

**Premarital Counseling  
General Requirements & Covenant  
For Rev. Mark Massey**

## ***General Requirements***

### **Spiritual Basis**

It is my desire as a minister that couples have the best possible start in the most important earthly relationship they will ever enter into. God created man and woman from the beginning, and He intended they be joined in marriage so that each might give to one another what the other lacked. Since God designed the marriage relationship, it makes sense that He knows best how to build a happy marriage.

His Word contains basic principles, which should be applied when building a fulfilling marriage. The following General Requirements and Covenant are offered as my sincere attempt to comply with God's principles for marriage.

In His Love,

Rev. Mark Massey

### **Premarital Counseling**

Is Premarital Counseling for you? The answer is YES. Before we embark on a long trip, we fill up our gas tank, check the tires, check the oil, and make sure our automobile is in good shape for the journey. Getting married without Premarital Counseling is like starting out on an important journey without doing any preparation at all. Half of all marriages end in divorce, and only half of those that endure are truly happy in the long run. Many engaged couples assume that they won't be a part of that statistic. But, if you just wing it and count on your luck to make your marriage a success, your odds are only **one in four**. Just a little effort now can make your odds a whole lot better over the long run. You want to do everything you can to ensure that your dreams of a great marriage and a great life are realized.

**Six sessions** of Premarital Counseling are required for couples who have never been married. More sessions may be required for couples where one or both have been divorced or the couple is living together. Rev. Massey will make a determination on a case by case basis. Rev. Miller will provide the counselor and the wedding couple will pay for the counseling. The wedding couple should be aware that Premarital Counseling will be **costly, time consuming, but worth it**.

After all Premarital Counseling is complete, Rev. Massey will meet with the couple as needed to review the counseling and plan the wedding service.

### **Sexual Purity**

Couples must remain celibate and not live together at any time prior to the wedding ceremony. Rev. Massey will not perform the ceremony if the couple is living at the same address. If you are currently living together but move to separate addresses and remain celibate, Rev. Massey will consent to perform your wedding ceremony (James 3:1).

## **Church Attendance**

Couples will cultivate a **support system** by faithfully attending worship services and joining a small group so they can grow in their relationship with Christ and with other Christians.

## **Divorce & Remarriage**

Divorced persons may be considered for marriage by Rev. Massey if they meet one of these Biblical criteria:

1. The divorce occurred because of sexual unfaithfulness by former spouse (Matt. 19:3-9)
2. Divorce occurred prior to conversion (2 Cor. 5:17)
3. The former spouse is deceased (Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:39)
4. Desertion by an unbelieving former spouse (1 Cor. 7:15)
5. An unbelieving former spouse initiated the divorce (1 Cor. 7:12-15)
6. Former believing spouse initiated the divorce and has remarried
7. Remarriage to a former spouse who has not been married to another person since your divorce of that spouse (Deut. 24:1-4)
8. Extenuating circumstances that are reviewed and acknowledged by Rev. Massey

Rev. Massey will not marry a couple if either person has been officially, legally divorced for less than one year.

## **Honorariums**

Rev. Mark Massey: \$150.00 (at FBC)      Away from FBC \$200.00 (within central Maryland)

Musicians & singers: \$50.00 each

Sound Technician: \$50.00

All honorariums shall be paid at the rehearsal. All checks should be made out to the person not the church.

## **Church Use Fees**

If the wedding takes place at FBC, the following fees apply and a **Building Use Application** must be obtained from the Church Office (410) 442-5506.

- Member use fee: \$0.00
- Non-member use fee: \$350.00
- Cleaning fee (applies to all): \$150.00

## **Wedding Bulletin**

FBC will gladly assist in producing the wedding bulletin by copying and folding it after it is published in its final form by the wedding couple.

## **Marriage License**

In Maryland, a marriage license must be obtained in the county in which the couple will be married. Friendship Baptist Church is located in Howard County.

## **Photography & Video**

It is the responsibility of the couple to secure a photographer and/or someone to video the wedding ceremony. Because the wedding ceremony is a worship service, no flash photography will be allowed during the wedding ceremony.

# ***Premarital Covenant***

## **Pastor's Massey's Covenant**

To promote God's plan for marriage, I covenant to:

1. Follow God's plan for marriage as found in Scripture, and implement these General Requirements for the couple I marry.
2. Teach and counsel that sexual intimacy is a God-given blessing for a married man and woman only, and that any sexual intimacy outside of marriage is a sin and will cause subsequent relationship difficulties. (1 Cor. 6:18-20, Heb. 13:4)
3. Teach and counsel this couple, if necessary, that reconciliation with God, each other, and any one else, should be the first priority in restoring sexual purity within this relationship (2 Cor. 5:18; 1 John 1:9).
4. Cultivate a support system by encouraging this couple to faithfully attend worship services at FBC, and by helping them find a small group where they can grow in their relationship with Christ, and with other Christians. (Hebrews 10:25)

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Couple's Covenant**

To prepare ourselves for a marriage according to God's plan, we covenant to:

1. Submit to God's plan for marriage as found in Scripture, and to adhere to these General Requirements for marriage.
2. To honor God and each other and remain celibate and not to live together at any time prior to the wedding ceremony. (1 Cor. 6:18-20, Heb. 13:4)
3. If necessary, to seek reconciliation with God, each other, and any one else, to restore sexual purity within this relationship (2 Cor. 5:18; 1 John 1:9).
4. Cultivate a support system by faithfully attending worship services at FBC, and by joining a small group where we can grow in our relationship with Christ, and with other Christians. (Hebrews 10:25)

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

*[Jesus said], "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."* – Matthew 19:4-6

**General Information**

**Groom's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/St \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been married before: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_

If you have been married before, please check the reason you are no longer:

Divorced. How long? \_\_\_\_\_  Widowed. How Long? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any children? No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_

If so, please list their names and age, and which parent they live with:

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Live with \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Live with \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Live with \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Live with \_\_\_\_\_

**Bride's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/St \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been married before: No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_

If you have been married before, please check the reason you are no longer:

Divorced. How long? \_\_\_\_\_  Widowed. How Long? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any children? No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_

If so, please list their names and age, and which parent they live with:

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Live with \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Live with \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Live with \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Live with \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Date of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/St \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

(If there is no wedding coordinator, Pastor Mark will direct the rehearsal & the wedding ceremony)

Other Information Rev. Massey needs to know:

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