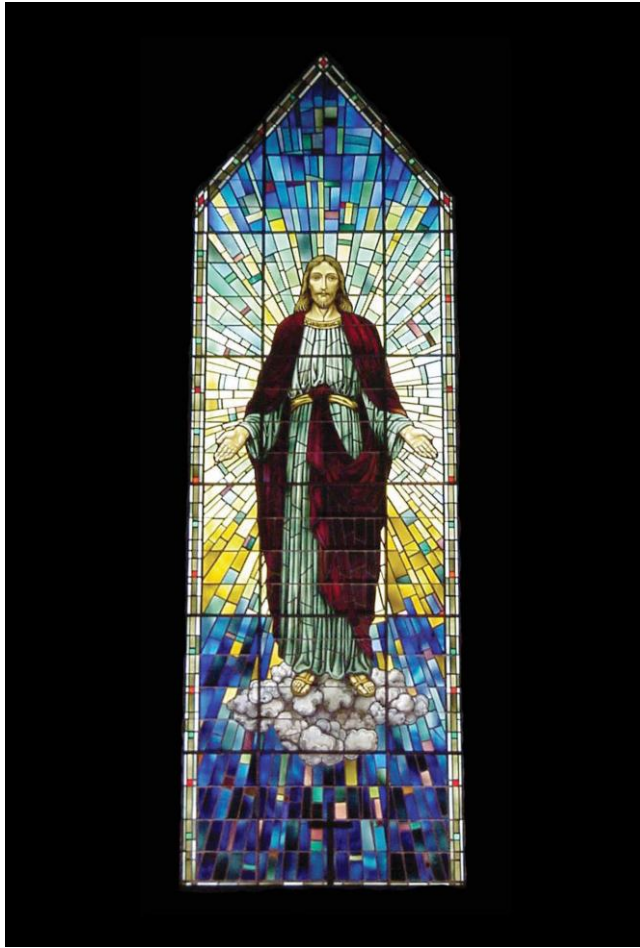


# Wedding Policy



**FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
(DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)  
1301 W. Louisiana Ave  
Midland, Texas 79701  
432. 682.2541  
[www.fccmidland.org](http://www.fccmidland.org)  
Adopted May 2010**

Congratulations on your engagement and upcoming wedding. Our church is pleased that you are considering the celebration of your wedding and the beginning of your married life together at First Christian Church.

It is our hope that this wedding policy will give you the guidelines you need to make your wedding plans and ceremony go as smoothly as possible. Please read this policy carefully and feel free to ask any questions you have. Our ministers and staff have been in the “wedding business” for many years, and our experiences have taught us well. Our wedding coordinator will assist you in all pertinent aspects of the wedding. We look forward to working with you and hope the next months will be filled with much joy and anticipation as you begin to prepare for your life in Christ together.

After reading this policy, the first thing a couple should do upon their decision to marry in our church is to arrange a meeting with the minister. The office staff will then be able to schedule the date of your wedding and accept your application and deposit. The minister will approve the wedding date, design the worship service with the couple, and arrange for mandatory premarital counseling. The wedding coordinator will be assigned and contact you to answer any questions regarding the policy and discuss plans for the ceremony. The coordinator will also be present at your rehearsal as well as your wedding to assist in meeting your needs.

## Table Of Contents

I. Our Facilities	page 3
II. Wedding Coordinator	page 3
III. Clergy	page 3
IV. Pre-marital Counseling	page 4
V. Fees	page 4
VI. Scheduling	page 5
VII. The Ceremony	page 5
VIII. Music	page 6
IX. Decorations, Candles and Flowers	page 6
X. Photographer/Videographer	page 6
XI. Sound System Operator	page 7
XII. Nursery Workers	page 7
XIII. Rehearsal	page 7
XIV. Rehearsal Dinner	page 7
XV. Reception	page 8
XVI. Clean Up and Reception Facilities	page 8

## I. Our Facilities

- A. FCC Sanctuary, which has a capacity of 350 persons (+75 in the balcony) with a center aisle. Our Sanctuary is handicap accessible with wheelchair seating locations.
- B. FCC Chapel has a capacity of 50 persons with a center aisle. The Chapel is handicap accessible but does not have wheelchair seating locations.

\*No rice or confetti is allowed.

\*No use of tobacco or alcoholic beverages on FCC grounds.

\*Birdseed may be used outdoors only.

\*Cell phones are to be turned off or on silent during the ceremony.

## II. Wedding Coordinator

*The wedding coordinator is required for all Sanctuary weddings, Chapel weddings and rehearsals.*

An FCC wedding coordinator will work with you in planning and conducting the details of your rehearsal, wedding and reception. As soon as your wedding is officially scheduled, you need to arrange a meeting with the coordinator to begin the planning. The Coordinator duties will include:

- A. Meeting to go over the policy and discuss plans.
- B. Reviewing the chosen facility and its use.
- C. Reviewing and approving decorations
- D. Unlocking and locking the building for a rehearsal and wedding.
- E. Assisting at the rehearsal and wedding.
- F. Submitting staff requests to the Senior Minister. (Including scheduling of: custodian, musician, soloist, sound system operator, nursery attendants, etc.)

## III. Clergy

Guest ministers from another Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or other denominations may, at the discretion and invitation of the minister of FCC, officiate or assist in the wedding ceremony. Protocol calls for a minister of FCC to personally invite the guest minister.

Guest ministers must comply with the wedding policy, including the spirit of covenant and equality, which is consistent with the practice and beliefs of the Disciple's Church. Out of state clergy are responsible for verifying by Texas state law, their standing for marriage services.

In compliance with The Ministerial Code of Ethics for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).<sup>1</sup>- No former minister of FCC will be allowed to participate in the wedding ceremony.

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<sup>1</sup> "Encouraging the ministry of my successor upon retirement or other departure from a ministry position, without interfering or intruding, and by making it clear to former parishioners that I am no longer their minister."

#### IV. Pre-Marital Counseling

Pre-Marital counseling is expected of all couples. We encourage your openness, your honesty, your questions, and your willingness to grow. We value this opportunity to get to know you better and to assist you in laying a firm foundation for lifelong commitment to each other. In the pre-marital counseling, couples will complete a marriage inventory, which evaluates relationships in terms of their strengths and potential areas of growth.

In circumstances where the bride and groom live outside of Midland's geographical area, a different minister in their area may conduct the counseling sessions.

#### V. Fees

Members: Where at least one individual or parent/guardian is a current member are not charged for the use of any of our buildings because of their contributions to the Church. Member fees are as follows:

Deposit	\$250.00 Due at time of scheduling
Minister	Honorarium
Wedding Coordinator	\$125.00
Musician	\$150.00
Sound System Operator	\$ 60.00
Nursery Attendants (2)	\$ 50.00/2 hours \$100.00/4 hours
Custodian	\$125.00

\*\* The Parlor is assigned for the bride's party and room 105 for the groom's party.

Non-Member fees are as follows:

Deposit	\$500.00 Due at time of scheduling
Sanctuary Fee	\$500.00
Chapel Fee	\$200.00
Minister	\$250.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$125.00
Musician	\$150.00
Sound System Operator	\$ 60.00
Nursery Attendants (2)	\$ 50.00/2 hours \$100/4 hours
Custodian	\$125.00

\*\* The Parlor is assigned for the bride's party and room 105 for the groom's party.

All fees are due to the church office four weeks prior to the wedding. Checks should be made payable to "First Christian Church."

## VI. Scheduling

For the sake of coordination no date will be placed on the calendar without the following:

- A. Reading the wedding policy.
- B. Approval of the minister.
- C. Receipt of the contract
- D. Appropriate fees.

Please note that weddings may be scheduled on any date *except*: New Year's Day, Holy Week, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Sunday weddings, while rare, may be scheduled with the approval of the minister and wedding coordinator.

Weddings will be scheduled no earlier than 10:00 am and no later than 7:30 pm.

## VII. The Ceremony

A wedding ceremony is first and foremost a worship service. Below there is a copy of a traditional order of a service. We will work with you if there are changes you wish to make to the order of worship; however, all elements of the service should have Christian spiritual significance or symbolism with a basis in Biblical teaching and/or Church tradition. While the minister does have the final say as to the order and elements of the service, together we will aspire to make the wedding a meaningful service.

### Entrance

Gathering

Greeting

### Declaration of Intention

Declaration by the Bride and Groom

Response of the families and people

### Proclamation and response

Scripture lesson(s)

Sermon (optional)

Intercessory prayer

### The marriage

Exchange of vows

Blessing and exchange of rings

Unity candle (optional)

Blessing of the marriage

### Holy communion (optional)

Declaration of marriage

### Sending forth

Dismissal with blessing

Going forth

The minister can only perform a wedding in full accordance with the law. Please do not overlook the importance of careful compliance. The wedding cannot take place without a marriage license. The license should be given to the minister at the rehearsal.

## **VIII. Music**

A wedding is a sacrament, and therefore, the use of sacred music ensures proclamation of Christian faith and hope. Such texts and music express the joy, praise, and thanksgiving that characterize marriage in a Christian spirit. The FCC Director of Music will be available to help guide you and should be contacted as soon as possible after the initial conference with the wedding coordinator. The choice of music and rehearsal schedules with the soloists/instrumentalists must be completed two weeks before the wedding.

Whenever the FCC Director of Music is not available, he/she will provide the couple with a list of approved substitute musicians.

## **IX. Decorations, Candles and Flowers**

Our sanctuary is a beautiful worship space designed to magnify the glory of God, and give spiritual significance to the service. Below are mandatory obligations:

- \* The wedding party must furnish all decorations and decoration equipment.
- \* ***Nothing*** in the chancel area of the Sanctuary or Chapel may be moved. This includes seasonal decorations.
- \* Decorations are not to be placed in the Sanctuary until one day before the wedding. All decorations must be removed after the wedding.
- \* Bows and/or flowers may be hung on the side of pews, providing the wood finish is not damaged.
- \* Only silk flower petals may be scattered for the bride.
- \* Only dripless candles are approved for use in our sanctuary. You are welcome to use the Church's two table candles.
- \* The communion table is reserved for sacred altar ware. No other decorations may be placed on the table.
- \* A kneeler is available for use in front of the communion table.

## **X. Photographer/Videographer**

We recognize the value of wedding photographs as a lasting remembrance and want to be cooperative, while keeping in mind the sacredness of the occasion. We suggest taking as many pictures as possible before the wedding. In order to allow your wedding guests time to arrive, all pre-wedding photographs taken inside the Sanctuary should be concluded no less than 45 minutes prior to the beginning of the service. Following the service, a maximum of 30 minutes is allowed for photos. If photos are made after the congregation has departed, please remember the importance of not keeping guests at the reception waiting.

Videotaping of the service may be done privately, provided the cameras are stationary, located in the balcony, and does not require the use of distracting lights. No additional microphones may be used. Please inform the wedding coordinator of all videotaping decisions.

***Flash photography of any kind is not allowed during the service.*** A lovely picture of the bride can be taken, in the narthex, just prior to the doors being opened to the sanctuary. Photographs may be taken from the narthex or balcony once the ceremony has begun, providing no flash is used, and it will not be a distraction.

## **XI. Sound System Operator**

Our trained technicians are the only people approved to operate the sound system in the Sanctuary.

## **XII. Nursery Workers**

A nursery will be available for young children at an additional cost. Our policy requires a minimum of two nursery workers at all times. Each nursery worker should be responsible for no more than four children. Standard time for nursery workers is two hours for the wedding and four hours for a wedding with a reception on site. Nursery workers are employees of FCC and will be contracted through the church office. Please let the wedding coordinator know if you will be in need of nursery workers and an approximate number of children that will need care. Wedding guests will need to provide diapers, wipes, and snacks for the children who will be cared for in the nursery.

## **XIII. Rehearsal**

The rehearsal is an integral part of the preparation for your wedding and should proceed in an orderly manner. It is usually held the evening before the wedding day. The following will help you prepare for the rehearsal.

- A. The entire wedding party should attend the rehearsal.
- B. The rehearsal will begin promptly at the designated time and usually last less than an hour.
- C. The marriage license should be presented to the minister during the rehearsal.

The officiating minister, with the help of the FCC wedding coordinator, will conduct the rehearsal. Private consultants hired by the bride, or her family, may assist the FCC wedding coordinator and minister at their discretion.

## **XIV. Rehearsal Dinner**

You may have your catered rehearsal dinner at FCC in the Montgomery Room of the Family Life Center. The details need to be discussed with the wedding coordinator and the related fees are included in the “fees” section.

## **XV. Reception**

FCC has three available areas for a reception and will allow two hours for decorating and two hours for clean up. It is requested that evening receptions be concluded by 10:00 pm to allow time for clean up. Fees apply to both members and non-members.

Reception and/or Rehearsal dinner fees:

Facility: Parlor (50 guests or less)	\$150.00
Facility: Montgomery Room (50-100 guests)	\$250.00
Facility: Family Life Center (over 100 guests)	\$500.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$100.00
Maintenance Personnel	\$ 25.00 per hour
Deposit	\$150.00 to \$500.00

Guidelines for FCC kitchen use:

- A. The wedding coordinator will oversee any individuals using the kitchen facilities.
- B. The caterer or reserving party will be responsible for furnishing all necessary supplies needed for the function. (This includes linens, dishes utensils, etc)
- C. The caterer or reserving party must be instructed with the proper operating procedures for any appliances.
- D. Use of the refrigerator and/or freezer for storing items prior to the event must be arranged ahead of time through the wedding coordinator. Permission will be given provided there is adequate room.
- E. Only at the discretion of the FCC coordinator will the pantry be unlocked
- F. For safety reasons, children under the age of 12 are not allowed in the kitchen.

## **XVI. Clean up and use of Reception Facilities**

Proper clean up is as follows:

- A. Counter tops and tables must be wiped clean.
- B. Tables must be broken down and stored.
- C. Appliances used must be cleaned according to the posted instructions.
- D. All trash should be taken to the dumpster.
- E. Floors must be swept and cleaned.



