

YOUR WEDDING AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH A STATEMENT OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Nature of the Service

The marriage ceremony is one of the most sacred rites of the Church. It is a ritual in which two persons invoke the blessing of God and pledge themselves to each other in holy wedlock. The wedding ceremony at the Church is not primarily a social event. It is a service of worship in which friends of the bridal couple are invited to witness the exchanging of vows.

It is the desire of ministers, staff and members of First Christian Church to make every wedding a memorable event, beautiful and meaningful, and to extend every possible courtesy to wedding parties.

The following policies and procedures have been developed in order to establish a regular procedure in regard to weddings in First Christian Church, Stillwater, Oklahoma and to make available to bridal parties information regarding the accepted customs of the Church.

Pre-Wedding Conferences

The minister(s) will officiate at the wedding ceremony only after appropriate pre-wedding conferences with the bride and groom. It is desirable for these conferences to be held at least 60 days before the wedding. Couples are urged to make every effort to make an appointment with their minister at least that far in advance.

Facilities Available at the Church

The Church Sanctuary - seats 350

Candelabra (but not the candles)

Prie-dieu (kneeling bench)

Brides's rooms

Reception rooms

Appropriate Steps for all Wedding Arrangements

Reservations are made through the church office. These will include:

1. Conference with minister
2. Conference with organist
3. Conference with wedding reception committee chair

Making the Reservations

Reservations for use of the church will be confirmed through the church office after consultation with the minister. The precise hour of the rehearsal and wedding should be fixed at the time the sanctuary or other rooms are reserved. Weddings of members can be scheduled one year in advance. Weddings of non-members can be scheduled three months before the wedding date.

If the bride, groom, bride's mother, father, grandparents or legal guardian or the groom's mother, father, grandparents or legal guardian has been a member of First Christian Church, Stillwater for at least a year prior to the wedding date, the wedding will be considered a "*member*" wedding. All other weddings are *non-member*.

Tentative dates may be cleared by telephone. No dates should be announced until the reservations have been confirmed, in order to reduce to a minimum the possibility of misunderstanding or embarrassment on the part of any of the persons involved.

Due to church programming and availability of staff, it is requested that couples avoid planning rehearsals or weddings on Sundays, **December 20 through January 2**, Maundy Thursday through Easter and on national holidays.

Saturday weddings are requested to be scheduled no later than 6:00 p.m.

The Rehearsal

The minister, representing the Church, is always in charge of the rehearsal. Wedding services, bridal secretaries and other persons of similar position must confer with the minister regarding all plans for the ceremony. The rehearsal should begin promptly at the time scheduled.

The following suggestions will guide you as you prepare for the rehearsal:

1. The minister will schedule the time of the rehearsal, usually on the day before the wedding. The rehearsal will require one hour and **may start no later than 6:00 p.m.**
2. All members of the wedding party are expected to be present at the rehearsal.
3. Please have lists prepared with the following information:
 - a. Names of attendants and order in which they are to stand.
 - b. Names of the candlelighters, if any.
 - c. Names of the ushers who will seat the mothers.
 - d. Number of family pews to be reserved.
 - e. Number of grandparents to be seated.
4. The marriage license should be delivered to the minister.

If it is planned that children will be included in the wedding party, please give careful attention to the age and maturity of the children and the responsibilities they are invited to carry out.

THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Music

The wedding ceremony is a service of worship. Couples, in consultation with the minister and organist, should keep the selection and quality of music in line with the high purposes of the service.

The First Christian Church organist should be the organist for all weddings. If unavailable, our organist will recommend other organists that may be used.

The bride and groom may choose any soloist they wish, giving due consideration to the size and nature of the sanctuary.

Flowers and Decorations

The beautiful, well-appointed sanctuary requires very little decoration. The use of greenery is discouraged except in the decorating of the candelabra. No decoration should be used which will hide from clear view the worship symbols in the Chancel, such as the cross and the Communion Table. Decorations which hide the beauty of the sanctuary or destroy the appeal of the church setting or de-emphasize the symbols in the church detract from the simple dignity and elegance which should characterize the wedding service.

Following is a list of expectations to give guidance in planning:

- a. The florist should call the church office a week in advance to set a time for decorating.
- b. Nails, tacks, staples, pins or anything which could mar the woodwork or wall should not be used.
- c. It is assumed that no candles or other decoration other than pew ribbons with fern and/or flower decor will be used outside the Chancel.
- d. Wrapped wire or ribbon that will not mar woodwork should be used to fasten bows.
- e. Polyethylene or similar plastic material should be used under the candelabra to protect carpet, furniture and floor.
- f. If candles are used, they must be waxless mechanical candles and must be provided by the wedding party. (They are usually available from your florist.)
- g. The florist should remove all decorations and equipment shortly after the ceremony unless other arrangements have been made.
- h. Church properties should be left in the condition in which they were found.
- i. Real rose petals are not allowed on the carpeting or floor in any area of the church.

- j. Confetti, rice, bird seed or rose petals are not allowed to be thrown in any area inside or outside of the church.
- k. Bubbles may be used outside only. Containers must be disposed of properly by the wedding party or their representatives.

Photography and Taping

Photographs and pictures are not permitted from the floor of the sanctuary while the wedding ceremony is in progress. The photographer may take pictures before or after the ceremony in any part of the building. The photographer may take pictures in the foyer of the church before the processional or as the wedding party approaches the foyer at the time of the recessional. The wedding party may reassemble in the sanctuary after the ceremony to pose for any parts of the ceremony or for other pictures that may be desired.

Amateur photographers are expected to follow the same rules as professional photographers.

A tape recording or video taping may be made if it is not distracting to the service.

Guest Ministers

A minister from another congregation may be invited to officiate at the wedding ceremony. It is appropriate for the bridal party to consult with the local minister before extending an invitation to a guest minister. One of the ministers of First Christian Church, or their representative, will be available to assist in every rehearsal and wedding in the Church.

Bridal Attire and Personal Belongings

The bride should be responsible for determining at what hour wedding attire will be delivered to the church. This information should be reported to the church office. The church will provide a dressing room where items may be kept. However, the Church cannot be responsible for property items, such as dresses, wraps, purses, silver, glassware and any other items that may be brought or delivered to the church for the wedding or reception. The Church cannot be liable for such items if lost, stolen, or damaged.

THE RECEPTION

The Church encourages its members to use its facilities for wedding receptions and will assist in making appropriate arrangements. Details of the reception should be scheduled with the chair of the wedding reception committee. Reception information is attached to this Policy and Procedure Statement.

It should be noted that no alcoholic beverages may be served in the church and dances shall not be held at the reception. Confetti, rice, bird seed or rose petals shall not be thrown on the church property. Bubbles are acceptable if used outside.

This policy or any part thereof, including the fee schedule, can only be changed by the Board of Trustees. Any questions or exceptions must be approved by the Property Use Committee which consists of the Chair of the Official Board, Vice-Chair of the Official Board, Chair of the Property Department, Senior Minister and the Minister of Christian Education and the President of the CWF.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on November 13, 2005, effective January 1, 2006.

Weddings which have already been scheduled and fees and / or deposits accepted by the church office will be conducted under the policies in effect at the time of scheduling. All weddings scheduled after the approval date of this policy will be covered by this policy.

Thank you for considering the First Christian Church for your wedding. We will pledge all the support we can to make your wedding as easy and as pleasant as possible.

Please understand that there are expenses incurred by the Church to host your wedding here. The fees are to offset those expenses. We offer the usage of our building on a no-cost basis to our members. Members will make a refundable deposit to the church office at the time of scheduling. The deposit will be returned after the wedding provided all policies are followed and there are no damages to the facilities. Members' deposit and fees may not be returnable if the wedding is cancelled within 30 days of the scheduled date.

EXPENSES/FEES:

1. **Deposit** (payable to First Christian Church) \$ 50.00

2. **Custodial fees:**
 - Wedding with Reception \$125.00
 - Wedding without Reception \$ 75.00(Check made out to the custodian -**Jeanette Stromberg**)
3. **Sound Technician** \$50.00
(The sound system may be operated only by authorized personnel.)
(Check made out to the technician. Make arrangements through their supervisor, **Daniel Yates, Director of Fine Arts, 405-624-3845, fccfinearts@cs.com**.)

4. **Musicians:** Organist (Required if the organ is used) (\$150.00 - \$175.00)
(to be worked out with organist - depending upon service required.)
(Check made out to organist - **David Hughes 780-0599**)
Pianist (\$150.00 - \$175.00)
(to be worked out with pianist - depending upon service required.)
(Check made out to pianist - **Chad Haney 747-6862**)
3-5 piece Contemporary Christian Band - available on request. Make arrangements through Contemporary Music Coordinator, **Chad Haney 747-6862**.
5. **Minister** (Bridal party's decision)
(customarily given to minister after the service)
6. **Catered Reception:** (Punch only. You furnish cake, any condiments.) We set up and clean up.
Arrangements for catering should be made with the Christian Women's Fellowship.
First 100 people: \$100.00
(.25 each additional guest over 100.)
Wedding Reception Committee Chairman: **Vena Weathers 372-7913**

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. After deciding to have your wedding at First Christian Church, you should sign the use agreement and return it with the deposit due to the church as per agreement. No date will be considered reserved until all church fees have been paid.
2. When your fees have been paid, you should arrange pre-marital counseling with our minister.
3. Unless special ministerial approval is granted, access to the church facility will not include the Educational Wing.
4. The custodial, musicians and sound technician fees reflect a "reasonable" amount of usage in terms of staff time or the number of hours that the building will be open before and after the wedding ceremony. Additional fees will be required for usage of the staff and/or building beyond these normal hours.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on November 13, 2005, effective January 1, 2006.

AGREEMENT FOR MEMBER WEDDING AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

November 13, 2005

This is an agreement between FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, afterward known as "The Church," and

Names of Bride/Groom Phone(s)

Address

for a wedding on _____ at _____
Date Time

with rehearsal on _____ at _____
Date Time

The following fees and costs are agreed upon:

Deposit to First Christian Church _____

Custodial _____

Sound Technician _____

Musician _____

Minister _____

TOTAL FEES COLLECTED/PAID \$ _____

Church Secretary

Wedding Representative

1. Fees may not be returnable if wedding is cancelled within 30 days of scheduled date..
2. No date is confirmed until all church fees have been paid.

Date Fees Collected _____ Wedding Date Confirmed _____

Church Secretary

