

WEDDING AND RECEPTION POLICIES

September, 2012

I. **Invitation**

- A. Our church is pleased when church family members use our facilities for weddings and receptions.
- B. Other persons from our community, particularly those with familial relationships to First Christian Church, are welcome to use our facilities on a case by case basis, determined at the convenience and discretion of the ministerial staff.
- C. The policies noted below should be strictly followed by all who make use of the church facilities.

II. **Theology**

Weddings in the church are considered to be a form of worship, with all due respect and holiness. In the Christian faith, the covenant vows between two people are considered a holy covenant, blessed by God and sustained through counseling, prayers and love. The church facility is not to be considered a “rented hall” for the convenience of the ceremony.

III. **Procedures**

- A. All persons wishing to use the church facilities for weddings and/or receptions must first visit the church office in person. The wedding date will not be confirmed on the church calendar until the **Damage Deposit** has been paid to the church office and the ministerial staff has been consulted and has approved the date and time.
- B. The ministerial staff of the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Macomb presides at all wedding ceremonies as scheduled at the convenience of the ministerial staff. If the couple wishes to have another minister participate in the service, the ministerial staff of First Christian Church will contact the guest minister and extend the invitation to participate if the guest minister meets the standards and criteria of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). If the guest minister is invited to participate in the ceremony, the ministerial staff of First Christian Church will be the presiding clergy, will plan and lead the ceremony, and shall be fully compensated at the usual rate as the presiding clergy.
- C. The bride- and groom-to-be are responsible for negotiating and arranging music for the service.
 - 1. All music used in the service must meet the expectations of the ministerial staff of the church. Approval must be received before music selections may be used.
 - 2. The church will provide an organist for the wedding.
 - 3. Alternative forms of music can be used. The church will provide the sound system and a sound technician for any musical needs.
- D. The minister will require pre-marital counseling sessions with either the minister or other mental health professionals. These sessions may be scheduled four to six weeks prior to the wedding.
- E. The bride- and groom-to-be are responsible for assigning responsibilities for removing

decorations from the sanctuary following the wedding. This includes items such as pew bows, candles and decorations on the communion table.

- F. Wedding bulletins or programs are the sole responsibility of the bride, groom or their designated person. The church office staff does not provide this service.

IV. Guidelines

- A. **The use of rice is strictly prohibited.** While birdseed and bubbles can be used, its usage is to be confined to **outside** the building.
- B. No tape, nails, tacks, or push-pins are to be used on the walls or woodwork of the church (including but not limited to pews, railings, doors, windows, etc.). The church recommends wiring flowers to pews and candelabra, tying flowers to pews and candelabra with ribbons or using wax clips (*Stikki Clips*).
- C. Candles provided by the church must be used in the candelabra owned by the church. These candle inserts are provided for the couple.
- D. Only drip-less or drip-free candles are to be used in any other fixtures or locations in the church. Appropriate protection must be provided to safe-guard the woodwork, carpet and furnishings of the church.
- E. Smoking or the use of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in the building or on church grounds. If on the day of the wedding, the minister has reason to believe the bride and/or groom are impaired by alcohol or illegal drugs, the minister may cancel the wedding service without notice.
- F. There will be **no** use of flash cameras or lighted videography during the ceremony. The photographer is welcome to take flash pictures during the processional and recessional. The photographer is welcome to take non-flash pictures during the ceremony as long as he or she moves in such a way as to not distract guests or detract from the worship service. Any videography should follow these same guidelines. **All videographers and photographers must meet with the minister prior to the wedding. These same guidelines are expected of the congregation. If a wedding bulletin is used, this must be noted in it.**
- G. Only staff members of the church may adjust or alter equipment settings in the building. If there is a need to change the temperature or set-up of any kind, please contact one of the church staff to assist and complete the change.
- H. First Christian Church is not responsible for any lost or stolen items. All persons use the church and its facilities at their own risk.
- I. Non-Member weddings must begin by 3:00 pm on Saturday weddings in order for the custodian to prepare the church for worship on Sunday.