

## **MARRIAGE POLICY – FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KENNEWICK, WA**

### **I. SCRIPTURE:** “What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.” Matthew 19:6

We believe that marriage is a particular covenantal relationship between a man and a woman, and thus church facilities will only be used for weddings that are consistent with this belief.

Furthermore, we believe that God has established and sanctified marriage for the welfare and happiness of the human family. For this reason, our Savior has declared that a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31). By His apostles He has instructed those who enter into this relationship to cherish a mutual esteem and love; to share in each other’s infirmities and weaknesses; to comfort each other in sickness, trouble, and sorrow; to provide for each other and for their household; to pray for and encourage each other; to live together as heirs of the grace of life; and to raise children, if there are any, in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

In Malachi 2:13-16, it says that God hates divorce, and in Ephesians 5, the image of marriage is that of Christ and His Church.

### **II. CONCERN:** “Marriage is holy”

Our concern as ministers and elders of First Presbyterian Church of Kennewick is to foster lasting marital unions under God. A wedding is but a day; a marriage is for a lifetime. Thus, as agents of God, acting on His behalf, we feel it is our responsibility to encourage engaged couples to set aside time for marriage preparation, instead of solely concentrating on wedding plans. We believe that couples who seriously participate in premarital testing and counseling will have a better understanding of what the marriage commitment involves. Therefore, out of love and concern for those we marry, we require couples who wish to be married at KFPC to participate in pre-marital counseling as described below.

### **III. IMPLEMENTATION:** These are the minimum expectations for a marriage to be performed:

- A. Waiting Period: Typically, a minimum of four months from the initial marital appointment until the wedding date.
- B. Pre-Marital Counseling: Minimum of four to six sessions that includes a relational instrument or inventory (e.g., Meyers/Briggs or Prepare Enrich) to help the couple evaluate their relationship objectively. These sessions must be concluded a month before the wedding date. A nominal fee will be charged to the couple for the test and scoring.
- C. Scripture: We will teach Biblical doctrines on morality, marriage and divorce, and encourage you to memorize key verses on marriage.
- D. If a couple has been living together, they will be encouraged to separate or remain celibate until their marriage.
- E. Engagement Seminar: We encourage the couple to participate in a concentrated period of joint introspection, such as Engaged Encounter.
- F. Helping Couples: We will provide as needed a mature married couple to meet with you to assist in the concept of marital “bonding.”

### **IV. COVENANT:**

- A. We covenant to build successful spiritual families.
- B. We covenant to follow scripture and to implement these minimum preparations for a marriage to be performed at First Presbyterian Church of Kennewick.
- C. We agree to set aside time for marriage preparation, recognizing that a wedding is only a day, but marriage is for a lifetime.