

Weddings at First Christian Church

It is our goal that your marriage to be a joyous, fulfilling relationship and all God intended it to be. Marriage is a gift from God, who wants to be at the center of your marriage and to bless your life together. It is for this reason that we share this information with you.

You are about to make one of the most important commitments of your life. Marriage is your decision to share life together with someone you love. Marriage is an exciting and awesome covenant – “As long as we both shall live.” That is quite a promise!

In Christian marriage, this covenant is made in the presence of God, not simply before your family and friends. In Christian marriage, God becomes the third partner in the promises made between a husband and wife.

Building a good Christian marriage is never automatic. It takes two loving people who are willing to work and pray to keep it growing. At First Christian Church we want to do all we can to help your dream become a reality in a growing marriage relationship.

As we read His Word we are able to discern the basic principles that must be understood and applied if we hope to experience joy and fulfillment in marriage. Ignoring these principles will result in frustration and ultimate failure in any marriage relationship.

Because we are committed to building strong marriages, we want to share these principles and policies with you.

A core value of First Christian Church (FCC) is to value every person. Each person deserves to be treated with the same dignity and respect as any other person, as each of us bears the image of God. FCC, as a body of Christians, will demonstrate this dignity and respect for every person in our thoughts, speech and behavior.

It is a foundational belief of FCC that the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16 & 2 Peter 1:20-21) and that God created human beings as male and female. (Genesis 1:27-28) Further, the Bible specifically holds that God grants two life-enhancing options for sexual behavior:

- Monogamous marital relations between one man and one woman (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18; 21-24; Matthew 17:4-6; Mark 10:5-8; Hebrews 14:4) or
- Sexual celibacy (1 Corinthians 7:7; Matthew 19:12)

God's definitions of marriage and sex are very precise and clear: Marriage is the union between one man and one woman. God envisions no other kind of marriage or sex in any other arena. It is therefore the policy of FCC that only marriages between one man and one woman shall be conducted on FCC property and/or officiated by FCC ministers, staff or elders at any location.

While FCC believes that only sexual relations between a married man and woman are God's design for sexuality, this belief will not inhibit or deter FCC's desire and commitment to extend Christ's love to all of our neighbors.

Introduction to FCC Wedding Policies

The Wedding Guide book will be given to you and all of the policies will be discussed when you have your appointment with the Wedding Facilitator. Here are some of the important policies you need to know as you consider FCC as the place for your wedding:

1. Couples must first meet the following criteria:

- a. Complete an initial interview with a First Christian Church minister.
- b. The couple should commit to sexual purity
- c. Willing to complete per-marital counseling

Couples with whom there has been a previous marriage and divorce should consider the initial interview with the FCC minister to be a time in which he determines whether the ceremony can be conducted at FCC or by an FCC minister or elder, in accordance with biblical principles. Professing Christians will not be joined in marriage with non-Christians, according to biblical teaching, nor will couples who are currently living together. The Senior Minister is available to talk through any of the above situations.

2. The Wedding Facilitator must be consulted and involved in the planning and during the wedding ceremony.
3. Weddings must be scheduled to start no later than 4:30p on Saturdays unless special arrangements have been made.
4. The Officiating Minister and the Wedding Facilitator will conduct the rehearsal. Rehearsals should run approximately one hour. Couples are asked to remind the wedding party of the importance of punctuality, both for the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.
5. The organ may only be used by an organist approved by the FCC Worship Arts Minister, Brian Walker. You can contact him at bwalker@fccoc.org.
6. All music must be Christ honoring.
7. All use of tobacco & alcoholic beverages is PROHIBITED on the church campus.
8. Flower girls may only use silk petals on the aisles.
9. Guests are requested not to use rice, birdseed, confetti or other type of materials that leave a residue or refuse. Some appropriate suggestions would be bubbles or ringing bells. (Bubbles MUST be kept outside.)
10. An FCC sound technician will be necessary for all weddings being held in the worship center. A sound technician is not needed for any wedding in the Chapel.

Scheduling a Wedding

1. Complete the wedding request form available on our website. Our staff will check the date for you, **tentatively** schedule the wedding and get with the ministerial staff for scheduling the initial appointment.
2. At your initial meeting, you may pay the \$50 non-refundable deposit if you plan to use our facility. When the wedding has been approved and the deposit is made the wedding date is officially scheduled.
3. Selecting a Minister: Any of the ministers on staff at First Christian can perform wedding ceremonies. The date will need to be scheduled with the minister as well as dates for pre-marital counseling. Outside

ministers may officiate ceremonies at the discretion and approval of the Senior Minister and Elder Board.

4. Weddings cannot be scheduled on Sundays or holidays including but not limited to the following days:
 - The 2 weeks prior to Easter
 - Easter weekend
 - Mother's & Father's Day weekends
 - Memorial Day & Labor Day weekends
 - 4th of July weekend
 - Thanksgiving weekend
 - The month of December
 - Any day the church is scheduled to be closed. These dates are available from the church office

Wedding Facilitator

The job of the FCC Wedding Facilitator is to assist the bridal party with the day of the wedding. She will meet with the couple about 8 weeks prior to the wedding day to go over ceremony details, assist the minister with the rehearsal and make sure the wedding ceremony runs smoothly.

Wedding Ceremony

This is such an exciting time for everyone and First Christian Church is honored that you would include us in your special day. There are two spaces available to hold the ceremony; the main worship center or the chapel. Preparation rooms are also available, one for the groom and groomsmen and one for the bride and bridesmaids. The wedding party is welcome to use these rooms to serve food or snacks but please limit eating to the assigned rooms.

Main Worship Center Facts

- Over 500 guests can be seated on the main level
- The center aisle is 77 feet from the double doors in the foyer to the steps at the bottom of the stage
- There are twenty five rows of pews on each side

Chapel Facts

- The side aisle is 50 feet
- There are four windows on the east side
- There are 8 rows and 80-100 guests can be seated

May the blessings of God's presence be upon your wedding ceremony as you are united together as one in Christ.