



Wedding Policy

*"He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD."
- Proverbs 18:22*

*So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together,
let man not separate." - Matthew 19:6*

Congratulations! We are happy to learn that you are considering using the facilities of Good News Bible Chapel for your wedding! Please read the following carefully. It presents several important policies and practices of Good News Bible Chapel regarding weddings. Please call the office at 508-226-2916 or send e-mail to elders@gNBC.org with any questions.

1. Attendance required

As a general rule we perform weddings only for those who are regular attendees of Good News Bible Chapel. "Regular attendees" usually means three out of four Sundays on average. In rare cases, special circumstances may warrant bypassing this policy. The elders will review the circumstances and make this decision.

2. God's design for marriage

We believe the Bible teaches that marriage is instituted by God for the benefit of all, Christians and non-Christians alike. We also believe that marriage is designed by God as a union between one man and one woman.

Specifically, marriage is designed by God for loving, supportive companionship and procreation. *"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him... For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.'" - Genesis 2:18 & 24.*

The bible also teaches that marriage is a symbolic picture of the loving and sacrificial relationship between Jesus Christ, the "bridegroom," and his church, "the bride." *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless." - Ephesians 5:25-27.*

Bible teaches that marriage is intended by God to be a permanent, life-long commitment. Jesus said: *"For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. Consequently they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."* Matthew 19:5-6.

Finally, 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 clearly teaches that Christians should not be "unequally yoked;" that is, born-again Christians should not intentionally marry a non-believer. The spiritual foundation of a marriage must be united and strong, not divided. From a practical standpoint, the marriage of a Christian to a non-Christian poses potential for significant problems with personal priorities and values, decision making, finances and child rearing.

3. Pre-marriage counseling

Any couple being married at Good News is required to participate in pre-marriage counseling with an elder of your choosing. The Pre-Marriage Counseling Agreement (located at the end of this document) spells out what is expected.

4. Questions regarding divorce

The Bible is very much opposed to divorce as it is a departure from the will of God, and His design for marriage. In Luke 16:18 Jesus states that: *"Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."*

It is our policy not to participate in a remarriage where there have not been any Biblical grounds for the divorce. Every request by divorced persons for remarriage will be discussed individually and agreed upon by the elders.

5. Living together and pre-marital sexual involvement

If you are already living together we request, based on the authority of the Bible, that you confess this as sin to God and cease living together until you are married.

Also, if you are already engaging in sexual relations, we ask you to stop. The primary reason for this request is that the scriptures teach that we are not to engage in premarital relations. Fornication (sexual intercourse between any two people not married to each other) is clearly prohibited in the Bible. See: 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; Galatians 5:19-21; Hebrews 13:4; etc.

A second reason for asking you to stop sexual relations before marriage is to find out if your relationship is built on something other than just the physical relationship.

We will not participate in the marriage of those who are deliberately breaking God's Law, unless there is heartfelt repentance, including the desire to walk in obedience to God demonstrated by living separately and cessation of sexual relations.

6. Setting the date and securing use of the buildings

The date and time should first be cleared with the person you would like to officiate at the wedding (usually the person who conducts your pre-marital counseling sessions), since his schedule is not always flexible. The facility manager will check to see if the building is available on the date you desire (including a date for a rehearsal). A decision also needs to be made as to whether the reception will be held in the Good News Activity Center in order to hold this time open as well. You must also sign a "Church Building Usage Agreement" and turn it in to the church office.

7. Use of the church buildings

- Any person assisting in the ceremony or reception shall be expected to dress appropriately and modestly.
- The desire to invite additional clergy members to co-participate in the service must be discussed and approved by the elders.
- Music for the service will be appropriate "Christian music" and music for the reception will be in good taste and appropriate for use in a church building.
- While you may use musicians of your own choosing, musicians from Good News are available with appropriate notice and schedule availability. Your pre-marital counselor can help you with this choice.
- Decorations should be in keeping with the dignity of the wedding service. Nothing should be used that will mar the facilities, furnishings, or woodwork in any area of the church. Any decorations hung must be removed following the service/reception. Note:

All fragments of adhesive tape must be removed from walls, doors, furniture, etc. Dripless candles may be used.

- It is the responsibility of the wedding party to see that all Chapel owned furniture and equipment are returned to their proper places when finished with them. A clean up fee may be assessed if significant janitorial work is required.
- The church sound system shall be operated only by qualified church personnel who should be notified well in advance. Your pre-marital counselor can help you with this.
- There is to be absolutely no smoking or consumption of alcohol anywhere on the church property.
- We request no dancing at the wedding reception if it is held in The Activity Center. We realize that this may require you to find another facility. Allowing dancing at weddings sets a precedent for dancing in the Activity Center that is not allowed.

8. Fees

- The standard fee for use of the Auditorium and other rooms for a wedding rehearsal and ceremony is \$125. The fee for the use of the Activity Center for a reception is \$125. These fees help to cover the costs associated with set-up and break down of seating, etc. In rare cases, these fees may be waived.
- It is customary but not required to offer a monetary gift to the person performing the pre-marital counseling and wedding ceremony, and to any musicians and sound technicians involved.

Policy: 101 Revision Date: March, 2005

Pre-Marital Counseling Agreement

In preparation for our marriage, and in order to have our wedding performed at Good News Bible Chapel, we agree to fulfill the following requirements:

1. Several sessions of pre-marriage counseling with a church elder selected by mutual agreement.
2. Completion of all assignments from an assigned workbook. This workbook will provide the content for the pre-marriage counseling sessions.
3. Regular church attendance at Good News Bible Chapel (three out of four Sundays, barring any unusual circumstances)
4. We will purchase these required books. They are available at *Morning Star Christian Bookstore* on Rt. 1 in South Attleboro or online from www.christianbook.com
 - *Preparing for Marriage God's Way* by Wayne Mack (both bride and groom need their own copy)
 - *Intended for Pleasure* by Dr. Ed Wheat (one copy required for the couple)

Groom's Signature

Bride's Signature