



Wedding Policy at First Christian Church

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! What a time of great joy and anticipation! We enjoy working with couples who are preparing a life together and pleased to be able to offer the facilities at First Christian Church as part of your new beginning! We welcome all couples, without exclusion, and do not discriminate (based on religion, gender, race, sexual orientation or national origin).

First Christian Church celebrated its 100th Anniversary in May 2015. It is conveniently located in the heart of the beautiful Dilworth neighborhood, a designated Historic District. The Sanctuary was dedicated in 1955 and has been the site of hundreds of weddings over the years. Seating capacity for the Sanctuary is 150-175.

As you know, a wedding can be one of the happiest and holiest moments in life. As two people plan to join their lives and establish a loving home, we rejoice with you and want to help make your wedding occasion beautiful and memorable. A wedding may be elaborately beautiful but the true beauty lies in the spirit and attitude of those who take part.

We encourage all couples who are considering First Christian Church for their wedding to attend at least one worship service and familiarize yourselves with the facilities, which are sacred spaces and a spiritual home for our Congregation. To learn more about our community and denomination, please visit www.fcc-charlotte.org and www.disciples.org.

Church Facilities Available for Weddings to Members and Non-Members

You do not have to be a member or affiliated with First Christian Church in order to use church space for your wedding. Rental fees are stipulated in the Fees section of this policy.

The following areas of the church are for rehearsals, pre-wedding preparation, wedding ceremonies, and receptions: the Sanctuary (including the Choir loft); areas that can be designated for members of the wedding party to dress and prepare; and the Fellowship Hall with the adjacent Kitchen located on the Second Floor of the Education Building.



Availability and Scheduling of Facilities

Church facilities, as specified above, will be available for weddings as approved by pastor and in coordination with the church schedule.

Please direct all inquiries about availability and scheduling to the Office Manager of First Christian Church, office@fcc-charlotte.org, 704-334-3771.

Reservations for the space are considered confirmed and final once:

- 1) The church has received a 50% non-refundable deposit of all applicable fees and
- 2) You have received written approval and confirmation of the dates signed by the Pastor.

Wedding Officiants

Options for Wedding Officiants are included in our *Preferred Vendors List*. Officiants not on this list may perform ceremonies if approved by the pastor of First Christian Church.

Wedding Host Provided by Church

First Christian Church will provide a Wedding Host who will be present the day of the rehearsal and the day of the wedding. The Host will represent the church and help the wedding party with specific facility-related needs on that day. Examples of duties include opening and closing the church, moderating air and heat, and directing the wedding party to appropriate rooms. The services of the Wedding Host are included in the rental fees.

***The Wedding Host does not perform the duties of a Wedding Director.**

Wedding Director Required

The wedding party is responsible for providing a professional Wedding Director at their expense. Examples of duties include directing décor, maintaining the schedule, and directing the processional. The name of the wedding director chosen must be specified in the contract



Fees

A 50% non-refundable deposit of all applicable fees is required to reserve the date. The final balance is due along with a \$500 refundable damage deposit 30 days prior to the date of the ceremony. Also required is a current Credit card number for First Christian Church to keep on file until after the Wedding.

Sanctuary for rehearsal (1.5-2hrs) & use of Sanctuary and dressing/preparation rooms for 3hrs on wedding day. Fees for wedding host and janitorial services are included.

\$800
\$400 for church
members

[Additional time \$200/hr, prorated each 1/2 hour]

Sanctuary for rehearsal (1 – 1 1/2 hrs) and on wedding day, use of sanctuary, dressing & preparation rooms, Fellowship Hall/Kitchen for 5 hours.

\$1,200
\$ 400 for church
members

[Additional time \$300/hr. prorated each 1/2 hour.

Services performed by, and ceremony planning session (1-2mos prior to wedding) with First Christian Church Pastor. \$ 400

**Pre-marital counseling is recommended and may be scheduled with First Christian Church Pastor or another pastor or counselor of your choosing.

Sound Technician (optional for weddings under 30.) \$ 100



Music

The church organ and piano may only be used by First Christian Church's Organist or by a qualified, pre-approved organist. If you wish to hire the First Christian Church Organist, we will confirm their availability for your date and their current rate. For other options, please consult the ***Preferred Vendors List***.

Requirements for Decorations

The Sanctuary is a historical place of simple and dignified beauty. While it does not require additional decorations to make it a place perfectly suitable for a beautiful wedding, we understand that many couples wish to enhance the space with their own personally selected decorations. If you choose to do so, please follow these requirements. They are mostly common sense, but we have spelled them out here to avoid any miscommunication. It is your responsibility to inform anyone involved in decorating the grounds for the ceremony and/or reception of these requirements.

- Any decorations must maintain the dignity of the Sanctuary.
- Any decorations must be positioned without the use of **tacks, pins, nails, tape, wire, glue, etc.**, which may cause damage to pews, furniture, or the building either in- or outdoors.
- Please, respectfully, do not place decorations on the communion table, the pulpit or the lectern. One exception is that a Unity candle may be placed on the communion table if you wish to incorporate one into the ceremony.
- We ask that you not move any furniture, but you may place flowers in the chancel area.
- Due to liability issues, aisle runners cannot be permitted under any circumstances.
- The furniture and floor must be fully protected at all times from moisture and candle wax. In the event of any accidents, you will be held responsible for any cleaning fees incurred to remove any wax from the floor and/or carpet. In an attempt to avoid this, the use of drip-free candles is required. However, experience tells us there are no truly "drip free" candles. We recommend using a clear drip mat beneath any candelabras used.
- All decorations must be removed from the building immediately following the wedding ceremony and photography. You may leave a floral arrangement in front of the Baptistry if you desire to share it with the Congregation.
- If necessary, special arrangements may be made to have rental equipment picked up on the next business day, provided the equipment is placed in a designated space following the service. The church assumes absolutely no liability or responsibility for such equipment. The buildings must be left in the condition in which they were found or the damage deposit will be forfeited to pay for expenses incurred (or expenses incurred will be billed to the credit card on file).



Photography and Videography

In order to preserve the dignity of the service and space, flash photography is not to be used in the Sanctuary during the sacred portion of the service. The sacred service begins as soon as the final wedding participant has proceeded down the aisle and ends as the couple is being pronounced. Professional non-flash photography is permitted from the balcony and narthex during the ceremony. Every opportunity and courtesy will be extended to have photographs made in the narthex before the ceremony and in the Sanctuary following the ceremony. Unlike many churches in the area, we will not rush your photography. We understand that you will be eager to be on your way to your reception. Your Wedding Host will stay for the duration of your scheduled time. If you run over, the additional time will be deducted from the damage deposit or billed to the credit card on file.

Videography of the service may be made from the balcony provided that usage is inconspicuous and does not distract from the ceremony. Photographers, Videographers and Video equipment are prohibited from being in the chancel (at the pulpit, lectern, communion table, and baptistery) during the wedding ceremony. It is your responsibility to inform the photographer and/or videographer of this requirement.

Sound System

For weddings larger than 30 people in attendance, a sound technician will be needed to run the church sound system. We will coordinate that for you. The fee for this service is \$100

Responsibility/Liability for Breakage, Damage, or Loss

You will be held responsible for full restitution for any and all breakage, damage, or loss to any and all church property and equipment committed by any party as a result of holding the rehearsal, wedding, and/or reception at First Christian Church. We have rarely had an issue with this, but for this reason we require a \$500 refundable damage deposit and a credit card number on file at the church.



Other Requirements

- First Christian Church is a smoke-free environment. There is absolutely no smoking of any kind inside church buildings.
- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. Firearms, either open-carry or concealed are prohibited on church property. The Wedding Host may require any guest, bridal party member, or family member to vacate the premises at a moment's notice if they smoke, use alcohol or illegal drugs, or carry a firearm in the buildings or on the church grounds; or if they attend the rehearsal, ceremony, or reception under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- All food must be prepared off-site.
- Caterers must provide all necessary serving items – dishes, cutlery, cups, glasses, etc. The church kitchen must be left as it is found with respect to cleaning all work areas and all garbage must be placed in the dumpster behind the building.
- The Fellowship Hall tables and chairs must be returned to their normal layout (chart posted in Fellowship Hall and will be pointed out by Wedding Host).
- Natural flower petals, bubbles or sparklers may be used outside. Please refrain from using rice, bird seed or confetti anywhere on the church property.
- If you desire wedding bulletins, they will be your responsibility to provide.

Approved by the General Board
(10/2017)