455) for three sessions of preparation. The cost of this preparation is to be paid by the couple directly to Ms. Churchill or Ms. Knerr. The cost of this service is **\$335.00 (*Note, this fee is not included in the Cathedral fees.)** and covers time and resources. If the couple lives at a distance, alternative arrangements can be made in consultation with the clergy.
- All couples are also expected to participate in a time of preparation directed by the clergy. These gatherings may involve other couples and are held as demand dictates. You will be notified in advance so that you can clear your calendar for participation.

Photography

- Photographers and videographers are expected to follow the directions of the officiating clergy.
- Photographers and videographers may not move around during a wedding but must shoot from a stationary spot.
- No flash photography or extra lighting is permitted.
- Respecting the time of those cleaning up after weddings and preparing for the next services in the Cathedral, we have established a period of 20 minutes following the ceremony for pictures inside the Cathedral.
- We ask that guests of the wedding participate in worship and therefore ask them to refrain from flash photography or lighted videography.

Decoration and Flowers

- Altar flowers are ordered through the Cathedral's Flower Guild using one of the Cathedral florists. (List of Florists can be obtained from Peggy Bankowski in the church office.) Questions about flowers may be directed to Kit Hower, Flower Guild Chair, at khower@ptd.net or 610-797-4309.
- Other floral arrangements and decoration (ex. End of pews, arrangement at table entering Sanctuary) may be ordered through a florist of the couple's choice though Cathedral florists are happy to help.
- Our experience has shown that aisle runners are dangerous and therefore not allowed.
- We thank you for adhering to our request to not throw rice or any other objects on the Cathedral property.

Bulletins

- The Cathedral can provide a simple bulletin for the service which includes the outline of the liturgy and a list of participants.
- Should you choose to have a bulletin or program printed by an outside source, please be sure to finalize the contents with the clergy before printing.

CATHEDRAL WEDDING FEES

For a Cathedral member the fee is \$600.

For an active member of a parish in the Diocese of Bethlehem with:

Your Clergy's endorsement and participation the fee is \$800.

Your Clergy's endorsement but Cathedral Clergy doing ceremony the fee is \$1,050.

For a non-member, a guest of the Cathedral the fee is \$2,500.

The fee goes to off-setting the cost to provide the following:

- Nave/Sanctuary (space/lights, heat/air conditioning)
- Public address/sound system
- Organ
- Altar flowers (Customized arrangements may require additional fee. See "Optional Fees" section.)
- Eucharist supplies
- Wedding Party Lounge Space
- Wedding Belles Ministry
- Sexton (Janitor)
- Altar Guild/Candles/Holy Communion Set Up, etc.
- Office Manager
- Organist
- Clergy

Upon clergy approval of wedding date, all wedding couples are required to provide a \$500 deposit to secure the wedding day and time. Deposit is due within 7 days of date approval. **Dates will not be held on the Cathedral calendar until the deposit is received.**

Full payment must be made to the Cathedral office along with the Marriage license 14 days before the wedding date.

OPTIONAL FEES

\$ _____ Customized Floral arrangements for the altar in
consultation with Cathedral Flower Guild Chair. ()

\$ _____ \$175.00 Candlelight Service ()

\$ _____ \$ 50.00 Additional Organist rehearsal ()

***** For Pastoral reasons, the clergy may modify
these fees.**

WEDDING APPLICATION

Requested Date of Wedding _____ Time _____

Name of Applicant 1 _____

Address _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

Cell _____ Email _____

Date of Birth _____

Religious Affiliation: Episcopal ___ Other _____

Are you a member of the Cathedral? Yes ___ No ___

Name of Parish if not the Cathedral _____

Date and Place of Baptism _____

Date and Place of Confirmation _____

Never been married ___ Widowed ___ Divorced ___ (number of times ___)

Father's Name _____

Mother's Name _____

Mother's Maiden Name _____

Name of Applicant 2 _____

Address _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

Cell _____ Email _____

Date of Birth _____

Religious Affiliation: Episcopal ___ Other _____

Are you a member of the Cathedral? Yes ___ No ___

Name of Parish if not the Cathedral _____

Date and Place of Baptism _____

Date and Place of Confirmation _____

Never been married__ Widowed__ Divorced__(number of times__)

Father's Name _____

Mother's Name _____

Mother's Maiden Name _____

COUPLE'S STATEMENT

We believe that we are ready to live together in a Covenant of Marriage

because _____

We desire to have our marriage celebrated and blessed in the Church

because _____

We have read and agree to policies for weddings of the Cathedral Church of the Nativity

Signature

Signature

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

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DECLARATION OF INTENTION

We,

and

desiring to receive the blessing of Holy Matrimony in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold marriage to be a lifelong union as it is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer and associated resources of the Episcopal Church.

We believe that this union, in heart, body, and mind, is intended by God for the mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will and ours, for the creativity and care of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto.

Signature

Signature

Date _____ A.D. _____