

WEDDING POLICY

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (Disciples of Christ)
Richlands, NC

A Wedding Ceremony, when conducted in the Church is not just a Civil or Social occasion conducted within the walls of a religious building. It is a Service of Worship, an act of deepest dedication. Prayers are offered, solemn vows are made, and great music of the Church is heard. All who are present for such a Wedding Service, and most particularly all the members of the Wedding party are expected to be in the spirit of sincere worship.

A Christian rite, whenever celebrated, must be conducted as a service of Worship and not as a performance. Christ is the focus. It is assumed that it will be conducted in conformity with Scripture, and Church tradition. Scripture and tradition are significant parts of Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) rites.

First Christian Church welcomes the opportunity of sharing with you in making your wedding plans. Our Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, and other facilities are at your service, as well as our minister. This information is offered in the expectation that it will aid you in your planning.

For the Couple

Your Wedding, if it is to solemnized by the Church, becomes an experience of Worship. Like all Worship Services of the Church, a Wedding Service is designed to glorify God, Who divinely ordained marriage, and to seek the blessing of God as you pledge your love. Because it is a religious service, anything that adds to the reverence is proper, and anything that obscures or detracts from the spiritual nature of the service is to be discouraged.

The Minister:

It is important for you to discuss with the Minister your plans and hopes before announcing the date of a Wedding to be conducted in the Church. Your Minister will want to counsel with you before the Wedding. The actual ceremony is very brief, but it will take the rest of your lives and all your joint abilities to make a Christian marriage. As a couple desiring marriage under God, and sanctified by the Church, you will want to plan your wedding to glorify God, just as you will plan your home as a place where God is central, and where Jesus Christ is loved.

All arrangements pertaining to the service of marriage are to be made in consultation with the Minister. Ordinarily, the Minister of First Christian Church conducts weddings performed in the Church. If another Minister is invited to conduct the ceremony or share in the service, it should be done in consultation with the Minister of First Christian Church.

Date:

Your wedding date can only be finalized after consultation with the Minister and Church calendar. Please bear in mind that Sundays, the week of Christmas, and Holy week are heavily scheduled with Church activities and weddings are discouraged at this time. The date requested will be placed on the Church calendar after the proper forms and deposits have been made. Please contact the Church secretary to finalize the proper paperwork.

Music:

Although music is not necessary at a Wedding, it can add much to the beauty of the ceremony and play an important part in creating the mood for Worship at the Wedding. The music is not considered to be entertainment or filler, but always an integral part of what is basically a Service of Worship. It is important that the music be carefully selected to stress spiritual significance of the Wedding service. Music should be to the glory of God who sanctifies the marriage. Songs that are clearly secular in their celebration of love are appropriate for use at the reception, not in the Ceremony itself.

Pianist, Organist, Soloist:

First Christian Church does not take responsibility for securing or paying the pianist, organist or soloist. This is to be handled by the bride.

Sound/Media System:

First Christian Church does not take responsibility for securing or paying the operator of the sound/media system. This is to be handled by the Bride.

Photography:

Pictures are to be taken during the ceremony without the aid of a Flash since the wedding is a Worship service. Guests at the wedding need to be made aware of this policy. The Wedding Party may have pictures taken before or after the ceremony. Video cameras should not detract from the sacredness of the Wedding ceremony.

Rehearsal:

The Rehearsal is usually scheduled for the evening prior to the wedding. Rehearsal needs to be set at a time that all parties can be present and in consultation with the Minister who will direct the rehearsal.

Decorations:

All decorations must be removed from the facilities following the Wedding and/or the Reception. Facilities should be left clean and orderly. All candles must be dripless and any wax be removed from the premises. The throwing of rice or birdseed will be confined to outside of the buildings. The florists and decorators are the responsibility of the Bride and/or Groom as are all damages.

WEDDING POLICY FOR CATERER

1. The caterer, or other person responsible for the reception, must contact the bridal party to request the number of tables needed (the wedding party is to contact the church/property committee regarding this need) and the time for setting up the fellowship hall (the wedding party will be given a key to the facilities after the deposit has been made and at the appropriate time. The pastor/secretary/custodian will not be available to assist the caterer in this matter.)
2. The caterer may use the fellowship hall and the kitchen but must supply all utensils, glass, silverware, and soap and/or cleaning solution needed for the event.
3. The facilities used must be left clean and no food items left in the refrigerator.
4. Silverware, glassware, cooking utensils and decorations brought into the church for the reception/rehearsal dinner must be removed immediately following the reception.
5. The church is not liable for any loss or damage to items brought in for the church for use at wedding and/or receptions.
6. Guidelines for decorating the Fellowship Hall:
 - a. Only drip-free candles shall be used, and ample covering placed beneath candle to protect the carpet and floor covering. The person reserving the church will be responsible for any damage to the building and furnishings caused by their decorators, florist or caterers.
 - b. Tacks, pins screws, nails, tape, staples, clamps or any form of fasteners, may not be used in attaching decorations to walls, ceilings, or furniture in the Sanctuary or Fellowship hall.
 - c. Fellowship Hall decorations already present shall not be removed, altered, or tampered with for the purpose of decorating.

First Christian Church reserves the right to restrict the privileges of any Caterer who violates these policies.

First Christian Church is not liable for any accidents or injury that may occur on church property.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines or policies regarding your service, please call our church office at (910) 324-4690 during office hours of 9:00 – 1:00pm.

INFORMATION FOR WEDDING DIRECTOR

Realizing that often times the wedding director is called upon to assist in decorating the church facilities for a wedding, rendering other assistance during a wedding, First Christian Church is providing you the following information. We ask, as you participate in the wedding, that you please observe there guidelines as they pertain to your involvement in the wedding.

RULES FOR USE OF SANTUARY – WEDDING DIRECTOR

1. Sanctuary will be for use of members and their immediate families, first and then non-members on a first come-first served basis.
2. Scheduling should be made at least 60 days in advance of intended use.
3. No fixed furniture may be moved. Removed items must be put back in the order they were found immediately following use of sanctuary.
4. No food or drink is to be brought into sanctuary, classrooms, etc except the nursery.
5. No birdseed or rice (etc) is to be scattered in sanctuary or inside the fellowship hall.
6. Heat and air are to be handles by a member of the properties committee.
7. Clean all rooms used.
8. Vacuum church, as needed
9. Remove all items pertaining to the event on the same day as the function from the sanctuary and restore any other rooms used, to the condition they were prior to use.
10. The families of the bride and groom will be responsible for any damage to the church buildings/church grounds before, during or after the ceremony.
11. All facilities of First Christian Church are to be left in the same condition as they were found.

Sound/Media System Use for Weddings

The Sound/Media System committee chairperson should be contacted at least 2 weeks prior to an event in order to schedule for sound/media equipment operation.

Sound/Media equipment should only be moved by a sound committee member. Please make arrangement with the scheduled sound operator to have any equipment relocated.

There will be a fee of \$75.00 for sound operation made payable to the individual responsible for operating equipment which will be due prior to the event.