

## CHRIST FIRST WEDDING POLICY

### General Intent

Christ First rejoices with couples wishing to make a Covenant of Marriage. Wedding services are a blessing and a celebration of the love between two people who are entering into a committed, caring relationship, honouring their love as a gift from God. Our congregation is an inclusive faith community, and conducts weddings for couples regardless of their gender expressions or identities.

Our buildings are available to host weddings for those wishing to be married in a Christian setting. We can host Christian, ecumenical, and interfaith weddings that bring two traditions together. Whether people come from different denominations of the same religion or different faiths, we are pleased to welcome them to our building. Fees will be charged for the service, staff, and facilities.

### Specific Policies

1. The Minister is expected to conduct the service and an organist will provide music.
2. At the discretion of the Minister, we welcome outside ministers to participate or officiate at the ceremony.
3. Initial inquiries are usually handled by the Office Administration team.
  - Inquiries asking for our minister – ask for date and consult with the Minister
  - Inquiries wanting to supply a minister for the ceremony - Ask for their preferred date. If available, then ask for contact information so that the Minister can follow up directly with the requesting couple. The Minister will call the couple for conversation on the practice and policy of the visiting clergy and community. To the best of our ability, and at the Minister's discretion, we will agree to supply ministers in general agreement with the ethos of Christ First. The Minister will confirm with the Office that booking can proceed.
4. The Office Administrator will gather specific details regarding the proposed date, location, rooms, musicians, technical requirements and other arrangements. A one hour rehearsal on another date will be offered.
5. A valid Ontario Marriage license must be provided to the church a minimum of 14 days in advance of the wedding.
6. A designated photographer can take non-flash pictures with consultation with the minister. Video-taping is permitted as long as the videographer consults the minister about location during the service.
7. Timing of flower deliveries and decorating the sanctuary must be discussed with the administrator at the time of booking. No adhesive materials are to be used to fasten decorations to church furnishings.

8. Throwing of rice, petals or confetti inside the building or on the property is strictly prohibited.
9. Christ First will be decorated seasonally for Lent, Easter, Thanksgiving and Advent. These decorations may remain in place during weddings held in these seasons.
10. A deposit is required at the time of booking. Balance of the fee must be paid 14 days prior to the wedding. Fees are outlined in the Policy on Fees for Weddings and Funerals.

### **Exceptions**

1. If individuals are members of a church congregation, marriage banns may be published. The banns (intention to marry) must be proclaimed during the worship service at least once, and at least five days prior to the wedding.
2. If no minister from Christ First is available (and no arrangements have been made for backup), the Chair of the Church Council will authorize another minister to conduct the service.

### **References**

1. Christ First Policy on Fees for Weddings and Funerals
2. Christ First Policy on Funerals

### **Responsibility**

The Worship Committee is responsible for keeping this policy up to date and for recommending changes for the approval of the Church Council.