



MARRIAGE POLICY

Date: 2/21/2019

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.

CEREMONY:

Within this church, a marriage ceremony shall include the reading of Scripture, prayer, spiritual admonition by clergy, and recitation of vows. In view of these elements, a marriage ceremony is deemed a form of liturgy.

CLERGY:

1. Only duly ordained/licensed clergy shall officiate at marriage ceremonies conducted on church property.
2. Clergy employed by the church shall be subject to dismissal or loss of license for officiating a marriage ceremony for a union that is inconsistent with the definition of marriage in the Statement of Faith.

APPLICANTS:

Applicants wishing to have a ceremony performed by a member of the clergy employed by the church, or to use the church facilities for a ceremony, must fall within the definition of marriage in the Statement of Faith. Besides the general definition of marriage, the church has other teachings on marriage that may impact the availability of use of church facilities for applicants, e.g., prior marriages, marrying outside of the faith, potential fraud. These issues will be explored during premarital 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 agreement with the Statement 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 the Marriage Policy may, in the minister's sole discretion, decline to make church facilities available for, or decline to officiate at, a ceremony when, in the minister's 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 doctrinal, moral, legal, or other reasons.

CERTIFICATE:

After the ceremony, the church will issue a document confirming the marriage ceremony. The language shall include this text as follows: "Be it known that (insert name of husband) and (insert name of wife) entered into the holy covenant of matrimony at the (insert name of church) on (insert day, month, and year, e.g., this twelfth day of January, in the year of our Lord, 2019)."