

# WEDDING POLICY

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF DENTON  
1203 NORTH FULTON STREET, DENTON, TX  
940-566-4990

## Concerning Your Wedding:

The marriage ceremony is one of the most sacred of all rituals of the church. It is never merely a social event; it is always a rite in which two persons pledge themselves to each other under the blessings of God and are united in holy matrimony. Practically, weddings are littered with potholes and landmines that can cause hurt feelings, stress and chaos. It is the desire of First Christian Church of Denton to make your wedding a memorable, pleasant and meaningful experience. To this end and out of years of experience, we have prepared the following policies.

## Setting The Date:

Before announcements are prepared you must reserve the date on the calendar of the minister and the church. Please contact:

1. Our minister: Rev. John Burton, who approves all weddings.
2. Our church administrative assistnat, who keeps The Official Calendar of the church in the office. It is to your advantage to reserve the date and facilities with her as early as possible. The church is not obligated to honor any date or reservation unless:
  - (a.) The minister has agreed to the wedding;
  - (b.) It has been placed on the Official Calendar;
  - (c.) A wedding form has been completed by the bride and groom;
  - (d.) A deposit has been made.
  - (e.) Premarital counseling is completed.

Note: Weddings or rehearsals are usually not scheduled to take place on the following dates without the Pastor's approval:

Holy Week (the week starting on Palm Sunday and concluding on Easter Sunday)  
The period from Dec. 15th through New Years Day

## The Minister

The minister of the First Christian Church of Denton:

- Shall have the final word on having or not having any wedding;
- Shall be in charge of and conduct all weddings held at the church even when other clergy may be invited to participate;
- May issue invitations to other clergy whom the bride and groom might desire;
- Shall work with the bride and groom to plan the wedding;
- Shall conduct the wedding rehearsal, if one is needed;
- Shall conduct pre-marital wedding counseling or assure that it shall be done by an agreeable third party;
- Shall confirm the existence of a valid marriage license before the wedding ceremony starts and shall assure it is signed and mailed after the ceremony.

## The Marriage License

The minister must have a valid marriage license in his possession before he may conduct a wedding, according to Texas State Law. You should give your license to the minister at the rehearsal. Marriage licenses can be obtained from the County Clerk's Office in any county in the state. For your information: licenses are valid for 30 days from the date of issue, but there is a 72-hour (3 days) waiting period before it can be used.

### **Pre-Marital Counseling**

Because we strongly believe that pre-marital counseling builds stronger, more enduring marriages, we require all couples planning to be married, including those previously married, to undergo a minimum of three sessions of pre-marital counseling. The number of sessions shall be determined by the minister. This counseling may be provided by the minister, at no additional charge, or by an acceptable third party. Couples who do not successfully complete premarital counseling shall not be married at First Christian Church of Denton. Their deposit and fees shall be refunded in full unless there are damages to church facilities.

### **Wedding Planning**

The minister shall ordinarily meet with the couple at least twice to plan the wedding service, including the music, the duties and responsibilities of the participants, the order of service, and any other special arrangements. The details of the service shall be finalized before the day of the wedding rehearsal.

### **Wedding Time Limitation**

Weddings are only one of the many ministries our church and our staff perform so weddings cannot grow to fill the entire day.

Our wedding coordinator will open the building three hours before the wedding. Flowers can arrive and decorating can begin at that time. (Depending on circumstances, some deliveries can be made and some decorating can be done on Fridays during the secretary's office hours – you may confirm this possibility with her.)

You have use of the sanctuary for 3 hours before the wedding and for 2 ½ hours from the time the wedding is supposed to begin. (For example: if it is a 3:00 p.m. wedding you have the sanctuary from noon until 5:30 p.m.) By the end of that time you will need to have all your personal items removed from the sanctuary, dressing rooms and any other space (other than the fellowship hall – if you are having a reception on site.) Our custodian will be in to clean the sanctuary and other rooms at that time.

### **Chapel Weddings**

Chapel Weddings are greatly defined by the size of the room. There is a maximum of 30 chairs to seat guests. The communion table has to be removed or the front row of chairs (6) to accommodate the pastor and the bride and groom. There is room for one additional attendant for the bride and groom if desired. Some candelabras may be too tall for this room. The center aisle is narrow enough to make a traditional "walk down the aisle" for bride and with father (or whomever) to be challenging.

### **Wedding Coordinator and Consultants**

First Christian Church of Denton provides a wedding coordinator to help the couple and assist the pastor. This is not optional for non-members. The Church's Wedding Coordinator will:

- Be available for pre-wedding consultation in regard to the details of the rehearsal and the wedding;
- Open the building three hours before the wedding to receive/direct deliveries, help with directions, and act as the church's liaison;
- Be present at the rehearsal to assist the Pastor with the "choreography" of the ceremony;
- Assist the Pastor and wedding party during the ceremony.
- And oversee and facilitate the removal of all wedding materials and personal items as well as restoring the facility to proper condition.

The Wedding Coordinator's fees are based on:

- ✓ 2 hours for the rehearsal

- ✓ 5 hours for the wedding

Additional time may be available for an additional fee.

Outside Wedding Consultants or Coordinators are not required, however, if one is to be used, they will work under the direction of the minister, who is in charge of the ceremony. It is the bride's responsibility to communicate this to the consultant/coordinator. Should a Wedding Consultant or Coordinator act unprofessionally, in the opinion of the minister, then the minister may direct them to leave.

### **Music/Minister of Music:**

When music is used in connection with the wedding ceremony, it becomes a very important part of it. All matters related to music should be discussed with the minister as well as our director of music. The church organist is available to serve for weddings, by special arrangement. If another organist is used, that person must have the approval of the director of music. Guest organists will understand this requirement in light of the value of the instrument. If a soloist is desired, the bride, or groom should make the arrangements and should pay them directly. If sound equipment is to be used, arrangements must be made in advance. The Minister must approve all music.

The music director shall:

- Meet with the couple to discuss music selections
- Rehearse with any guest musicians
- Attend the wedding rehearsal
- Provide
  - Prelude music
  - Music for the seating of grandparents and parents
  - Processional music
  - Up to two selections to be performed during the ceremony
  - Recessional music
  - Postlude music

### **Photography:**

The wedding ceremony is a worship service. No flash pictures should be made by anyone during the ceremony as this is very distracting and takes away from the true focus of the wedding. This information should be conveyed by the bride and groom to their families and friends. A professional photographer may receive permission from the minister to take pictures of entries and exits. Said professional may also take non-flash pictures from the rear of the sanctuary during the service. Other pictures can be posed before or after the ceremony. Photographers should consult with the minister beforehand about photographs. Should a professional photographer act unprofessionally, in the opinion of the minister, then the minister may require them to leave.

### **Videotaping:**

In recent years it has become popular to make a videotape record of the wedding service. The church has no objection to this practice, as long as it does not interfere with the wedding service itself. The camera should be located in an unobtrusive place, using available light only, preferably mounted on a tripod. Videographers should not expect to wander around the sanctuary during the service and they are expected to consult with the minister beforehand about videotaping. Should a videographer act unprofessionally, in the opinion of the minister, then the minister may require them to leave.

### **Flowers And Decoration:**

Only drip-less candles may be used. The floor under and around candelabra must be thoroughly protected by plastic covers.

Under no circumstances shall decorations be attached to the pews or other furniture by pinning,

gluing, nailing or taping. For weddings scheduled during the Advent season, Christmas wreaths, trees, and decorations must remain in place, and poinsettia plants may be rearranged (under the direction of the Church's Wedding Coordinator) but not removed from the sanctuary. During Lent and Easter season the cross shall remain draped. Any plants or flowers located in the sanctuary may be moved only if returned to original location after the ceremony. The Communion Table may be moved back against the chancel wall with the minister's approval - the Custodian will do the actual moving. The Cross and candles shall not be removed from Communion Table.

The Church does not have a Unity Candle to rent or loan for weddings. We suggest that you rent one from a florist. There are models that sit on a table and others that have a stand-alone base, either one can be used. You need to purchase your own candles for the Unity Candle if you chose to include this ritual.

Doors will be open and air conditioning or heating will be turned on 3 hours before scheduled wedding time. Heating or AC will be turned on to bring the building to an appropriate temperature when the doors are open. Florists should note this and bring flowers accordingly. They should contact the church office to make arrangements for deliveries. All decorations of the sanctuary or the fellowship hall, food preparation, etc. will be accomplished during the rehearsal or within 3 hours prior to the wedding service. When the facilities are used on Saturday, all decorations, plants, flowers, and equipment shall be removed from the sanctuary by no later than 9:00 pm and , if there is a reception at the church, from the fellowship hall by 10:00 pm. Facilities for storage are not available. Additional time will require additional fees.

#### **Rehearsal:**

The wedding rehearsal shall begin promptly at the scheduled time, under the direction of the minister. The rehearsal is an integral part of the wedding preparation and shall be held in a dignified, quiet manner. All members of the wedding party should be present. The wedding rehearsal will continue no longer than 2 hours. Additional time may be scheduled at \$50 per half-hour. We suggest that the rehearsal dinner should be scheduled after the rehearsal because people are much more attentive if they know supper is waiting.

#### **Reception:**

The church Fellowship Hall is available, depending on prior commitments, for use for receptions, provided arrangements are made with the church office at the time the wedding is booked. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on church property and smoking is not permitted inside any of the buildings. Policies for the use of the church kitchen and Fellowship Hall shall be provided if the reception is to be held here. There is a fee for the use of the Fellowship Hall and for custodial services. Wedding receptions are allotted 2 ½ hours from the end of the wedding service but shall be concluded no later than 10:00 pm. By the end of that time all guests should have departed, the furniture should be restored to its original location, and all decorations and personal possessions removed. Additional reception time can be purchased for \$50 per half-hour.

#### **Building Capacity:**

Sanctuary	250 persons
Chapel	30 persons
Fellowship Hall	200 persons
Chairs	150
Tables	Nine 60" round tables and nine 8' rectangular tables
Note: the room gets very tight if you seat more than 120 people at tables	
Gathering Area	40-50 people seated at round tables

### Dressing Rooms:

There is a "Bride's Room" which may be used by the bride and her attendants for dressing. If furniture or other items are moved or rearranged, they must be returned to their place after the wedding. A Sunday School room in the education building may be used by the groom and groomsmen for dressing.

### Additional Information:

- Members of the wedding party or guests who are under the influence of alcoholic beverages or drugs shall be asked to leave the property.
- Tobacco, in any form, is not permitted to be used in the church buildings.
- The throwing of rice or confetti is not permitted inside or outside the church buildings. For the traditional good-luck shower, birdseed may be used only outside. Using individual bubbler blowers is also permitted but only outside.
- Flowers or flower petals may not be scattered on the aisles of the sanctuary, unless an aisle runner and/or silk flowers are used.
- The church will not be liable for items lost, damaged or stolen. Any items found will be turned in to the Church Secretary. You may inquire about such items during office hours, at 940-566-4990.

### Wedding Fees:

Fees for the use of the church facilities have been determined by the Church Board. The deposit has to be paid in full and 20% of all fees at the time the wedding is booked. All fees are to be paid at least 45 days in advance of the wedding.

#### **Members**

Deposit (*)		\$100.00
A Wedding in the Sanctuary		\$0.00
A Wedding in the Chapel		\$0.00
A Reception/Wedding in the Gathering Area		\$0.00
A Reception in the Fellowship Hall		\$0.00
Custodian's Fee (**)		\$_____
Sanctuary	\$50	
Bride's Room and/or Chapel	\$50	
Groom's Room	\$25	
Fellowship Hall	\$50	
Gathering Area	\$25	
Music Minister's Fee		\$150.00
Wedding Coordinator's Fee (***)		\$75.00
Pastor's Fee		\$150.00
Set-up/Tear-down Fee (Move communion table, etc.)		\$50.00

*"Member" is understood to mean that the bride, the groom, or a parent of either the bride or the groom, is currently an active, supporting member of the First Christian Church of Denton as evidenced by worship attendance, financial support, or other active support. (An exception is made for homebound members.)*

#### **Non-Members**

Deposit (*)		\$500.00
A Wedding in the Sanctuary		\$700.00
A Wedding in the Chapel		\$300.00
A Reception in the Gathering Area		\$200.00
A Reception in the Fellowship Hall		\$300.00

Custodian's Fee (**)		\$ _____
Sanctuary	\$50	
Bride's Room and/or Chapel	\$50	
Groom's Room	\$25	
Fellowship Hall	\$50	
Gathering Area	\$25	
Music Minister's Fee		\$300.00
Wedding Coordinator's Fee (***)		\$200.00
Pastor's Fee		\$300.00
Set-up/Tear-down Fee (move communion table, etc.)		\$50.00

(\*) The Deposit may be fully refunded. See "Deposits section"

(\*\*) The Custodian's fees are based on a per room charge.

(\*\*\*) The Wedding Coordinator's Fee is based on the time allotted in the policy. Additional time equals additional charges.

#### **Additional Fees \*\*\*\*\***

Additional rehearsal time	\$25/half-hour
Additional wedding time	\$50/half-hour
Additional reception time	\$50/half-hour
Additional reception time <u>after 10:00 pm</u>	\$100/half-hour
Additional Wedding Coordinator Time	\$25/half-hour
Additional Custodial Time	\$25/half-hour

#### **The Grandparent Discount**

For people who fall into the non-member category, if one or more of their grandparents are active members of First Christian Church of Denton (see the note under the Members Fees.) we offer a Grandparents Discount i.e.- we will waive the fees for renting the sanctuary (\$700.00) the chapel (\$300.00) and Gathering Area (\$200.00) for the ceremony.

#### **Deposit(s):**

The deposit is to be paid to the church at the time the wedding date is reserved and the wedding form is completed.

The deposit will be refunded within one month after the wedding if the following conditions have been met:

1. All buildings, furniture, rooms, and equipment will be put back in their original state.
2. There have been no bounced checks for wedding fees or services.
3. There have been no damages to the facility.
4. The wedding has not exceeded the time allowed. Any fees resulting from additional time will be deducted from the wedding deposit.
5. No rice, confetti, flower petals or birdseed have been used inside the buildings, and nothing other than birdseed or bubbles have been used on the grounds outside the buildings.
6. No alcohol has been brought into the facility for personal use or distribution.
7. The sanctuary is cleared of all persons and wedding equipment within the allotted time from the conclusion of the wedding service. Any fees resulting from additional time will be deducted from the wedding deposit.
8. If used for a reception, the fellowship building must be cleared within the allotted time from the conclusion of the wedding service - but no later than 10:00 p.m. Any fees resulting from additional time will be deducted from the wedding deposit.

**Failure to meet any of the above conditions will constitute reason for forfeit of the deposit.**

### **Also, Cancellation of the Wedding**

Refunds upon the cancellation of weddings are based on the likelihood of booking another wedding for that same weekend.

- ✓ With 90 days or more notice of cancellation the couple will receive back 75% of their deposit and all fees.
- ✓ With 60-89 days notice of cancellation the couple will receive back 50% of their deposit and 75% of all fees.
- ✓ With 30-59 days notice of cancellation the couple will receive back 25% of their deposit and 50% of all fees.
- ✓ With less than 30 days notice of cancellation the couple will forfeit their entire deposit and all fees.

If the Minister declares the deposit to be all or partially forfeited, he shall inform the couple in writing of the reason for the forfeiture. The couple may appeal this decision to the Official Board of First Christian Church its next meeting. The decision of the Official Board will be final.

### **Our Best Wishes To You:**

We sincerely hope that your wedding may be a happy experience and may become a treasured memory. Our prayer is that your married life will be a growing and deepening relationship of love and sharing. We offer the facilities of the First Christian Church of Denton gladly, and our staff will serve you in every reasonable way.

Further, it is our hope that the First Christian Church of Denton will continue to be a helpful and supportive part of your lives as you work together to realize your dreams of love and marriage.