



Wedding Policies & Procedures

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|---|-------------|-----------|
| Wedding Policies | page | 3 |
| Wedding Application | page | 5 |
| Completion of Premarital Counseling | page | 7 |
| Catering Policies | page | 8 |
| Florist Policies | page | 9 |
| Musician Policies | page | 10 |
| Outside Consultant Agreement | page | 11 |
| Wedding Photography Policies | page | 12 |
| Videography Policies | page | 13 |
| Baskin Chapel Wedding Policies | page | 14 |
| Worship Center Wedding Polices | page | 15 |
| Wilson Hall Reception Policies | page | 16 |
| Living Together Without Being Married Policies | page | 17 |
| Regular Attendee Form | page | 19 |

Wedding Policies for Brentwood Baptist Church (and all affiliated campuses)

Brentwood Baptist Church is one church, multiple locations. Together, our campuses make up one church with one mission. We share resources, staff, and governance so each congregation can effectively reach our Middle Tennessee communities.

Brentwood Baptist Church affirms that the marriage of a man and a woman is sacred in the sight of God and blessed by God. Marriage was God's idea. It was the Lord who said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helper as his partner. Therefore, a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife and together, they become one flesh." Therefore, the institution of marriage should not be entered into lightly.

The wedding ceremony is an important event as couples begin their married lives together. Brentwood Baptist Church believes that the ceremony is a worship service and dedicates worship space for this purpose. The policies that are listed below are intended to reflect this intent and purpose. They are not intended to be restrictive or exclusive in any way. Rather, they are intended to preserve the sacredness of the event.

Policies

1. Individuals who are seeking to have a wedding ceremony at Brentwood Baptist Church or any of her affiliated campuses must be members of the church, regular attendees of the church, or the children or grandchildren of members of the church.
2. Regular attendees of the church must have a letter from an ordained minister of the church that validates their active participation. If no minister is known by the regular attendees, an attendance form obtained from the Facilities Office must be signed by a Brentwood Baptist minister indicating that the couple has attended Brentwood Baptist Church at least four (4) times prior to the wedding.
3. It is understood that all wedding couples (including those living out of town or out of state) will be able to meet the following expectations:
 - The wedding couple or, at a minimum the bride, will meet in person with the Facilities Administrative Assistant to review and sign the wedding policies. Surrogates such as the parents of the wedding couple, may not complete this task for the wedding couple;
 - The wedding couple or, at a minimum the bride, will meet in person with the Wedding Coordinator to review the wedding plans. Surrogates such as the parents of the wedding couple, may not complete this task for the wedding couple;
 - The wedding couple will complete all requirements for premarital counseling (see note below).
4. Couples must complete premarital counseling prior to the wedding. If the counseling is not done at Brentwood Baptist, the couple must have a form obtained from the Facilities Office signed by their minister stating that they have completed premarital counseling.
5. Couples who are living together prior to marriage must abstain from sexual relations and move apart until the time of the wedding ceremony.
6. Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Brentwood Baptist Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, our pastors and ministers and the staff of

Brentwood Baptist Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Brentwood Baptist Church (and its campuses) shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

7. Brentwood Baptist Wedding Coordinators and assistants will be required for all ceremonies (coordinator fees are included in the wedding fees). Outside consultants may be used, but must defer to the decisions and interpretation of policies of the assigned Wedding Coordinator. Outside consultants must sign the “Outside Consultant Agreement” obtained from the Facilities Office.
8. A security deposit of \$500 is required in order to reserve a wedding date on the calendar for all campuses.
9. The wedding fee must be paid in full at least 60 days before the wedding in order for the wedding ceremony to take place.
10. Couples must meet with the Facilities Administrative Assistant and complete a wedding application form before a date can be set for a wedding ceremony.
11. A trained and authorized sound tech is required to operate the audio and video equipment of the church.
12. Dates and times for weddings and rehearsals must be calendared through the Facilities Office.
13. Any changes to dates and times must be made **2 weeks prior** to the wedding. No changes will be considered after the 2 weeks prior deadline.
14. Any changes to scheduled times must be communicated **by the coordinator** directly to the Facilities Office.
15. Rehearsal and wedding start and end times must be adhered to closely.
16. Seating is limited to the number listed in the policy. Fire codes prevent seating in the aisles and hallways.
17. Guest seating is not allowed in the sound booths. Only photographers, videographers, or musicians are allowed in the sound booths. There are no exceptions.
18. When requested, the elements of the Lord’s Supper will be served to the bride and groom only, and not to the wedding guests.

Bride Photo Policy

Brentwood Baptist will allow couples who are getting married on a Brentwood campus to have a photo shoot at the campus as long as the photo shoot is scheduled in advance and approved through the facilities office. Two nights each month will be designated by the facilities office for the venue to be used for these sessions. In the case of a funeral or other event that cannot be planned in advance, the scheduled photo shoot may be changed. It will be required that the wedding coordinator that is working with the couple be present for the shoot. A facilities and coordinator fee of \$50/hour will be charged for the session. The session may not last longer than 2 hours. Brentwood Baptist campuses may not be used for photo shoots for members who are getting married at other venues.

WEDDING APPLICATION BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

I affirm that:

1. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be used in a way that contradicts its faith or by persons or groups holding beliefs that contradict the church's faith.
2. To the best of my knowledge the purpose for which I am requesting use of church facilities will not contradict the church's faith, and I commit to promptly disclose any potential conflict of which I am aware, or become aware, to church staff.
3. I understand that Brentwood Baptist Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and biological woman. Further, our pastors and ministers and the staff of Brentwood Baptist Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Brentwood Baptist Church (and its campuses) shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.
4. I understand that Brentwood Baptist Church will not perform a wedding ceremony for couples who are currently living together unless they agree to move apart until the time of the wedding.
5. I understand that upon approval of my facilities use request, I will need to provide a security deposit in the amount of \$500 and any other fees required by the church.
6. I understand that the church does not allow its facilities to be generally available to the public, and that my use of these facilities is subject to the executive pastor's approval, which is conditioned in part on my agreement to the requirements in the "Church Facility Use Policy," a copy of which I have read and understood.
7. The church believes disputes are to be worked out between parties without recourse to the courts. See, generally, Matthew Chapter 18 and 1 Corinthians Chapter 6. Accordingly, users of the facility agree to attempt resolution of any disputes through Christian mediation.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Bride

Name: _____

Member? Yes (campus) _____ No (OR) Regular Attendee? Yes (campus) _____ No

Current Address: _____

Home #: _____ Work #: _____ Cell #: _____

E-mail: _____

Bride's Signature: _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Groom

Name: _____

Member? Yes (campus) _____ No (OR) Regular Attendee? Yes (campus) _____ No

Current Address: _____

Home #: _____ Work #: _____ Cell #: _____

E-mail: _____

Groom's Signature: _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____

The time allowed for weddings will be:

- Saturday - 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- Saturday - 2:00 PM- 6:00 PM
- Saturday - 4:00 PM- 8:00 PM

MINISTER TO PERFORM THE CEREMONY:

WEDDING REHEARSAL DATE: _____ TIME: _____

WEDDING DATE: _____ TIME: _____

Once a location, date and time have been selected, no changes can be made after two (2) weeks prior to the wedding. Changes that are requested before the two (2) week prior deadline will be considered, but cannot be guaranteed.

REFUNDABLE SECURITY DEPOSIT OF \$500 IS REQUIRED TO CONTINUE APPLICATION PROCESS AND TO CONFIRM THE DATE ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR

COMPLETION OF PREMARITAL COUNSELING

This certifies that _____ have completed the required premarital counseling as required by Brentwood Baptist Church.

Minister (please PRINT)

Minister (signature)

Phone

Please return this signed form to your Wedding Coordinator or campus Administrative Assistant at least 2 weeks prior to the wedding.

CATERING POLICIES BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

1. There will be no decorations affixed to the walls, moveable partitions or surfaces in any room. Signage or decorations pertaining to church business will not be removed from any location within the church.
2. **Open flame candles are prohibited on all Brentwood Baptist Church campuses (with the exception of the unity candle).**
3. No alcoholic beverages or items containing alcohol may be served at the reception or any other wedding related activities on the church premises.
4. A Wedding Coordinator must be present for receptions. No exceptions.
5. The caterer and their employees must refrain from the use of irreverent language, discourteous actions and smoking inside the building.
6. The caterer may arrive at the beginning of the reserved 4-hour wedding time frame to begin set up.
7. **Absolutely** no food or drink is to be taken into the wedding venue.
8. The use of church buildings for all wedding activities must conclude and everyone out of the building no later than 8:00 pm. There are no exceptions to this policy. The church Facility Maintenance personnel will be setting up the rooms for the next day's activities.
9. **For Brentwood campus only:** To use the church food service as your caterer **OR** use the kitchen for catering, please contact Chef Andy Engberg at aengberg@brentwoodbaptist.com at least 60 days prior to event. Additional fees may be incurred.

We agree to comply with the rules and regulations of Brentwood Baptist Church regarding decorations, conduct, etc., as described above for weddings and receptions.

Caterer Name _____ Telephone _____

Caterer Signature _____

Wedding Date and Time _____

Bride's Name _____ Telephone _____

Please return this signed form to your Wedding Coordinator or campus Administrative Assistant at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

FLORIST POLICIES BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

1. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to make sure all flowers and decorations are removed immediately after the wedding.
2. No set up of flowers is allowed in the baptistry. No nails, screws, tacks, glue or cellophane tape may be used on the walls carpet, floors, stage, furniture or woodwork. Protective covering must be placed under the unity candelabra. Only dripless candles are to be used in the unity candelabra.
3. Our church facilities staff will be responsible for removing and returning all church-supplied equipment to the wedding closet.
4. Use of wedding decorations or equipment in the aisles is prohibited.
5. The florist and their employees must refrain from the use of irreverent language, discourteous actions and smoking inside the building.
6. **Absolutely** no food or drink is to be taken into the wedding venue.
7. **NO REAL FLOWERS MAY BE DROPPED BY ANY PERSON OF THE WEDDING PARTY.** Silk petals may be dropped down the main aisle. However, it is the responsibility of the wedding party to pick up ALL petals immediately after the ceremony.
8. The florist may arrive 30 minutes prior to the reserved 4-hour time frame and should be scheduled through the wedding coordinator.

We agree to comply with the rules and regulations of Brentwood Baptist Church regarding decorations, conduct, etc., as described above for weddings.

Florist Name _____ Telephone _____

Florist Signature _____

Wedding Date and Time _____

Bride's Name _____ Telephone _____

Please return this signed form to your Wedding Coordinator or campus Administrative Assistant at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

MUSICIAN POLICIES BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

1. The Worship Ministry (at the campus where the wedding is being held) must approve all music used during the ceremony. It is the Bride's responsibility to email the appropriate Minister (see list below) a complete listing of musical selections which will be used during the ceremony 30 days prior to the wedding date. The list must include song title, composer, and lyrics where applicable.
2. The harp, organ, and all electronic/electric instruments are available for use by approved musicians only. If you desire to use any of these instruments with an outside musician, this request must be made in writing to the Worship Ministry.
3. It is the Bride's responsibility to contract with any musicians being used for the wedding ceremony; therefore, musicians must consult the Bride directly with any music related questions. A list of "Special Event Musicians" is available from the Facilities Office or the Music and Worship office.
4. No flowers, ribbons, or other decorations may be affixed in any way to any church-owned musical instruments.
5. No church owned musical instruments may be removed from the church building. Neither can any church instruments be moved within the church building without the approval of the Music and Worship Minister.
6. Musicians and any of their employees must refrain from the use of irreverent language, discourteous actions and smoking inside the building.
7. No food or drink may be taken into the wedding venue.

We agree to comply with the rules and regulations of Brentwood Baptist Church regarding Wedding Ceremony Music as described above.

Musician Name _____ Telephone _____

Musician Signature _____

Wedding Date and Time _____

Bride's Name _____ Telephone _____

Worship Ministry

Brentwood Campus: Luke Roman (lroman@brentwoodbaptist.com)
Station Hill Campus: Cliff Duren (cduren@stationhillchurch.com)
Ave South Campus: Ronnie Dennis (rdennis@avesouthchurch.com)
West Franklin Campus: Brad Cleveland (bcleveland@westfranklinchurch.com)
Woodbine Campus: Melodie Tunney (mtunney@churchatwoodbine.com)
Lockeland Campus: Drew Middleton (dmiddleton@lockelandspringschurch.com)

Please return this signed form to your Wedding Coordinator or campus Administrative Assistant at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

OUTSIDE CONSULTANT AGREEMENT BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

Each wedding held at Brentwood Baptist Church (or an affiliated campus) will be assigned a Brentwood Baptist Church Wedding Coordinator who will be present during all activities scheduled for the wedding.

The Outside Consultant agrees to do the following:

1. Ensure that all communication and special requests with the church go through the Wedding Coordinator.
2. Defer all decisions and interpretation of policies to the assigned Wedding Coordinator. Outside Consultant and Wedding Coordinator will go over the policies of the church and the Consultant will be responsible for ensuring all wedding attendees follow the policies.
3. Provide names and phone numbers of any vendors providing services to the wedding party at least two weeks prior to the event, with a description of services to be provided.
4. Provide information on technical needs directly to the Wedding Coordinator.
5. Ensure bride provides a list of wedding/ceremony music to the Wedding Coordinator and Worship Ministry at least 30 days prior to the wedding for approval by Music and Worship Minister.
6. Understand that under no circumstances will the Outside Consultant move any furniture, flowers, plants, instruments, panels, cameras, or ask technical staff to move them without first consulting the Wedding Coordinator.
7. Ensure that the wedding party stay confined to only those areas which have been reserved for the wedding. Non-compliance to this request may result in additional fees or loss of security deposit.
8. Ensure that the wedding ceremony begins and ends on time.
9. Ensure that they and their employees refrain from the use of irreverent language, discourteous actions and smoking inside the building.

I agree to comply with the rules and regulations of Brentwood Baptist Church as set forth above.

Outside Consultant Name _____ Telephone _____

Outside Consultant Signature _____

Wedding Date and Time _____

Bride's Name _____ Telephone _____

Please return this signed form to your Wedding Coordinator or campus Administrative Assistant at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY POLICIES BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

1. NO FLASH photography will be allowed during the ceremony. The ceremony begins when the bride arrives at the end of the aisle. Timed exposures ONLY are allowed from the balcony. You may photograph the bride and groom as they recess using a flash.
2. The use of tripods, stands, and other equipment is allowed as long as their use does not deface any of the church furnishings and does not interfere with the movement in the aisles.
3. The Church Wedding Coordinator can help direct your Photographer as to suitable locations for setup.
4. Any trash should be placed in its proper receptacle or be removed from the church when you leave.
5. Photographer and their employees must refrain from the use of irreverent language, discourteous actions and smoking inside the building.
6. No food or drink may be taken into the wedding venue.
7. All those assisting the Photographer are expected to abide by these same guidelines.
8. Should you choose NOT to follow these guidelines, you will be added to our UNAPPROVED list of photographers.

We agree to comply with the rules and regulations of Brentwood Baptist Church regarding Photographer as described above.

Photographer Name _____ Telephone _____

Photographer Signature _____

Wedding Date and Time _____

Bride's Name _____ Telephone _____

Please return this signed form to your Wedding Coordinator or campus Administrative Assistant at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

VIDEOGRAPHY POLICIES BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

1. Videotaping is permitted, but is not provided by Brentwood Baptist Church.
2. The Church Wedding Coordinator can help direct your Videographer as to suitable locations for setup.
3. The use of tripods, stands and other equipment is permitted as long as their use does not deface any church furnishings.
4. The use of any Church video equipment is not permitted.
5. Videographer and their employees must refrain from the use of irreverent language, discourteous actions and smoking inside the building.
6. No food or drink may be taken into the wedding venue.

We agree to comply with the rules and regulations of Brentwood Baptist Church regarding Videography as described above.

Videographer Name _____ Telephone _____

Videographer Signature _____

Wedding Date and Time _____

Bride's Name _____ Telephone _____

Please return this signed form to your Wedding Coordinator or campus Administrative Assistant at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

BASKIN CHAPEL WEDDING POLICIES *(Brentwood Campus)*

1. The Baskin Chapel on the Brentwood campus is available for weddings not to exceed 250 attendees.
2. The time allowed for weddings will be 8:00-12:00 PM, 2:00-6:00 PM and 4:00-8:00 PM on Saturdays. The time allowed for Sundays is 2:00-6:00 PM.
3. Sunday weddings will only be considered if both of the previous Saturday time slots are filled.
4. Sunday weddings will be billed at double the normal rate.
5. The bride's room will be scheduled for 4-hour time periods. Requests for longer time periods will not be permitted.
6. No musical instruments, technical equipment, furniture or greenery located throughout the building may be moved or rearranged. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MAY THE ORGAN OR PIANO BE MOVED BY ANYONE OTHER THAN FACILITY PERSONNEL. FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THIS PROVISION WILL RESULT IN A CHARGE AGAINST THE BRIDE'S DEPOSIT EQUAL TO THE AMOUNT OF THE FACILITY RENTAL.** If staging necessitates the moving or rearrangement of musical instruments, technical equipment or furniture, it may be done **ONLY** with prior approval of the Music and Worship Minister and **ONLY** under the direction and supervision of the Wedding Coordinator, Facilities Office, and Media Technical Staff. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL CANDLES BE PLACED ON TOP OF THE ORGAN OR PIANO!**
7. Chairs may not be removed from the Chapel.
8. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to make sure all flowers and decorations are removed immediately after the wedding.
9. No nails, screws, tacks, glue or tape of any kind may be used on the walls, floor, stage, furniture or woodwork.
10. **Open flame candles are prohibited on all Brentwood Baptist Church campuses (with the exception of the unity candle).**
11. Lighting of the unity candle (use dripless candles only) will be done under the supervision of the Church Wedding Coordinator. Protective covering must be placed under the unity candelabra.
12. Use of wedding decorations or equipment in the aisles is prohibited.
13. Confetti, rice, sparklers or other materials are not to be thrown in the church building. **NO REAL FLOWERS MAY BE DROPPED BY ANY PERSON OF THE WEDDING PARTY.** Silk petals may be dropped down the main aisle. However, it is the responsibility of the wedding party to pick up ALL petals immediately after the ceremony.
14. Aisle runners will not be allowed.
15. Cost for this venue: \$1,350.00

WORSHIP CENTER WEDDING POLICIES *(Brentwood Campus)*

1. No musical instruments, technical equipment, furniture or greenery located in the Worship Center should be moved or rearranged.
2. The time allowed for weddings will be 8:00-12:00 PM, 2:00-6:00 PM and 4:00-8:00 PM on Saturdays. The time allowed for Sundays is 2:00-6:00 PM.
3. Sunday weddings will only be considered if both of the previous Saturday time slots are filled.
4. Sunday weddings will be billed at double the normal rate.
5. The bride's room will be scheduled for 4-hour time periods. Requests for longer time periods will not be permitted.
6. Movable wooden panels are available to conceal musical instruments, music stands and the choir loft. These are to be moved by our church custodians **ONLY**. **TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF ALL INVOLVED, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE THE WOODEN PANELS, ORGAN, OR PIANO TO BE MOVED BY ANYONE OTHER THAN FACILITY PERSONNEL. FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THIS PROVISION WILL RESULT IN A CHARGE AGAINST THE BRIDE'S DEPOSIT EQUAL TO THE AMOUNT OF THE FACILITY RENTAL. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL CANDLES BE PLACED ON THE ORGAN OR PIANO!**
7. If staging necessitates the moving or the rearrangement of musical instruments, technical equipment or furniture, or if greenery is moved from other areas of the building, it may be done **ONLY** with prior approval of the Music and Worship Minister and **ONLY** under the direction and supervision of the Wedding Coordinator, Facilities Office, and Media Technical Staff.
8. Chairs may not be removed from the Worship Center, stage or choir loft.
9. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to make sure all flowers and decorations are removed immediately after the wedding.
10. No nails, screws, tacks, glue or tape of any kind may be used on the walls, carpet, floors, stage, furniture or woodwork.
11. **Open flame candles are prohibited on all Brentwood Baptist Church campuses (with the exception of the unity candle).** Lighting of the unity candle (use dripless candles only) will be done under the supervision of the Church Wedding Coordinator. Protective covering must be placed under the unity candelabra.
12. Use of wedding decorations or equipment in the aisles is prohibited.
13. Confetti, rice, sparklers or other materials are not to be thrown in the church building. **NO REAL FLOWERS MAY BE DROPPED BY ANY PERSON OF THE WEDDING PARTY.** Silk petals may be dropped down the main aisle. However, it is the responsibility of the wedding party to pick up ALL petals immediately after the ceremony.
14. No aisle runners are allowed.
15. An additional sound tech fee of \$35 will be incurred if changes are made after the original request is confirmed.
16. Cost of this venue is \$1,550.00

WILSON HALL RECEPTION POLICIES *(Brentwood Campus)*

1. Wilson Hall is available for receptions and may be reserved at the time the wedding is scheduled.
2. The capacity of this area should not exceed 1,000 people at any time.
3. The wedding party will be required to use Brentwood Baptist Church furniture.
4. There will be no decorations affixed to the walls, moveable partitions, stage, or surfaces in the rooms.
- 5. Open flame candles are prohibited on all Brentwood Baptist Church campuses.**
6. Catering policies will be discussed in detail with our Church Wedding Coordinator.
7. No alcoholic beverages or items containing alcohol will be served at the reception or any other wedding related activities on the church premises.
8. The wedding party and their guests must refrain from the use of irreverent language, discourteous actions and smoking inside the church building.
9. The requested event date must be approved through the Facilities Management Office.
10. To use the church food service as your caterer or use the kitchen for catering, please contact Chef Andy Engberg at aengberg@brentwoodbaptist.com at least 60 days prior to event. Additional fees may be incurred.
11. Neither the use of electronically based bands nor dancing is permissible at the reception. Acoustic instruments may be played and song list should be approved by the Worship Ministry (see Musician Policies).
12. Use of the piano must be coordinated in advance through the Wedding Coordinator.
13. The wedding party must vacate the area by 8:00 p.m. on Saturday evening due to the required set up time for Sunday morning worship.
14. Special arrangements must be made 30 days in advance for special audio, video and lighting technical support with the Technical Director. Tech Support is an additional \$75 for all receptions.
15. The Church Wedding Coordinator must be present for receptions.
16. Cost of this venue for a reception is \$500.

THEY'RE LIVING TOGETHER—THEY WANT ME TO PERFORM THEIR WEDDING ONE MINISTER'S RESPONSE MIKE GLENN

The first meeting I have with a couple planning their wedding ceremony is usually routine. I find out basic information from the bride and groom. Nothing fancy—where they work, how they met, and phone numbers and addresses. That's when I find out a couple is living together without being married. Both the groom and bride-to-be give me the same address. What am I to do with this situation?

First, I must acknowledge that I am a Christian minister. My perspective on marriage and how we approach this relationship is formed from the clear teachings of Scripture. I am compelled to approach marriage from a distinctively Christian perspective. Christians are different from the rest of the world. We follow Christ's guidance and counsel in our relationships and with that, we look forward to God's blessings in our marriages.

For believers, the issue is not whether or not a couple should be married. The question of marriage is answered in the same context as every part of the believer's life. Will our marriage bring glory and honor to God? In a Christian marriage, the marriage partners express their relationship with Christ in their relationships with each other. As a couple prepares for their wedding, both must ask if their present lifestyle is one that will bring glory and honor to God. If the couple's lifestyle is not one that currently honors God, is it reasonable to expect the marriage relationship to bring glory to God?

The Scriptures plainly teach that a couple should live together as husband and wife only after they are married. Living together before marriage harms the people involved and ignores God's vision for the marriage relationship.

In the wedding service, we use such words as "holy" and phrases like "seeking God's blessings." When I am involved in a marriage service, the service will be distinctively Christian. Not only will the marriage ceremony be distinctively Christian, but as a Christian minister, I expect the couple's marriage to be distinctively Christian. The Bible clearly articulates Christian principles for both husbands and wives. These principles are to be part of the couple's married life together. Living together without being married is evidence that the Christian principles of marriage are not yet understood.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES INVOLVED:

1. **We are precious to God.** Jesus Christ gave His life for us on the cross. Living together takes what is precious—the groom and his wife-to-be—and makes them common. God has created each person uniquely in His image. Living together without marriage debases each person. The woman is not honored as being the husband's wife; she becomes simply a woman who is living with a man. The man becomes a man who is living with a

woman. Neither are honored or built up. In fact, each one is torn down, made less than God intended.

2. **Living together erodes the foundation of a lasting marriage which cannot easily be repaired.** Commitment—the total and willful decision of a man and a woman to remain together until death—is the foundation of a successful and Godly marriage. The scriptural principal involved in commitment is sacrifice. Living together in marriage requires a great deal of self-discipline and sacrifice. Living apart before marriage demonstrates that you are capable of exerting this self-discipline and sacrifice. Especially in the face of today’s culture, it is a greater statement of commitment to say, “I will restrain myself until we are married.”
3. **Sex outside of marriage is always wrong.** Sexual relations without the binding commitments of the total persons involved as exhibited in marriage cheapens the relationship and the people involved. For the sake of the persons who are living together and seeking to be married, and keeping with our obedience to God and His Word, I cannot scripturally nor logically support this arrangement. Supporting two people living together without marriage violates the principle of love for the couple and the integrity of the Gospel we proclaim.

I WILL WORK WITH THE COUPLE WHO ARE LIVING TOGETHER WITHOUT BEING MARRIED UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. That they enter into premarital counseling with a recognized minister or counselor.
2. That they move apart until the time of the wedding, and abstain from sexual relations. Moving apart until the wedding will restore some understanding of the sacredness of the marriage event. The time will also give both individuals an opportunity to evaluate where they are in their own pilgrimages as Christians. It also shows their future partners that they are willing to do whatever is necessary for their marriage to survive. To be quite honest, there will be times when remaining in the marriage will be hard, not merely inconvenient.

Please do not misunderstand my position. The stand I take is taken out of great love for the couple and out of great respect for God and His Word. I simply cannot silently stand by and watch as a couple does things that hurt their lives, damages their prospects for a successful marriage, and ignores God’s desires for their lives.

I trust the couple will prayerfully consider the redemptive remedies I have offered. I am deeply committed to living with integrity the claims the Gospel of Jesus Christ makes upon my life. Also, I am deeply committed in my love for each person contemplating marriage. Sometimes, love means having to be painfully honest with the one who is loved.

God has offered marriage as a great gift to us. I want each marriage to be all that the couple hopes it will be. I want each marriage to be all God wants it to be. When it comes to a Christian marriage, I am not comfortable in settling for anything less.

Regular Attendee Form

Name: _____

| | | |
|------|------------------|----------|
| Date | Service Attended | Minister |
|------|------------------|----------|

| | | |
|------|------------------|----------|
| Date | Service Attended | Minister |
|------|------------------|----------|

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| Date | Service Attended | Minister |
|------|------------------|----------|

| | | |
|------|------------------|----------|
| Date | Service Attended | Minister |
|------|------------------|----------|

This form must be signed by a minister of the church on the date of attendance.