

Chatham Bible Church Wedding Policy

Chatham Bible Church desires your wedding to be one of the most meaningful, happiest and God-honoring occasions of your lives. The marriage covenant was given by God to man and woman, representative of Jesus Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:22-33), and was meant to be a life-long bond. In Mark 10:6-9 (ESV), Jesus taught, "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

This document provides basic information regarding weddings at Chatham. Complete details are available in our wedding guide booklet, which may be obtained from our wedding coordinator. Please read carefully, then contact the church office for available dates and further information.

Who May Be Married at Chatham?

Professing Christian couples comprised of one man and one woman who are members of Chatham Bible Church or have regularly attended for a minimum of 6 months are welcome to be married at Chatham.

If extenuating circumstances (such as building damage, construction or very limited seating capacity) make it impossible for a non-attending, professing Christian couple to be married in their own church, their marrying pastor may be granted permission to perform the ceremony. He should contact our pastor to discuss this possibility.

If one member of a couple is a professing believer and the other is a non-believer, they may not be married at Chatham on the basis of the Biblical teaching found in 2 Corinthians 6:14, "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers."

Divorced persons may only be married at Chatham if they have been the innocent party to desertion or adultery. This is based on Scriptural principles found in Matthew 19:9 and I Corinthians 7:12-15.

Couples are expected not to live together or be sexually active prior to marriage. (Hebrews 13:4)

Please refer also to article 6 of our Constitution regarding ceremonies allowed on our premises.

Preparing for Marriage

∞ Initial Meeting With a Pastor

The first appointment is an informal time to get acquainted. The three of you will talk over matters that relate to your marriage, the wedding and whether you meet the guidelines for being married at Chatham. This meeting should take place at least **6 months before** your wedding date.

∞ Pre-Marital Counseling

All couples desiring to be married at Chatham must attend at least six sessions with either the marrying pastor or a trained mentor couple from the church. These sessions will help you to build a strong foundation for your life together. Each session will last approximately 90 minutes, and include assignments which you are expected to complete between sessions.

∞ Securing a Wedding Date

All weddings must be booked a minimum of 6 months in advance. Ceremonies should begin at 6 p.m. on Friday and no later than 4 p.m. on Saturday. You may tentatively reserve a date on our church calendar, but **there will be no confirmation of your desired date until:**

- there have been *at least four pre-marital counseling sessions*, and
- **for non-members**, a *non-refundable deposit of \$100* has been made *within 7 days* from contact with the wedding coordinator.

Once these steps have been followed, your wedding date will be confirmed and you may begin announcing the date and sending out invitations.

It is strongly recommended that you to reserve your date with us *before* booking a reception hall. Otherwise, your desired date may already be blocked by another event.

∞ The Wedding Coordinator

Our wedding coordinator will assist you in planning the details of your wedding and will coordinate with the church staff, assist in directing the rehearsal and be your resource for any and all questions regarding your wedding and/or reception held at the church.

The coordinator will help the wedding party with any last minute details and will line up grandparents, parents and the wedding party to ensure a timely start. The coordinator will also provide guidelines for your receiving line and will line up participants if desired.

The wedding coordinator also:

- secures and disburses checks for all related fees
- communicates set-up with the custodial staff and sound technician
- coordinates with the florist and photographer
- assists with signing of the marriage license
- is the liaison for all details, such as climate control, lighting and building access.

Planning the Wedding Day

∞ General Policies

- No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the church building or on the premises.
- Please refrain from smoking on church premises.
- Throwing of rice or confetti is not permitted. Bubbles or bird seed may be used outside.
- No food or drink is allowed in the worship center at any time. This includes all rehearsals, visits and the wedding itself.
- It is your responsibility to communicate all Chatham policies to your wedding party and whoever else may need to know (photographers, family, etc.).

∞ Music

You are responsible for selecting the music for your wedding, and for securing a pianist and other musicians as desired. Questions regarding music selection or hiring Chatham musicians should be directed to the wedding coordinator. All music and personnel should be selected prior to your final appointment with the pastor.

∞ Rehearsal

A rehearsal is required for all weddings, and is scheduled for the evening before the wedding. All participants should be present and on time, including bride, groom, wedding party, flower girl, ring bearer, ushers, soloists, musicians, the couple's parents and, if possible, grandparents.

Wedding Day Details

☞ The Marriage License

You are responsible for acquiring your marriage license from the county courthouse in Clayton, MO if you reside in St. Louis County. Otherwise, you can obtain a marriage license from any county seat in the state of Missouri. You will need to give this license to the wedding coordinator or pastor on the night of the rehearsal.

☞ Photography & Videography

It is your responsibility to discuss our guidelines with your photographers, including:

- Photographers should never block any congregant's field of view during the ceremony.
- Only unobtrusive non-flash pictures are appropriate during the ceremony, with the exception of the processional and recessional.
- Video recording during the ceremony must be done from fixed locations.
- Video lamps are not allowed during the ceremony.

Wedding Fee Schedule

| | <u>Member*</u> | <u>Non-Member**</u> |
|---|----------------|--|
| Building Rental | | |
| Worship Center | no fee | \$100 <i>(non-refundable deposit)</i> |
| Activity Center/Reception | no fee | n/a |
| Pastor <i>(Members may give an honorarium to officiating pastor.)</i> | no fee | \$100 |
| Wedding Coordinator | \$300 | \$350 |
| Post-Wedding Cleanup Fee | \$50*** | \$50*** |
| Custodian | | |
| Worship Center | \$100 | \$125 |
| Activity Center/Reception <i>(Does not include set-up or tear-down of tables & chairs. This is the responsibility of the wedding party.)</i> | \$75 | n/a |
| Sound Technician | \$100 | \$125 |
| Video Technician <i>(optional)</i> | \$50 | \$75 |
| Pianist, Soloists, Musicians <i>(optional)</i> <i>(Contact wedding coordinator for hiring information.)</i> | varies | varies |

* "Members" are couples who have attended Chatham regularly for at least 6 months prior to their wedding, and who plan to join the church either before or after the ceremony. Members using the wedding coordinator should give coordinator all checks at the rehearsal for appropriate distribution. Otherwise, checks must be given to all appropriate individuals at the rehearsal.

** Non-members are required to give the non-refundable deposit to the wedding coordinator within 7 days of coordinator contact. Make payable to Chatham Bible Church, attn.: wedding coordinator. All other checks are to be made payable to the appropriate individuals and given to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal.

*** Cleanup fee check to be made payable to wedding coordinator. If a cleaning crew is assigned by the wedding party and all cleanup completed, check will be voided and returned by mail. If required cleanup is not completed, check will be cashed at coordinator's discretion.