



The American Church in Paris

WEDDING GUIDELINES

Information about Wedding Blessing Ceremony

Wedding coordinator

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Thank you for contacting The American Church in Paris about your desire to have a blessing of marriage ceremony at the church. We want to serve your needs as well as we can, and we hope that we can accommodate your requests. Because we are an international and interdenominational congregation, we welcome people from diverse backgrounds and Christian traditions. We have prepared the following information to help you understand the procedures we follow and to answer the most frequently-asked questions about having a ceremony at our Church.

- 1. In France, only weddings solemnized by the civil authorities have legal standing;** thus a church wedding has spiritual significance, but not legal status. Before celebrating the religious wedding ceremony, **you must provide us with a copy of your legal marriage certificate.** The easiest way to do this is to be married in a legal ceremony in your home country and then fax us a copy of the certificate, or send a scanned copy by email.
 - 2. All wedding ceremonies** in The American Church in Paris will be performed by one of our ordained pastors, usually the visiting pastor. If you desire for your pastor to be involved, he/she can co-officiate at the invitation of the visiting pastor. You will need to discuss such a request with the visiting pastor. We do not rent out the church for weddings. All weddings are services of The American Church. Our basic order of service will be sent to you, and you may make suggestions; but, any changes must be approved by the visiting pastor in charge. Should there be a request for major changes in the text, you will need to provide a typed copy of the suggested order of service. This can be sent by email. Bulletins for the guests, if desired, are to be provided by you
 - 3.** Weddings must be reserved as far in advance as possible, and should be confirmed in writing, preferably by e-mail or by fax.
 - 4.** Confirming weddings and/or communicating questions or requests is best done by email or fax, especially when there is a time difference between France and, for example, the U.S.
 - 5. The wedding service will normally be in English,** though if you desire for all or part of the ceremony to be bilingual with French, this can usually be done. Since we have a bilingual – English & French – service prepared, a family member or friend can read the French portions. We can also arrange for one of our translators for an additional charge.
- If you desire a bilingual service in other than English & French, it will be your responsibility to find a translator. In this case, you will need to discuss it with the visiting pastor.
- 6.** It is desirable for you to **meet with the officiating visiting pastor prior to the wedding ceremony.** This is easiest to arrange if you can arrive in Paris a day or so before the wedding date. If a rehearsal is desired a day or so before the wedding, the reservation should be set with the wedding coordinator. Weddings that do not have several persons in the wedding party (for processional, bridesmaids & groomsmen, etc.) will not require a rehearsal in the sanctuary.

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7. Flowers, photographs, video, limousine and a soloist if desired, are **your responsibility**. The ACP music director can help with the plans for your music.

8. Photographers should understand that the ceremony is an occasion of religious significance, and, therefore, photos taken during the actual ceremony should be done discreetly and with regard for the occasion. The photographer should visit with the visiting pastor before the ceremony about where and when photos may be taken.

9. The sanctuary must be left as it was before the wedding. Ribbons, pew decorations and similar items must be removed. Flowers that you provide for the altar may either be taken following the ceremony or left on the altar.

Items such as rice, confetti, etc, are not permitted. Flower petals should only be used on the pavement outside of the church. (Please note flower petals on the church premises will have to be removed by wedding party or guests)

Expected donations

The American Church in Paris is a **self-supporting Church** with no external sources of funding. Its extensive ministries to the English-speaking expatriate community are supported solely by the giving of the congregation, rents from community groups using the church's facilities, and wedding donations. The schedule of suggested donations reflects not only our costs in providing you with a beautiful atmosphere and spiritual ministry on the occasion of your wedding ceremony, but a source of vital income that enables us to continue to provide our extensive ministries to all who come through our doors.

The **expected donation** for the wedding ceremony is

- a) **1,485 €** for ceremonies with less than 50 guest and
- b) **1,935 €** for ceremonies with more than 50 guests.

The extra charge for ceremonies with over 50 guests covers the expenses of mandatory security services, sound management and extra printing needs.

To **secure a booking**, a **500 € deposit is required**. The balance is due 45 days before the ceremony.

Weddings at the American Church include two hours of sanctuary time, the visiting pastor, organ or piano music by our church musician, correspondence with the wedding coordinator, the visiting pastor, and the music director, a meeting with the visiting pastor, and a one hour rehearsal in the sanctuary a day or two prior to the wedding date if it is desired.

The two hour sanctuary reservation allows time for the ceremony, preparation prior to the ceremony, and greetings and photos following the ceremony.

Cancellations must be made to the wedding coordinator at least 45 days before the wedding date. The charges for cancellations made after this limit are as follows: between 30 days and 45 days before the ceremony, the deposit of 500 euros will not be refunded; and less than 30 days prior to the ceremony, an additional 250 euros will be charged. A refund of the balance that has been paid, minus currency conversion costs, bank charges and any other charges experienced by the church, will be made.

The church has a large hall adjoining the sanctuary. Interested parties for a vin-honneur (light reception), should contact the Wedding Coordinator for more information.