



## **Weddings at First Christian Church**

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage! We celebrate with you both as you explore the possibility of confirming your marriage vows in our sacred space. We hope we can provide a meaningful experience for you and your family here at First Christian. Weddings are an opportunity to rejoice in the universal love of God made personal and specific, and First Christian Church is excited to offer pastoral counseling and assistance, as well as our facilities for a moment as important as this.

As an open and affirming congregation, we affirm that when two consenting adults choose to make an everlasting covenant, this covenant is celebrated by God. Our pastors conduct and our facilities are available for weddings for all who wish to make such a covenant, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

We are excited to welcome you to our church home, and hope you might find a home here too in your short time with us.



## **General Information**

All applications for use of First Christian Church for weddings, including the name of the clergy person to officiate, should be submitted in the church office. Applicants will be notified one week following receipt of application of approval or disapproval.

Applications for weddings can be found in the church office, or requested by email ([fcc@firstchristian.org](mailto:fcc@firstchristian.org)).

A request to see our sanctuary or church building can be made at any time by emailing or calling the church office, and we will set aside time to give you a tour and answer any questions you might have about our space.

Once a wedding application is approved by the senior minister, the date will be secured on the church calendar as soon as a \$250 deposit has been submitted to the church office. However, dates for weddings of non-church members cannot be guaranteed for more than three months in advance of the proposed date.

According to church policy, no weddings are to be scheduled in the Sanctuary before 4 p.m. on Sundays. We also do not schedule weddings on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Years Eve, New Years Day or Easter Sunday.

### **Clergy**

Rev. Dr. Brad Stagg – [brad@firstchristian.org](mailto:brad@firstchristian.org)

Rev. Dr. Topher Endress – [topher@firstchristian.org](mailto:topher@firstchristian.org)

If our ministers are unavailable to officiate your wedding, you are welcome to invite an ordained minister with recognized status in a Christian denomination to officiate with the approval of our senior minister. If you would like our ministers to be the primary clergy officiating your ceremony, but would also like to invite an ordained minister to participate as well, arrangements should be made to ask one of the ministers of First Christian Church to extend the invitation to the other minister.

A time for premarital pastoral counseling with the pastor performing the ceremony should be arranged at least eight weeks prior to the wedding date. During these sessions, the pastor will help plan the ceremony and provide guidance for a strong foundation in marriage. The number and length of sessions will vary at the pastor's discretion.

A valid marriage license is necessary for the performance of the wedding ceremony.



## **Music & Musicians**

Please contact the church office at [fcc@firstchristian.org](mailto:fcc@firstchristian.org) for contact information for our musicians!

**Topher Otake** – Director of Music Ministry

**Dr. Rochelle Parker** – Organist

**Travis McFarlane** – Pianist

## **Organ and Piano Use Policy**

1. Only the church Organist is allowed to play for services held in the church sanctuary, including weddings and funerals. If the church organist is unable to play for a service, it will then be his/her responsibility to hire a qualified organist to substitute for that service.
2. Musicians outside of the church staff have permission to use the grand piano in the sanctuary. Contact information for the musicians or players must be provided to the Church Office.
3. Titles for all musical selections must be turned into the church office 1-2 weeks prior to the wedding. Pre-recorded music is not recommended, but **must be submitted to the church office at least two weeks before the ceremony to ensure compatibility with the church sound system. All titles must be approved by the Director of Music or the Church Organist.**

The wedding couple is responsible for contacting the Organist or Pianist to make arrangements for playing for the service. The phone number and/or e-mail address for music staff may be obtained from the church office. **Sheet music must be provided by the wedding couple, unless the music staff already have the music available.**

## **Photography and Videography**

In order to preserve the sanctity, dignity and worshipful spirit of the wedding ceremony, photographers are urged to abide by the following rules:

1. Ushers will encourage persons with cameras to make no flash pictures during ceremony, but to be on hand for posed photographs if taken before or following the wedding.
2. Photographer or photographers may take flash pictures of bridal party members as they enter sanctuary doors provided they are not standing in front of wedding guests.
3. There will be no flash pictures taken during the ceremony. Time exposures may be taken during wedding, preferably from balcony.
4. Flash pictures may be taken of members of wedding party from Narthex as the recessional takes place.

## **Videotaping at Weddings**

Video equipment may be used for recording wedding ceremonies. The video photographer should consult with the minister of FCC or the church liaison regarding placement of equipment in the sanctuary so that the above stated policy for wedding photography will be preserved. All photographers and video equipment in the sanctuary will be placed in a stationary position during the entire wedding ceremony.



## **Our Facilities**

Wedding ceremonies are held in the **sanctuary** of the church. We invite applicants to set up a time with the church office to tour the sanctuary and church building to see our spaces in person.

**Sanctuary Capacity:** There are **32 pews**, fitting up to 360 people, on the **sanctuary floor**. There are **12 pews**, fitting up to 120 people, in the **sanctuary balcony**.

### **Preparation Areas**

We have two primary locations where the wedding party can get ready before the wedding. **Morris Parlor**, primarily used as a meeting area on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the main church building, includes several tables and chairs. The **Banner Room** is a room behind the sanctuary that was once used as an office for previous FCC ministers, but now is also used as a gathering space with several couches and chairs. An alternative space, **Bethany Hall**, the building located next to the church, is a big meeting space with plenty of couches and tables to use for getting ready before the ceremony.

### **Accessibility**

An elevator serves all four floors of our building, making the office, classrooms, and restrooms accessible to people with disabilities. Ramps located in the first floor of the atrium allow easy access to our sanctuary. There is also an exterior ramp leading to our sanctuary at the corner of 10<sup>th</sup> St & Walnut. There is accessible seating space in the back right corner of our sanctuary for wheelchair users. Listening devices for the hearing impaired, large print hymnals for eyes requiring extra help, children's packets for children with active attention spans, and shawls for warmth are available to make all services enjoyable, comfortable, and accessible.

### **Sanctuary & Narthex Decorations**

All decorations for the sanctuary should be approved by the church office - we do not allow for decorations to be attached to the wooden pews, unless it is guaranteed not to scratch or damage the wood.

Worship & decorative elements available, at request:

- **Unity Candle** – a candle holder to hold three candles (one pillar and two tapers).
  - The candles for the unity candle should be **provided by the wedding party**.
  - **All candles provided by the wedding party must be dripless.**
- **Candelabras** – all candles for the candelabras are provided by the church. Pictures of the candelabras are available in the Church Office.
  - **7-tier Candelabras** (set of two) placed on the chancel, flanking the wedding party
  - **16 individual hurricane lamps** attached to varying pews in the sanctuary
- **Guest Book Stand** – a wooden stand to hold a guest book. This will sit in the narthex, where guests will sign before entering the sanctuary.



## **Fees**

**Ministerial Fee:** Church weddings that are performed by one of the ministers of the church require a ministerial fee of \$300, in addition to the \$1400 sanctuary fee. If it is desired for special reasons to have another minister perform the service, arrangements should be made to ask one of the ministers of First Christian Church to extend the invitation to the other minister.

**Church Liaison:** For each wedding, a church liaison, provided from the church membership and trained in the use of the church's sound and light system must be present at a cost of \$200 per wedding, payable through the Church's usual payroll process. The church liaison represents the church at the rehearsal and the wedding. **The liaison is not a wedding director or coordinator.** They are the connection between the church and the wedding party. The liaison will help with lighting, sound system, facilities, and answer questions concerning the church's policies and procedures.

**Custodial Services:** Weddings are not considered a normal part of the custodian's duties, though their special services are usually needed. This is particularly true of weddings planned for times when the office is not open and when receptions are planned in the church. Special custodian services shall be arranged with the custodian with payment for this service at \$200 for their time. The head custodian will perform this service unless it is designated to another church custodian by the Office Manager.

**Total Fees:** There will be a total fee of \$1400 of which \$250 is non-refundable once the date is approved and secured on the church calendar. The \$250 must be presented with final application to secure the date requested. The deposit of \$250 is also due *at least* one month before the wedding. The rest of your fees (remaining deposit, ministerial fees, damage deposit) are due one week before the wedding.

- The **\$1400 fee** for use of First Christian Church for your wedding includes...
  - Sanctuary - \$800
  - Liaison - \$200
  - Custodian - \$200
  - Musician (whether the musician is needed or not) - \$200
- If one of the ministers from First Christian Church officiates, the **\$300 ministerial fee** will be in addition to the \$1400 deposit.
- In addition to the total fee there will be a **\$500 refundable deposit** required to cover possible damage to, and extra clean-up of, church property. Any part of this deposit not so expended by the Property Committee shall be returned to the applicant on the first Wednesday after the event. These fees and the deposit do not include additional custodial fees. In case of damage to premises or equipment, the church will require reimbursement.





## **Rehearsal & Wedding Expectations**

After your wedding application has been approved and we have received your \$250 deposit, there isn't any expectation to be in contact with us until the month leading up to your wedding date, unless you have further questions about our space. Roughly one month before your wedding, you'll receive a letter with a **questionnaire** from the Church Office with a list of questions regarding logistics for the wedding and rehearsal, as well as a list of some of our expectations for your use of our building. A few of those expectations are listed here:

- The **minister** is responsible for leading the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. The rehearsal will be limited to **one hour**, in consideration of the minister and musicians' schedules.
- You will receive a set of **keys to the church** from the liaison at your rehearsal for you to use throughout your wedding day. This key card will allow you to gain access to the building on the wedding day to meet the florist and the wedding party.
- For obvious security reasons, we require you keep all exterior doors secured at all times. The church liaison will unlock the exterior doors for your guests approximately one hour prior to the wedding time. **You will be expected to assign someone to be in charge of the exterior door key card and return the keys to the church liaison or the church office the following week.**
- **It is the responsibility of the wedding party to arrange for the care of their personal property before, during, and after the ceremony.** The church will not be responsible for personal items brought to the church; nor, shall the church be liable for any lost, damaged, or stolen items.
- It is required that you leave the church in the same condition as found. Our church policy does not allow nails, tacks, staples, tape, pins or anything else that will mar the woodwork, pews, or walls. Removal of all gifts, decorations, flowers, equipment, and personal items is required immediately following the ceremony. This includes any petals, flowers, or other items thrown by a flower girl or other wedding party in the middle isle. **You will be expected to assign someone to be in charge of removing all of these items.**
- **No rice or bird seed throwing will be allowed in the church building. No smoking, no confetti, or alcoholic beverages will be allowed anywhere on the church property.**



## **Application Process & Timeline**

Here is the process of your application and what the Church Office needs from you to finalize your wedding at First Christian Church:

1. **Wedding Application**, signed & noted that you've read our policies
2. Once your application is approved, a **\$250 deposit** to secure your date on our calendar
3. 1-2 weeks prior to your wedding, a **questionnaire** (sent a month before from the church office with details about the day-of) and **the rest of your deposit** must be sent to the Church Office.

*The amounts listed below are the "leftover" of the \$1400 fee, subtracting your \$250 initial deposit*

- a. If you **are not** using an FCC minister, your total will be **\$1, 150.00** and a **\$500 damage deposit** (two separate checks).
- b. If you **are** using an FCC minister, your total will be **\$1,450.00** and a **\$500 damage deposit** (two separate checks)

Thank you again for choosing First Christian Church! Applications and questions can be sent digitally to the church office at [fcc@firstchristian.org](mailto:fcc@firstchristian.org) or any time during business hours, 8:00am – 12:00pm & 1:00pm – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday. You can call the church office with questions during the week at (573) 449-7265.