



Weddings at First Christian Church Colorado Springs



First Christian Church welcomes you in planning a wedding here. This is an important ministry of our church, which seeks to extend the *Grace and Love of God* to you. We invite any couple seeking a Christian ceremony, both members and non-members, to have their ceremony in the sacred beauty of our building. We want your day to be a memorable one, and these policies and procedures are ones that will help make that so!

Any marriage ceremony in this church is understood to be an act of Christian worship, a service in which two people receive from God the gift of marriage. By coming to the church for your wedding, you are saying that you want this happy and sacred ceremony, and the life that shall follow, to be lived in the presence of God. A church wedding ceremony therefore symbolizes that you are seeking God's presence to bless the beginning of your new life together.

16 E. Platte Ave.
Colorado Springs CO 80903
719-633-8888
www.firstchristiancos.org
fcc@firstchristiancos.org



One-Page Summary of Key Provisions

FEES AND SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

Weddings at First Christian Church cost \$1500, which includes the use of the Sanctuary, Bridal Room, Parlor, candelabras, unity candle stand, sound system, staff fees for our Senior Pastor, Organist, Wedding Administrator and Custodial. Even if you have your own pastor officiating or your own pianist or other instrumentalist play (no outside organist is allowed), the fee remains the same. Congregational uses of the building have precedence. No weddings will be performed on Sundays or on most holidays.

No weddings will be scheduled until a 30% deposit has been received by the church along with a signed application. The balance of the fee will be due one month prior to the weddings, along with a \$300 security deposit. Security deposits are refunded within 30 days from the date of the wedding if there is no damage to church property and if all time limits are met. A brief meeting with the Senior Minister and both the bride and groom is required. This meeting takes only about 15-20 minutes and is a requirement whether a First Christian Church minister or your personal minister is officiating at your wedding.

USE OF THE BUILDING

NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES and NO SMOKING and NO PEANUTS are permitted anywhere in the building at any time. **If alcohol is found on the church property it will result in immediate cancellation of your wedding.** Smoking is permitted outside the building in designated areas only. Adequate time is allowed for your wedding and we can be flexible in some areas. Specifically, one hour is allowed for a rehearsal and 3 hours are allowed for each wedding. Receptions are not held for non-members.

The sanctuary is not air conditioned and there is no elevator to the upper floors from the main level. The sanctuary level is **partially** handicap-accessible.

No birdseed, rice or confetti are permitted either inside or outside the building. Helium balloons are not allowed inside the building because of the alarm system. Due to safety reasons, no runners are allowed. The use of bubbles or bells is permitted. Decorations should be discussed with the Wedding Administrator. Nothing must be done that will damage the furniture, carpet or walls.

First Christian Church is decorated for Christmas in November and December. These decorations will remain. The candles on the wall are not to be used.

MUSIC

Weddings are very personal and therefore, music request vary. There are various music formats used for weddings in our sanctuary including; organ, piano, strings, trumpet, bagpipes, and others. Our sound system is also quite adequate with both wireless and stationary microphones available. Additional sound equipment (amplifiers, etc.) may not be brought into the sanctuary. Depending on your specific request, additional sound charges may apply. The church sanctuary houses an elaborate pipe organ. Like many churches with expensive pipe organs, First Christian Church requires their organist to be contracted for weddings using the organ.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

Photographs usually begin 1 - 1 1/2 hours prior to the wedding. Photographers are permitted to stand in the aisle and take pictures of the bridal party as they enter and exit the Sanctuary. Photographers are to be positioned at the rear of the sanctuary once the bridal party has reached the alter. Flash photography is not allowed in the sanctuary during the ceremony. Videography is permitted as well. Only one unattended camera may be placed in the chancel area and one camera may be placed in the balcony. Videographers must remain stationary.

STAFF

The church wedding policy requires that the Senior Pastor or other on-staff pastor be onsite for all weddings. The use of First Christian Church's Wedding Administrator is required for both the rehearsal and the wedding.

CANCELLATION

Should the wedding be canceled 60 days or less from the date of the wedding, all money paid less administrative costs will be refunded. Administrative costs are determined based on each individual case.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Christian Wedding

A wedding is one of life's most meaningful experiences. Two people, before God and witnesses, commit themselves to each other in love. They pledge their faithfulness forever.

Every Christian wedding held in the church facility is understood to be a worship service. Whether your wedding here is very large or only a few close friends, it is a worship service. The "congregation" that gathers to join in this service of worship with you is not a group of loyal supporters or spectators, but are understood to be those who have come to join with you in giving praise and thanks to God. This means that your wedding is not for you alone, but enables those who love you to share your joy and worship God with you at your wedding.

Because the wedding is indeed a service of worship, we ask the same respect and consideration as would be given in any other celebration of worship. We do not permit photos to be taken in the sanctuary (which is the only place weddings will be held at First Christian Church) during the ceremony except by the official photographer who will not use flash photography and will be positioned at the rear of the Sanctuary. For the same reason, we ask for a clearance of music used during the ceremony. We ask that cell phones be turned off. There is no eating or drinking, of course. These policies are further detailed later in this document

Key Steps in Planning Your Wedding at First Christian Church, Part One

Arrangements for the wedding are to begin with the Wedding Administrator.

Very early in your planning, you will need to meet with one of First Christian's pastors. This is required, even if you will be having your own pastor officiate.

You will want and need to stay in close touch during the planning process with the Wedding Administrator. Questions need to be asked as early as possible in the process.

You will want to pay attention to the financial deadlines.

You will need to be familiar with the Church's more detailed policies (below) as you plan your Wedding.

Church Policies

- (A) If you would like pre-wedding pictures, have your photographer arrive at the church 90 minutes before the wedding. All pre-wedding pictures must be completed 30 minutes before the ceremony begins. You may use the Parlor, along with the Bride's Room for these pictures. The Wedding Administrator will review the church policies with the photographer.

- (B) Professional photographers are permitted to take time-exposed (non-flash) pictures during the ceremony. All other pictures during the ceremony are forbidden. The clicks and flashes detract from the sanctity of the service. Unexpected flashes can also ruin your professional photographs. The officiating pastor can remain immediately after the ceremony to recreate any portion of the service with your photographer.
- (C) Photographers are permitted to stand in the aisle and take pictures of the bridal party as they enter and exit the Sanctuary. During the ceremony, photographers must be positioned in or under the balcony. Under no circumstances will a photographer or videographer be allowed to be on the chancel or forward of the area under the balcony. After the photographs are taken from the aisle at the front of the bridal party entering, photographers and videographers must return to the rear of the sanctuary. Failure to abide by these rules will bar the photographer or videographer from future weddings at First Christian Church.
- (D) Video Taping: Arrangements to videotape a wedding ceremony can be made through the Wedding Administrator. Personal video recordings are permitted in the Sanctuary with one unattended camera. In such cases the person videotaping must attend the rehearsal. Guests may not video or audio record, or take pictures, during the service. This includes the use of cell phones for photography or videography.
- (E) Rice or Birdseed: Because of the danger of injury and the cleaning difficulties, the throwing of rice and birdseed is not permitted. Guests waiting for the bride and groom to exit the church may blow bubbles or ring bells, but only outside.
- (F) Decorations: Any decorations attached to the brass must be done so ONLY with pipe cleaners or a coated florist wire. Pew decorations must be attached without the use of any type of tape, nails or staples. You are responsible for removing all decorations that you provide. All decorations not removed will be discarded and an additional fee will be deducted from your security deposit. No aisle runners may be used. You may use rose petals, fake or real, but the use of rose petal blankets is not permitted. Any equipment or decorations provided by First Christian Church will be the responsibility of First Christian Church. Decorations must be approved by the Wedding Administrator.
- (G) Smoking: Due to a city ordinance smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building. A designated smoking area is located outside at the northeast corner of the building.
- (H) Beverages: No alcoholic beverages of any kind are permitted on church property, indoors or outdoors. **Immediate cancellation – even on the day of the service – of your wedding will be the consequence of violating this policy.**
- (I) Marriage License: A valid marriage license is required and must be given to the Wedding Administrator at the time of the rehearsal or prior. Failure to follow these rules may jeopardize the legal status of your marriage.

(J) *Safekeeping of Valuables and Gifts:* First Christian Church is not responsible for items left during and after a wedding. If gifts are brought to the wedding a member of the wedding party should watch over the gifts.

(K) While First Christian Church will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the facilities for your wedding we cannot guarantee that repairs will not be in progress on the day of your wedding. The church retains the right to renovate the facilities as deemed necessary. Should this occur you will be notified as far in advance as possible. You will then have the option of continuing with your plans here or choose another venue. If you change to another venue due to renovations or repairs your deposit will be refunded in full.

(L) No food or drink is allowed in the sanctuary

(M) First Christian Church is a peanut free environment.

(N) First Christian Church is decorated for Christmas in November and December. These decorations will remain. The candles on the wall are not to be used.

Key Steps, continued

These steps should be followed in scheduling a wedding at First Christian Church.

- Call 719-633-8888 to contact the church to find out if your selected wedding date is available. You will then be sent a Wedding Contract and the Wedding Administrator's contact information.
- Return the signed Wedding Contract and the deposit to the church.
- Contact the Wedding Administrator who will confirm availability for the dates of your wedding and rehearsal.
- The Wedding Administrator will also schedule a meeting with you at least three to five months prior to your wedding date.
- After the date has been approved by the Wedding Administrator, you will need to contact the pastor at First Christian Church who will be officiating at your wedding. He or she will need to meet with you as soon as possible to plan your wedding, etc. You are welcome to use your own pastor to officiate; however, that pastor must be approved by a pastor of First Christian Church.

We do not have member rates for weddings for couples who are not members at First Christian Church at the time of initial contact.

Fees

The Wedding Administrator will discuss all wedding fees when the first contact is made. A deposit is due at the time your wedding is scheduled. The fee for a wedding at First Christian Church is \$1500 which includes the use of the Sanctuary, Bridal Room, Parlor, candelabras, unity candle stand, sound system, staff fees for our Senior Pastor, Organist, Wedding Administrator and Custodial. Even if you have your own pastor officiating or your own pianist or other instrumentalist play (no outside organist is allowed), the fee remains the same.

Should you decide you wish to use the church for your wedding you will need to come in and complete the paperwork and a 30% deposit will be required to hold your date on the calendar. The balance will be due no later than one month before the rehearsal along with a \$300 refundable security deposit. Once your date is put on the church calendar, we do not schedule any other events which will coincide or conflict with the date of your wedding. Should the wedding be canceled 60 days or less from the date of the wedding, all money paid less administrative costs will be refunded. Administrative costs are determined based on each individual case.

In an effort to keep our wedding staff's schedule as smooth as possible, it is necessary for us to charge a \$100 per half hour fee for every half hour the rehearsal or ceremony is delayed. These fees will be deducted from your security deposit. There have been instances where the rehearsal, or the wedding itself, has started as late as an hour and half from the appointed time. When our wedding staff is scheduled for a specific time it is unfair to keep them waiting.

Counseling

Premarital counseling is strongly advised. The pastors at First Christian Church are available to do so, or you may select your own counselor. The fee for a First Christian Church pastor offering premarital counseling is \$200.

Receptions

First Christian Church does not offer receptions for non-member weddings.

Music

Any wedding ceremony held at First Christian Church is a worship service. The music that is selected for your wedding should accentuate the reverence of the service. The music, prelude, processional, solos, and the recessional may reflect moods lofty and serious, joyful and festive - all with the underlying purpose of glorifying God. Music performed at a service of Christian marriage is understood to be an act of worship offered to God in devotion, thanksgiving, and praise. The view that such music is for the entertainment of the wedding guests is incompatible with the nature of Christian worship. Hymns are particularly appropriate for use at the wedding service, for the prelude, processional, and recessional music. Processional music is understood not as a theatrical pageant that focuses attention on the bride, but as an act of worship that symbolizes the gathering of the family of God, including the wedding party, at the altar of our faith. Processional music is selected in full consideration of this understanding, and is subject to approval by the First Christian Church organist and/or pastor.

Organist: A First Christian Church organist plays for all weddings when organ music is required. The Wedding Administrator will supply you with the name and phone number of the appropriate organist. Please contact the organist at least three months before the wedding to discuss the appropriate music selections. Before or after consultation with the organist, please ensure that your Pastor is aware of any vocal music and has approved its use.

Pastor: First Christian Church is committed to the belief that both men and women are called of God into ministry. Therefore you may not specifically request a minister of one gender. The scheduled minister-on-call for the weekend of your wedding will be the one to perform the ceremony (unless you have your own minister officiate).

Participants

The goals of the Wedding Administrator are to provide an uplifting and worshipful wedding for the bride and groom and to enable their families and friends to enjoy this memorable experience. Your friends will enjoy participating in your wedding. Listed below are suggestions in which they can be helpful and relieve you and your family of unnecessary concerns.

Ushers: Groomsmen may also serve as ushers.

Responsibilities, unless otherwise instructed, are:

1. Seat guests other than the family equally on both sides of the center aisle as soon as they begin arriving.
2. Remind all guests that flash pictures are not allowed during the ceremony, but may be taken afterward. Turn off cell phones and no food or drinks are allowed in the sanctuary.
3. Ask guests who arrive after the bride's mother is seated to wait for seating until after the procession is completed.
4. Place any gifts in the back pew or in the Parlor where they can be gathered and taken to the reception following the ceremony.

Guest Book: One person should be responsible for the guest book and invite all guests to sign. The guest book will be closed 10 minutes before the ceremony. Remind guests that the guest book will be available at the reception.

Gift Runner: One person should be responsible for receiving the gifts from the guests as they arrive for the ceremony and placing them in a prearranged area and securing them. This person should also be responsible for transporting the gifts from the church. In the absence of a gift runner, the ushers may perform this duty.

Flowers and Candles: One person should be responsible for taking altar flowers and the wedding candle home. The florist is expected to contact the Wedding Administrator in order to become familiar with customary procedures and regulations. The bride and groom are ultimately responsible for these policies being adhered to.

Receiving Line: It is traditionally accepted that the receiving line be held at the reception, rather than at the church. Guests should be instructed to proceed directly to the reception. This permits the bride and groom to make a grand entrance at the reception.

Unity Candle or Sand: In recent years Christian couples began including the lighting of the unity candle in their wedding ceremonies. The bride and groom each take a lighted family candle and light a larger candle to symbolize the union of their lives in marriage. Sand can also be used to symbolize their marriage. First Christian Church does not provide unity candles or sand.

Continued Worship: Married couples are urged to attend church regularly, whether in this church or in any other church of their choice. A common Christian commitment is not only a source of strength to both partners, but also a powerful stabilizing factor in marriage.

White Paraments: The white paraments and Christian symbols are to be used during all wedding services. The removal of these paraments is not permitted. This is a Christian church that uses Christian symbols and if this is not acceptable to the families they will want to choose another place to hold their services.

Key Steps, Part III

To ensure understanding of the policies regarding your wedding at First Christian Church, please read the following:

1. Telephone your Pastor to set up an appointment for the counseling, if applicable.
2. Telephone the organist from this church to discuss all music arrangements. Only organists from this church may play our organ. Other musicians may participate with the permission of the music department and in consultation with the church pastor.
3. The bridal party, all parents, ushers, and personal attendants should arrive at least one hour before the wedding.
4. Ushers should be prepared to seat guests 30 minutes before the wedding.
5. Payment in full is due at least one month before the date of the wedding, along with the required security deposit. Make checks payable to First Christian Church with the envelope addressed to the attention of the Wedding Administrator.
6. If a guest book is brought to the church, an attendant should be available 30 minutes before the beginning of the ceremony. The book should be closed at least ten minutes before the beginning of the ceremony. It is also the responsibility of the guest book attendant to watch the gifts and see that they are transported to their destination.
7. Individuals should be selected for both the bride and the groom to be personal attendants. They are to be responsible for pinning on the corsages and boutonnieres, emptying personal items and valuables from the bride's and groom's room prior to the wedding, removing decorations, checking the pews after the ceremony, picking up the wedding candles, etc.

8. Rehearsals involve the bridal party, all parents, ushers and personal attendants. There will be an hour scheduled for your rehearsal. Please have all involved in the ceremony arrive promptly as you will only have that hour to rehearse. Rehearsals in the Sanctuary may be difficult to locate for persons not familiar with the church. Since the main Sanctuary doors are locked, entrance to the Sanctuary is through the north entrance off Cascade. Please station someone at that door to direct guests to the Sanctuary. Please REMEMBER to bring the marriage license and the unity candle to the wedding rehearsal.

By your submittal of a written request to have your wedding at First Christian Church, you thereby agree that you have read and understand and will abide by these policies. You also further agree and understand that no policy can ever anticipate every situation, and therefore, if need be, the staff of First Christian Church, at their discretion, will make decisions in situations that are not specifically addressed by this policy.

CONTRACT FOR WEDDING

First Christian Church - (719) 633-8888 16 East Platte Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Bride/Groom: _____

Date of Wedding: _____ Phone _____

Address: _____

WEDDING: Sanctuary \$1500.00

The price of the wedding includes regular custodial set-up costs, any wedding equipment usage (optional), candles, Senior Pastor, Organist, & Wedding Administrator charge, light and sound engineer fee. This does not include unity candle, flowers, or decorations.

If the Wedding Administrator is requested beyond the time frame of 5 hours total for rehearsal preparation and wedding day, an added fee of \$25.00 per half hour will be deducted from your security deposit. In addition, \$100.00 per half hour will be deducted from your security deposit for every rehearsal or ceremony that is delayed.

The First Christian Church requires the total cost for your wedding to be paid at least one month prior to the wedding along with a \$300 refundable security deposit so service providers can be paid on the wedding day. Refunds will be made only if a cancellation is made prior to 60 days of your wedding date. The security deposit will be refunded within 30 days from the date of the wedding providing no damage was done to church property, all time limits are met and decorations are removed.

Please confirm the following by signing and returning the original copy of this form with a \$450.00 refundable deposit to the attention of Diana Serna. Once the Contract and deposit are received your requested date will be reserved. Contracts are accepted on a first come, first serve basis and your deposit will be returned if your requested date has been taken.

Any questions you may have prior to your first meeting with the wedding administrator, please contact Diana Serna at weddings@firstchristiancos.org.

Rehearsal: Date _____ 5:00 pm

Wedding: Date _____ Time _____

Signature of responsible party

Date

Signature of Pastor

Date

Office use only Paid \$ _____ Check No. _____

Date _____ Initialed _____

NOTES:

CONTACT INFORMATION

BRIDE FULL NAME: _____

BRIDE ADDRESS: _____

BRIDE PHONE NUMBERS: HOME _____

CELL _____

WORK _____

BRIDE E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

GROOM FULL NAME _____

GROOM ADDRESS: _____

GROOM PHONE NUMBERS: HOME _____

CELL _____

WORK _____

GROOM E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

EMERGENCY Contact Name/Phone Number(s)/Email _____
