

Faith Community Church

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fch.org



*Planning
Guide
For*

*Your
Wedding
at*

Faith Community Church

Congratulations on your engagement!

We, at Faith Community Church, hope this time will be a rich experience as you prepare to join together in Christian marriage.

We, your pastors and staff, want to be helpful as you prepare for marriage and plan for your wedding. Our church wedding coordinator will assist and guide you through the wedding process along with the officiating pastor. Together, they will be valuable resources.

This *Wedding Planning Guide* will also be useful. It details the steps you will go through and lists information that will help you prepare for your wedding day.

To begin the process, please read this booklet, complete the forms in the center and mail or drop them off at the church. After we have received your data forms you may call to schedule an appointment with a pastor.

May God bless you in this exciting time of your engagement!

— *The Faith Community Church Staff*

subsequent to salvation); rather it refers to qualities which currently characterize one's life.

Paul's qualifications for leadership in the church do not exclude singles from such leadership for the quality of the marital state was in view, not the nature of it. Paul himself was most likely single.

The innocent believer in a divorce and those who divorce and remarry on Biblical grounds have the same rights and privileges of ministry and service as anyone else. Qualifications for office, etc., are based on the standards by which all are measured; the fact of the divorce itself has no bearing.

A believer married to an unbeliever has the same rights and privileges of ministry and service as anyone else.

The innocent party in a marriage affected by unchastity has the same rights and privileges of ministry and service as anyone else.

However, the guilty party in a non-Biblical divorce or marriage affected by unchastity is not qualified for ministry and service until reasonable evidence of repentance and godliness of life has been demonstrated.

Those involved in a marriage where there is significant discord other than unchastity ought not to be serving in an office or official ministry of the church. Instead, they should be using all possible time and energy to promote reconciliation and peace at home. For such couples, the attainment of God's intention for their marriage must precede their involvement in the work of the church.

Those who come to us from elsewhere who have been involved in an unbiblical divorce or remarriage after salvation are expected to be repentant and accept Christ's teachings on divorce and remarriage for the present marriage. Qualification for official ministry and service is based on observations that the present marriage is characterized by pure and sacrificial love.

God's eyes, the original marriage bond was still intact at the time of the remarriage (Mark 10:11-12).

- In a broken marriage, the goal should be confession of sin, and repentance that leads to the restoration of fellowship with our Lord. It is expected that the believer will then, if possible, attempt to restore the marriage.
- If the repentant believer has already remarried, to pursue divorce from the present spouse to seek reunion with the former spouse would be wrong. After all, the grace of God delivers one from sin at the point of genuine confession and repentance.
- The second marriage becomes valid once the believer has confessed and repented. He or she is to remain in the second marriage and to be obedient from that point on to the Scripture on marriage and divorce.

If someone was married, divorced, or remarried before salvation, he or she is responsible to God for living according to the Scriptures on these matters after their conversion (I Cor. 7:17-24).

Remarriage

Remarriage is allowed when an individual's spouse has died (I Cor. 7:39; Rom 7:3). This marriage is only to a believer (I Cor. 7:39; II Cor. 6:14-18).

Remarriage is allowed when one's divorce has been on Biblical grounds of unfaithfulness by the other spouse (Matt. 19:9) or if an unbelieving spouse has left the marriage (I Cor. 7:15).

If one's divorce was on unbiblical grounds, remarriage is allowed if one's former spouse has remarried. However, one should examine one's own contribution to the divorce and repent of any sinful actions.

Remarriage to one's former spouse is certainly allowed if the divorce was not on Biblical grounds. However, the issues that caused the divorce must be thoroughly resolved.

On Church Service and Marital Status

First Timothy 3:2, 12 sets the marital qualification for leadership within the church. The phrase "the husband of one wife" does not mean that a person can not have had a divorce in the past since none of the other qualifications listed refer to specific acts in the past (prior to salvation or

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The Steps ...

To ensure the smooth planning and celebration of your wedding, we have prepared a checklist of simple steps you and your fiancé will take as you plan for your special day. You can also use this checklist to record meeting dates, names, and the contact information of those helping you as you plan your wedding.

(Numbers in parentheses indicate pages on which the steps are discussed)

- Receive and read this ***Planning Guide*** **TOGETHER**
- Complete the ***Personal Data Sheets*** and return to the office
- Contact the church to schedule an appointment with a pastor
- Initial meeting with pastor (4) on: _____
Pastor's name: _____
Contact information: _____
- Securing a Wedding Date** from pastor (4)
- Set Wedding Date with Pastor: _____
- Rehearsal date and time _____
- Wedding coordinator's name and contact information

- Initial Coordinator contact (5) on _____
- Ceremony Planning Meeting with Pastor (10) on _____

(4-6 weeks before wedding date). Bring changes to ***Order of Service*** (11), music selections, and list of wedding parties and participants.

- The first legitimate ground for divorce is unchastity. This is any kind of Biblically-prohibited sexual relationship with another or any Biblically condemned perversion (Matt. 5:32; 19:9). Our Lord teaches that only unchastity can shatter the bond of oneness created by marriage and its consummation in the act of marriage.
- In marriages where there has been sexual fidelity but significant discord, division, and abuse, the bond of oneness still exists though the marriage is a terrible relationship. The first act should be to protect the safety and welfare of family members. Then such couples must be encouraged and, where needed, assisted to seek the help of trained Christian counselors so they can accept and apply the Biblical principles of marriage and personal relationships to their situation.
- Where a marriage has been shattered by adultery the goal should be first repentance, reconciliation, and renewal of the marriage wherever possible.
- The second legitimate ground for divorce is when an unbeliever seeks a divorce from a believer because of incompatibility with the Christian or with his or her Christian convictions (I Cor. 7:12-15).
- A Christian, however, is not permitted to seek divorce on the grounds of his or her mate being a non-Christian. If the non-Christian wants to remain in the marriage with the Christian, the Christian is obligated to do so and to be the best possible mate (I Pet. 3:1-2, 7-9).

If Christians divorce for reasons other than these Biblical grounds, they must remain unmarried or reconciled to the former spouse (I Cor. 7:10-11).

When there has been a divorce on non-Biblical grounds, the marriage bond is still intact. Therefore, the one who remarries first commits "adultery" (Matt. 19:9). This is also true of the new spouse (Matt. 5:32). Anyone considering marriage to a person who divorced on non-Biblical grounds must understand this truth.

Men's decrees of divorce do not affect God's bond of marriage. Adultery does. Because adultery through remarriage breaks the marriage bond, the ex-spouse is then free to remarry without committing adultery.

A believer who pursues divorce or remarriage on non-Biblical grounds must understand that he or she is subject to church discipline because he or she is openly rejecting the word of God. The one who pursues remarriage on non-Biblical grounds commits the sin of "adultery" because in

Biblical Perspective on Marriage & Divorce at Faith Community Church

Marriage

The Biblical view of marriage is that it is indissoluble (Gen. 2:22-24; Matt. 19:5-6; Eph. 5:31). God ordained marriage to be a bond in which two people actually do become one before Him. This is clearly stated in the above texts and also in Ephesians 5:28, where it says that the wife is part of her husband now; the implication is that he is part of her as well. This oneness is consummated in the act of marriage.

Marriage is for the duration of one's life. Marriage is not a convenience contract to be sustained as long as the two mutually agree upon it or only as long as one is satisfied with it (Rom. 7:2-3; I Cor. 7:39).

A marriage is legally valid when performed by any authorized representative of the state and whether the two involved were or were not true believers in Christ at the time of the wedding. Faith in Jesus Christ, or lack of it, has no bearing on the validity of the legal marriage. (Heb. 13:4; I Cor. 7:12-14).

Marriage is to be accompanied by sexual faithfulness to one's spouse and by purity of thought and conduct toward all of both sexes (I Thess. 4:3-7; Matt. 5:28; I Cor. 6:9-11, 18-20).

God's will for the Christian concerning marriage is that a believer should marry another believer. (I Cor. 7:39; 11 Cor. 6:14-18).

Divorce

God hates divorce (Mal. 2:16; Matt. 19:6). Both the Old Testament and New Testament make it very clear that marriage is an indissoluble bond for as long as both are alive except for in two situations, which we will discuss in a moment. Jesus explains that divorce was a concession given to the Jews by Moses because of the hardness of their hearts (Mark 10:4-5). It was granted in order to protect innocent parties.

Divorce is permitted by God under certain conditions, but it is not mandated by these conditions:

- Get wedding license 4 to 60 days before wedding date (9)
- Inform wedding party and participants of rules & regulations (7)
- Share appropriate information with florist, photographer, musicians (8)

Notes: _____

Prerequisites for Wedding Approval

As a Christian church, we value, support, and practice Christian marriage in the context of a community of Christian faith. Marriage is God's wonderful gift to us and deserves careful presentation, protection, and preparation. The following prerequisites are designed to help you enjoy the blessings of Christian marriage in their fullest measure.

- **Membership or regular attendance** at Faith Community Church before the wedding. Attendance is recorded by signing the response form in worship services.
- **Pastoral meeting.** A meeting with a pastor must take place before we can commit to having the wedding at Faith Community Church. At the end of this meeting, you and the pastor will decide if you can move forward with wedding plans at Faith Community Church. In most cases, this meeting should take place at least six months before the wedding.
- **Premarital counseling.** This is required and offered through Faith Community Church. This process begins with your first pastoral meeting and should begin six months before your wedding. (page 4)
- **Christian Relationship and Lifestyle.** By definition, a Christian marriage is between a Christian man and a Christian woman. If you are living together or are sexually active, please read "A Christian Perspective on Sex" on page 15 of this booklet. Normally, such couples will be asked to separate and adopt a celibate lifestyle until marriage. A pastor would be pleased to answer questions you might have and help you restore your lifestyle to be one that honors God and is best for you.

If you have been previously married and divorced, please read "Biblical Perspectives on Marriage & Divorce at Faith Community Church" (page 21-23) before your initial meeting with a pastor, and he will answer any questions you may have.

Premarital Counseling

Before calling the church to schedule an appointment with a pastor, please read this guide, especially pages 14-24 and complete the *Personal Data Sheets*.

Where do we go from here?

You have read this because you desire to be married at Faith Community Church. Our goal is to help you prepare for a successful, satisfying marriage. To do this, a couple ought to honor God and his Word.

The Bible is clear that sex is for marriage. Sex before marriage can actually harm a relationship. We want to help you succeed in your marriage.

What is our next step?

Contact the church office to set up an appointment with a pastor. He will sit down with you and discuss your situation and available options.

In preparation for meeting with a pastor, please be prepared to discuss the following questions:

- When did you become sexually active in your relationship? What led to this?
- What impact has your sexual activity had on your relationship?
- What would be the benefits of adopting a celibate lifestyle until your wedding night?

...to keep alive creativity in expressing love

Love is expressed in many different ways. However, sex before marriage tends to become the primary expression of love.

When sex is saved until marriage, the couple must discover other ways to express love and commitment. They find ways that are often more fulfilling and satisfying: the importance of kind words; spending time together not because sex will be had, but because of the joy of being together; the special gift that says “I love you!”, sharing kindness by helping each other; and affection that communicates “I love you.”

...to have a honeymoon (not just another vacation together)

A honeymoon is intended to be a time of discovery and joy, a time to launch a marriage in the completeness of oneness. Sadly, for many, nothing is left for the honeymoon, and it is merely another vacation.

Stepping away from sex until marriage cannot erase sexual activity that has preceded it, but it can promise a fresh start and anticipation for the development of a sexual relationship within the oneness of marriage.

...to develop trust

The development of self-control within your relationship will create an environment of trust in your marriage. The ability to say “no” to sex now will prepare you for saying “no” to sex outside your marriage in the future. When your spouse sees that your passions do not control you, but that you control your passions, he or she will respect you and trust you.

...to prevent pregnancy

A natural byproduct of sex is pregnancy. Pregnancy before marriage creates incredible strain on the relationship—both before and after the wedding.

Initial Meeting with Your Officiating Pastor

This is an informal time to get acquainted and talk over matters that relate to your marriage and wedding. It will last from one to two hours. During the first hour, the pastor will ask you some questions and discuss some of the following topics:

- why you want to get married
- a little about your family backgrounds and your goals and plans for the future.
- your Christian experience
- any questions or concerns you might have
- how Faith Community Church and its staff will help you prepare for your wedding and marriage

You will also discuss Christian marriage and explore your willingness to follow God’s criteria as well as the wisdom of getting married at this time. Finally, both you and the pastor will decide together if we will move forward towards your wedding at Faith Community Church.

Your pastor will arrange for you to take the **PREPARE** inventory, a pre-marital tool designed to help you learn more about yourself, your partner, and your relationship. The Caring Coordinator will review the results with you and explain the premarital counseling process which includes being matched with a married couple from the church as “marriage mentors” to complete the counseling process. You can expect to meet with your mentors 5 or 6 times before your wedding.

Securing a Wedding Date

After your officiating pastor approves your wedding, you can set a wedding and rehearsal date and time with the pastor according to his schedule.

A wedding coordinator will contact you to confirm the date has been placed on the church calendar, and she will set up a meeting to discuss your wedding needs.

Please note that all weddings will be held in the Chapel unless attendance exceeds 160. If you will have more than 160 guests, please speak with your pastor about availability of the Worship Center.

Wedding Coordinator

After your meeting with the pastor, a wedding coordinator will contact you to assist in planning the details of your wedding. Your coordinator will be your liaison with the church, attend the wedding rehearsal and wedding, and be your resource for any questions about your wedding day.

Initial Wedding Coordinator meeting

At this meeting, your coordinator will discuss with you the details of your wedding service. She will also review the wedding format and available options and answer any questions you may have. You may contact the wedding coordinator with any concerns or problems, and she may phone or email you to see how plans are progressing and will meet with you several times leading up to your wedding day.

She will inform the church staff of your decisions on wedding and reception setup, cleanup, sound and light, and other requests.

Attending the Rehearsal

Either the officiating pastor or your wedding coordinator will direct the rehearsal. Your coordinator will provide tips on etiquette and coordination, like meeting with the ushers, organizing duties, and coordinating the start time and program cues with the pianist or organist.

You should urge all wedding attendants and participants—including the musician(s) who accompany the processional and recessional—to attend the rehearsal. Please encourage everyone to be there 30 minutes early.

The rehearsal will last one hour. Although the musicians' rehearsals may be planned for another time, the musicians (or their representative) should be at the wedding rehearsal to learn their cues and order of service and to talk with the sound technician about their needs.

Attending the Wedding

Your coordinator will arrive at the church before the wedding to check the room setup, turn on lights, and assist as needed. She will guide the wedding party to their changing rooms, familiarize the photographer with the area, and assist the florist. The coordinator will help the wedding party with any last-minute details and line up parents and attendants to ensure a timely start. If you would like, your coordinator can also provide suggestions for your receiving line and help line up the participants.

But we are already sexually active—what can we do now?

Many who had been sexually active before marriage later commit themselves to a celibate lifestyle until marriage. It is not easy, but the benefits are great.

We never hear couples say, “I wish we had continued to be sexually active,” or “Stopping our sexual activity before marriage destroyed our marriage.” We *do* hear people say, “I wish we had waited,” or, “If we had stopped, it would have helped.” Why do they say this?

Why Wait?

...to maintain an objective view of your relationship

In a relationship, stepping away from sex until marriage can provide a more objective view of your relationship. When a couple is sexually active before marriage, sex can become the focal point in the relationship. This diminishes or even destroys the growth of other vital aspects of the relationship. And because of guilt, your relationship with God is hindered; this, too, impacts your relationship as a couple.

Abstaining from sex before marriage allows an honest evaluation of the relationship. Without guilt about sex, the couple can feel the blessing of God and develop other vital aspects of their relationship. Everything is open for communication. There is no guilt or shame to deal with.

...to develop other areas in your relationship

Waiting until marriage for sex brings growth in other areas of your relationship. Because God intends sex for marriage, we feel distant from God when we have become sexually involved before marriage. Experiencing God's forgiveness and waiting allow us to develop our relationship with God from a pure heart.

Emotionally, waiting until marriage develops within us a better attitude about ourselves and our mate. We view each other as valuable for who we are and not primarily what can be physically experienced.

When sex is not the focal point of a relationship before marriage, communication is stronger and more fulfilling. Communication deepens the relationship. Sex can shut down meaningful communication because we are drawn to view each other primarily as physical beings, often ignoring emotional and spiritual aspects.

...a wonderful way to get to know your spouse

When referring to married couples, the Bible often uses the word “know” to describe sexual intercourse. In the oneness of the marriage relationship, sex provides a wonderful environment to better understand yourself and your spouse emotionally and spiritually as well as to develop and enhance communication.

The openness of oneness allows a couple to become vulnerable with one another and grow as they share together. Sex before marriage can push couples apart spiritually and emotionally and can hinder communication.

...designed for reproduction

One reason God intended sex for marriage is that it is within the commitment of marriage that God has chosen to bring children into the world. Sex produces children. Children need the safe, loving environment of a committed marriage.

“God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” Genesis 1:28

...worth waiting for

When you wait, you enter marriage honoring God and each other. Our obedience to God strengthens our relationship with him and our spouse.

When you wait for marriage, you learn to control your passions. There are times within marriage when sex will be unavailable to you—during business trips, during or after pregnancy, or perhaps because of illness. Self-control developed before marriage will be useful during marriage.

“It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God.” I Thessalonians 4:3-5

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”

I Corinthians 6:19-20

Facility Setup

The wedding coordinator will coordinate with the Faith Community Church custodian and staff the setup of the Chapel, dressing rooms, lobby, and, when necessary, the Fellowship Hall.

If your reception will be held at Faith Community Church, you should discuss your choice of caterer with your wedding coordinator.

We also suggest you provide a light snack for the wedding party sometime before the ceremony to help avoid light-headedness or fainting.

The Chapel

The following equipment is available for weddings in the Chapel:

- A podium for the guest book
 - Basic microphone setup (lapel for pastor, 1-2 podium microphones for solos and readings)
 - A table for the unity candle
- Music and flower stands

The Reception

Faith Community Church provides 60” round tables, each of which comfortably seats eight people. We can accommodate a reception for approximately 150 people.

We can also provide 6 or 8-ft. rectangular tables for a head table and for buffet tables.

The caterer—or the bride and groom—must provide all linens and decorations. Scheduling for decorations should be coordinated through your wedding coordinator. Nothing is to be taped to walls, and social dancing is not allowed.

Policies

Faith Community Church is a smoke-free building.

No alcoholic beverages may be brought to or consumed in the Faith Community Church building or facilities or on the grounds.

Social dancing is not permitted in the building.

No rice, birdseed, potpourri, aerosol shooting string, etc. may be brought into or thrown in the building, entry area, or grounds.

No food or drink in the Chapel.

It is your responsibility to communicate these policies to your wedding party and to whoever else needs to know.

Please note: Anyone using the facilities around holiday seasons will be subordinate to the seasonal decorations set up by the church's decorating committee. **Seasonal decorations will not be removed or substantially altered for events such as weddings,**

Sound and Light Technician

Faith Community Church assigns to your wedding a sound and light technician who will provide basic setup and run the sound and lights. Basic setup includes a microphone for the pastor, 1-2 microphones at a podium for solos and readings, and a CD for playing music. For an additional fee, more complex setups can be arranged with the technician.

Video Recording

Video recording of your wedding ceremony is permitted, but Faith Community Church does not provide a technician or equipment. If a video recording of your wedding is to be made, your videographer will need to know the following:

- Video recording of the ceremony must be done from one of several predetermined, fixed locations. (Please discuss this with your wedding coordinator).
- During the ceremony, the videographer must remain in one place and will not be permitted to roam.
- Video lamps are not allowed during the ceremony

...makes two people one

If God created sex, then why the limitations? Why is sex intended only for a marriage relationship?

As the designer of the human race, God developed within us a need for intimacy on many levels. The physical intimacy of a sexual relationship is intended to reflect the spiritual and emotional intimacy of commitment of a couple through marriage.

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." Genesis 2:24

Marriage draws two people together into a oneness of intimacy found nowhere else. The sexual relationship consummates or completes that oneness. Two lives are united spiritually and emotionally, as well as physically. This oneness only really takes place after the individuals leave their parents as their primary relationship, and they then cleave (commit themselves) to the other without reservation.

Sexual union before marriage unites two people into one without the spiritual and emotional oneness of the marriage commitment. Sex is intended to be the last, grand uniting of two lives into one through the commitment of marriage.

...designed for giving

God never intended a sexual relationship to be a taking relationship, a relationship that focuses on self. Rather, the sexual union of husband and wife is an opportunity to give to one another, to seek the fulfillment of another—not the sole satisfaction of self. A sexual relationship

outside of marriage tends to focus on taking for self rather than giving for the other.

"The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control." 1 Corinthians 7:3-5

A Christian Perspective on Sex

Faith Community Church values God's Word, the Bible, and healthy, growing marriages.

As Christians, we have a commitment to take our lead in thought and action from the Bible and to apply it to all areas of life. The Bible states clearly that a sexual relationship is intended for marriage and that sex outside of marriage is wrong.

We also know that couples who are sexually active before marriage are more likely to experience marital dissatisfaction and divorce than one who is not.

This section looks at sex, its role in life, and why it ought to be experienced only in marriage.

Sex is ...

...created by God

Sex is not a mistake. It is not an aberration. It is not unnatural. Sex is one of God's great ideas. God created everything that exists, and he culminated his creation by creating humanity. He created us as male and female. He created us as sexual beings. He created us to have sex.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27

...wonderful in marriage

A sexual relationship within marriage is to be enjoyed, celebrated, and treasured.

"May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. A loving doe, a graceful deer—may her breasts satisfy you always; may you ever be captivated by her love." Proverbs 5:18-19

A sexual relationship outside of marriage keeps us from what God intended to be the best experience of sex within a marriage relationship.

A sexual relationship outside of marriage exposes us to emotional and spiritual pain; it is contrary to God's purpose for our lives.

"But if they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion." I Corinthians 7:9

Honoraria

An honorarium is traditionally given to the officiating pastor, and to any other professional service providers who do not have a separate fee agreement.

The amount usually given depends upon the individuals and the amount of time or work involved. When you expect more (rehearsals, extra solos, much practice, or a difficult service, etc.), the honoraria should be increased accordingly.

- Accompanist or Soloist: amount determined by the musician.
- Pastors: appropriate amount based on the premarital counseling and preparation, rehearsal, and wedding preparation. (Your Wedding Coordinator can help you determine the appropriate amount)
The fees will be collected by the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal and distributed to the individuals above.

Information for Your Service Providers

You will need to share the following information with your florist, photographer, and musicians in order for your day to go as smoothly as possible.

Photographer

Your wedding coordinator will be a good resource for your photographer before and during the wedding. **No flash photography** is allowed during the ceremony except during the processional and recessional. Shots may be restaged after the ceremony.

Florist

Your florist will need the following information:

- All flowers, corsages, boutonnieres, bows, garlands, etc. should be labeled and arrive two hours before the ceremony begins.
- If you would like a runner, the Chapel requires a 52-foot aisle runner. Runners are *not* provided by Faith Community Church.

- Candles may be used *only* on the platform. “Dripless” candles are required for use in a candelabrum or as unity candles. You must supply the candles and holders.
- To avoid having litter and wrappings in the Chapel or in public view, the wedding coordinator will designate where the flowers should be delivered and unwrapped or unboxed.

Pianist

Your wedding coordinator can assist you by suggesting names of pianists. Other musicians of your own choosing are to be discussed with the wedding coordinator.

Music Selection

Questions regarding music, lyrics, or appropriateness may be directed to the Faith Community Church accompanist, who can help you choose vocal and instrumental music. You should select your music before your Ceremony Planning Meeting with your officiating pastor. The officiating pastor will make final decisions on the appropriateness of all music.

Music copyright laws

Faith Community Church belongs to an organization called Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI). Printing copyright information along with our CCLI number allows us to use most choruses and hymns. If you are planning to print songs in your wedding program, please let wedding coordinator know. The copyright information must be included because Faith Community Church is responsible for reporting all music used during any service at the church.

License

Both the bride and the groom must be present to purchase the wedding license, which may be obtained from any city or town clerk in Massachusetts. There is a three-day waiting period following the date of application for a license, and then it must be used within 60 days.

Please give the wedding license to the officiating pastor at the wedding rehearsal. He must have it before the wedding ceremony.

Community Marriage Agreement

We at Faith Community Church have a high regard for marriage.

We believe...

- That God has established the sanctity and companionship of marriage in scripture
- That God intends the marriage bond of husband and wife to last a lifetime
- That as religious leaders, we have a responsibility to provide and to participate in premarital preparation to improve the understanding and mutual commitment of those couples being married
- That as religious leaders, we have a responsibility to provide ongoing support to strengthen and nourish existing marriages

Therefore, we will...

- Expect a minimum of 6 months of marriage preparation
- Train mature married couples to serve as mentors to those who are engaged, newlyweds, or experiencing marriage difficulties
- Expect a minimum of 5-6 sessions with your “marriage mentors,” who will use scriptures, a premarital inventory, and intensive educational tools to guide you
- Strongly encourage additional retreats, classes, and marriage enrichment opportunities that are designed to continue to build and strengthen marriages
- Use or develop programs for troubled marriages that use counseling, retreats, and mentoring by other couples
- Cooperate with other congregations and organizations to share resources and to create a positive climate in which all marriages are helped to succeed

Bride: John, before God and these witnesses, I take you to be my lawful wedded husband. I will always honor and cherish you and will love you as the Lord's own precious gift to me. I will also strive by my life, love, and loyalty to lead you to a closer walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Original

You may choose to write your own vows for your wedding ceremony. You should bring a draft of your original vows to a meeting with the pastor at least one month before the wedding. He will consult with you about approval and use of the vows that you have written.

Sample Ring Vows

- This ring I give thee in token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love; with this ring, I thee wed, and with all my earthly goods, I thee endow.
- With this ring I wed you, Jane/John. And with this ring I pledge to you my life, my love, and my undying faithfulness. In the name of God our Father, Jesus Christ our Savior and the Holy Spirit our guide, Amen.”

Optional Question to the parents (before vows)

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

Wedding Ceremony Planning Meeting

Four to six weeks before your wedding, you will meet with the officiating pastor to make final decisions about the service, content, and participating persons. (See pages 11-13 for a sample order of ceremony and vows.)

Directions

You may use directions in your invitation or in any other way you may need.

We are located east of
Hopkinton Center at:

146 E. Main St.
Hopkinton, MA 01748

From the West:

Take exit 21A off I-495. Travel east on Main Street (it will join Route 135) through the town center of Hopkinton. Continue 2 miles past the town center towards Ashland. We are on the right (South) side.

From the East:

Take Route 135 west through Ashland towards Hopkinton. We are located on the left (South) side, less than a mile after the Ashland/Hopkinton town line.



Order of Service Sample Ceremony

Organ/piano prelude (seating of guests, grandparents, and groom's parents; the bride's mother is seated last)

Lighting of Candles (by ushers or other designated persons)

Solo/Duet or other music (optional)

Processional (groom, pastor, attendants, and the bride and her father enter)

Audience seated (if standing for processional – optional)

Introduction to Marriage Ceremony

Prayer

Scripture Reading

Ministerial Challenge

Marriage Vows (see sample vows, page 12-13)

Marriage Meditation by Pastor

The Ring Service (see sample ring vows, page 12-13)

Unity Candle (optional)

Solo/Duet or other music

Declaration of Marriage

Prayer of Blessing

Kiss

Presentation of the couple

Recessional

Sample Vows

Traditional

Groom: I, John, take thee, Jane, to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward; for better or for worse; for richer or for poorer; in sickness and in health; to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge thee my faith.

Bride: I, Jane, take thee, John, to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward; for better or for worse; for richer or for poorer; in sickness and in health; to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge thee my faith.

Modern #1

Groom: Jane, I vow before God and these witnesses to love you. As I receive from God, I will lead, protect, and provide for you both spiritually and physically. No matter what the cost, I will be loyal to you in all things and in all circumstances. With God as my strength, I will keep these vows until death.

Bride: John, I vow before God and these witnesses to love you. As I receive from God, I will submit to your leadership and be loyal to you in all things and in all circumstances. With God as my strength, I will keep these vows until death.

Modern #2

Groom: Jane, before God and these witnesses, I take you to be my lawful wedded wife. I will always honor and cherish you and will love you as the Lord's own precious gift to me. I will also strive by my life, love, and loyalty to lead you to a closer walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.