

MARRIAGE POLICY FOR CHURCHES

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Marriage is a union ordained by God. It was first instituted by God in the early chapters of Genesis, codified in the Levitical law, the Old Testament prophets compared it to a relationship between God and his people, examples of it are in the historical narratives, and, the wisdom literature discusses the unique unity of this relationship. Jesus explained the original intention and core elements of marriage, and several New Testament Epistles give explicit instructions on this union. Marriage is a typology of Christ and the Church. As such, the Church views marriage as a profound spiritual institution established by God. Due to the importance of marriage in the biblical witness, this church adopts the following policy.

Clergy:

1. Only duly ordained clergy shall officiate at marriage ceremonies conducted on church property.
2. Clergy employed by the church shall be subject to dismissal and/or loss of ordination for officiating a same gender marriage ceremony.

Applicants:

1. Applicants wishing to have a ceremony performed by a member of the clergy employed by the church, or to use the church facilities, shall affirm their agreement with the Articles of Faith and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. Applicants shall receive ____ hours of premarital counseling by clergy or counselors employed by the church or other persons who, in the sole opinion of the pastoral staff of the church, have appropriate training, experience, and spiritual understanding to provide such counseling.

Premises:

1. Any marriage performed on church premises shall be officiated by a member of the clergy.
2. Clergy officiating marriage ceremonies on church premises, whether or not employed by the church, shall affirm their

July 1, 2013

agreement with the Articles of Faith and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.

3. The clergy assigned by the church to implement the procedures contained in this Marriage Policy may, in his or her sole discretion, decline to make church facilities available for, and/or decline to officiate at, a ceremony when, in his or her judgment, there are significant concerns that one or both of the applicants may not be qualified to enter into the sacred bond of marriage for theological, doctrinal, moral or legal reasons.