

Church Operational Policy
Wedding Guidelines: FAC-1

Authorized by: *Senior Minister*

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I. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to set the guidelines and responsibilities of those desiring to be married at South Side Christian Church.

II. Ministry Goal:

The goal is to prepare couples to have a marriage based on Christian principles and to have a wedding ceremony that brings honor to Christ and His Church. We see God's design for marriage as a lifetime commitment between one man and one woman. To follow God's design we feel that it is important to spend time in preparation for this life-long commitment. In order for this to be accomplished, the parties involved need to agree to and adhere to the guidelines set forth below this is the standard to which couples getting married at South Side will strive towards.

III. Elder's Statement On Marriage Standards:

The Elders at South Side Christian Church have established the following as basic marriage standards for any couple desiring to be married at South Side Christian Church by a staff minister:

- A. Regular attenders at South Side Christian Church
We are committed to serve those who are active members or regular attenders of South Side Christian Church prior to scheduling the wedding date. Regular attendance should continue leading up to the wedding.
- B. Live by Biblical standards in your relationship
We believe that those desiring to be married in the church should live by Biblical standards in their relationship. The man and the woman need to be living in accordance with Scriptural principles: maintaining sexual purity; living in a separate residence from your future spouse; seeking a partner with the same spiritual values.
- C. A dating relationship for a minimum of nine (9) months before marriage.
There is no shortcut to building intimacy, trust, and communication. While some people have skills and maturity which enable them to build an intimate relationship faster than others, we believe that a nine month dating relationship is the minimum in light of the permanent nature of a marriage relationship.
- D. If divorced, at least one year of legal divorce must pass before consideration for marriage.
We believe a new marriage relationship should not be pursued until the potential of a healthy reconciliation has been exhausted and time for emotional healing has taken place. The premarital counseling process, therefore, will not begin until at least one year has elapsed from the time of the divorce was made legally final. During the counseling process the divorce and implications on the upcoming marriage will be discussed.

- E. Participation in Pre-Marital Counseling: The couple must complete the pre-marital counseling sessions offered by the church prior to the wedding ceremony. The couple will discuss their pre-marital counseling sessions with the officiating minister.

IV. Eligible Couples And Ministers

It is our intention to marry couples that are part of the South Side body. Final determination regarding a couple's eligibility will be made by a member of South Side's ministerial staff. In the event that an eligible couple wishes to get married and a South Side minister is unavailable to officiate, or the eligible couple elects to utilize an outside minister the following applies:

- 1.) The proposed minister's name must be submitted to a South Side minister for approval.
- 2.) The engaged couple must participate in premarital counseling. A South Side minister may agree to perform premarital counseling only for a couple that cannot regularly meet with their officiating minister. An additional fee will be applied in this instance.
- 3.) A wedding coordinator will be assigned to serve as a liaison between the officiating minister and South Side Christian Church.
- 4.) The fee structure will remain the same to compensate the wedding coordinator.
- 5.) The couple should be aware that any compensation offered to the outside minister is their responsibility.

Only with the approval and support of a South Side minister can a non-eligible couple be married at South Side. This exception should only be made to foster continued relationships between the South Side minister, the couple, and the church. The same rate schedule would apply to these exceptions.

V. Building Guidelines For Weddings, Receptions & Rehearsal Dinners

The South Side Christian Church building has been erected and dedicated for the purpose of honoring and serving God. All activities held in the building should be conducted in such a way as to uphold this purpose. The following guidelines have been adopted to assist those using the building and equipment in observing this purpose.

A. Guidelines for use of the building

1. The date and time for weddings, rehearsals, rehearsal dinners and receptions must be cleared through the church office. No date is confirmed until:
 - 1) the building deposit is received and the date has been cleared with the South Side minister officiating at the wedding or the senior minister in the event another minister not from South Side is performing the wedding.
 - 2) a member of the wedding party meets with the staff minister officiating the wedding in order to discuss these guidelines, and,
 - 3) the contract has been signed and returned to the church office.A tentative date will be placed on the calendar. If the requirements above have not been met within one month the date will not be held.
2. The activity is to be confined to the area for which the use was requested and individuals will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the purpose of the building.
3. No smoking within the facilities at any time, and no alcoholic beverages in any form will be allowed within the building or on the church property at

any time. If it has been determined that any participant of the wedding is under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or illegal drugs, the officiating minister has at his discretion the option of prohibiting them from participating in the ceremony.

4. Saturday weddings without a reception in the building must be started not later than 5:00PM with the building being cleared by 9:30PM.
5. Saturday weddings with a reception in the building must be started no later than 4:00 PM with the building cleared by 9:30PM
6. Sunday weddings and receptions must be scheduled so times will not conflict with any Sunday worship services or other scheduled church activity.
7. Wedding receptions at the church will be permitted only if the wedding is held at the church. Receptions/rehearsal dinners with 150+ guests will require an additional custodian and additional fee.
8. Rooms have been cleaned and set up for Sunday; therefore, please check with the church office or custodian before using any rooms other than those reserved. Check with your photographer to determine if an additional room will be needed for pictures.
9. Damage to church owned property, including furnishings and equipment, must be paid for at full repair or replacement cost by the wedding party.
10. Food may only be served and eaten by the wedding party in the fellowship hall (B65) and/or the dressing rooms. No food or drink will be allowed in the worship center at any time.
12. The church building will be open 3 hours prior to a wedding for dressing and pictures.
13. For purposes of decorating the church, access is available from noon on Friday prior to the wedding (assuming a Saturday wedding) Arrangements must be made through the church to schedule additional time for decorating. The officiating minister will be responsible for unlocking all doors prior to the rehearsal, wedding, and reception. The officiating minister is responsible for locking up the building following rehearsal. The custodian is responsible for locking up the church following the wedding.
14. South Side Christian Church is not responsible for the damage, theft, or loss of any personal items brought into the church by members of the wedding party or guests. South Side Christian church is also not responsible for the damage, theft, or loss of any equipment, decorations, or other items brought into the church by or for the wedding party that may be used in conjunction with the wedding.

- B. Guidelines for the use of the Worship Center (sanctuary)
1. The center of the stage will be cleared of all instruments and other stage equipment, but there is a possibility that some equipment may remain on the outer side of the stage.
 2. The piano is also available for use, however only the sound technician or Worship Minister is authorized to move it.
 3. All parties are responsible for putting up their own decorations. Glitter or glitter covered decorations may not be used and decorations must be removable and non-marring. If a decoration must be left, prior arrangements must be made with the custodian. All decorations left after the wedding will be thrown away.
 4. No real flower petals may be used to throw at the wedding party either on the church grounds or in the facility.
 5. Only bells, bubbles or balloons will be allowed as the bride and groom are exiting the facilities. Artificial flower petals may be used during the ceremony and in the auditorium (sanctuary) only. No real flower petals may be used at anytime or anywhere on the church grounds. The church reserves the right to disapprove any item which is believed to be detrimental to the care and maintenance of the facility and grounds. This disapproval if not concurred to by the wedding party will result in canceling the use of the facility for the wedding.
 8. Only dripless candles may be used if additional candles are needed. Any candles placed on the stage floor, or along the aisles must be on enclosed in a glass goblet or container.
 9. The church custodian is responsible for cleaning and setting up the sanctuary for the rehearsal and wedding ceremony and for all cleanup of the sanctuary and building.
- C. Guidelines for the use of media and musical equipment
1. Only South Side sound technicians can operate the sound equipment during a wedding.
 2. Any of the church's musical instruments may be used upon approval with the worship minister.
 3. The sound technician is responsible for setting up microphones and other equipment needed for the rehearsal and wedding. He or she will operate all sound equipment and will be present at the rehearsal as well as the wedding. If your soloist wishes to practice with the equipment, arrangements must be made with our sound technician.
 4. The use of some video equipment is also available for slide shows, lyrics for worship times etc. This may or may not necessitate another technician. The necessity for another media technician will be determined by the technical director. You should include any and all possible video plans and ideas to him/her when you first contact the technical director. If another media technician is needed see fee schedule.
 5. Any additional use of the church's video equipment (cameras, etc) must be attended to by a trained volunteer within the technical ministry of South Side Christian Church.
- D. Guidelines for receptions and/or rehearsal dinners in the church building

1. Receptions/rehearsal dinners must be held in the Fellowship Hall. Receptions/rehearsal dinners with 150 + guests will require an additional custodian and fee. (see fee schedule)
 2. The custodian will be responsible for cleaning the room and for setting up tables and chairs before and after the reception/rehearsal dinner.
 3. Serving dishes, table service and kitchen facilities of the church may be used, but the kitchen must be cleaned and all items washed and returned to its proper place by the wedding party. If any item is broken or damaged, it must be replaced or the church reimbursed for its cost.
 4. All paper products must be furnished by the wedding party.
 5. All parties are responsible for putting up their own decorations. Only thumb tacks on the ceiling tile may be used. Masking tape may be used on block, wood, or concrete walls and plasti-tak may be used on dry wall. If any decoration must be left after the reception, prior arrangements must be made with the custodian. All other decorations will be thrown away.
 6. Thirty-five tables and 240 chairs are available for receptions in the Fellowship Hall. Other tables and chairs may be rented at the user's expense.
 7. Roaster (cookers) are available but they may not be removed from the church building.
- E. Guidelines for rehearsals
1. The minister will be in charge of all rehearsals.
 2. Persons needed to be present at the rehearsal: bride, bridegroom, best man, maid of honor, bridesmaids, groomsmen, flower girl, ring bearer, ushers, readers, and parents.
 3. No changes are permitted from rehearsal night to ceremony without notifying the minister.
 4. The marriage license should be brought to the rehearsal and given to the officiating minister.
 5. If you are planning to have a rehearsal dinner at the church, you must make arrangements to reserve the fellowship hall and pay the additional custodial & wedding coordinator fees.

VI. Reservation and Payment

- A. Interested couples will begin the reservation process by completing the Wedding Request form posted at southsidechristian.com.
- B. Once completed, a staff member will contact you to confirm the availability of the facility and officiating minister.
- C. Fees
 - a. The total fee of \$550 is due no later than one month prior to the wedding date. This fee includes all personnel costs of the officiating minister, custodian, and sound technician.
 - b. A \$150 non-refundable deposit and signed contract is due to reserve the facility.
 - c. Additional fees may be assessed to host a reception, rehearsal dinner, or to cover a video technician if needed.