

Policies and Procedures for Weddings at St. John's Reformed Church

All weddings conducted at St. John's Reformed Church or by its minister are Christian ceremonies. They are under the direction of the installed Minister of Word and Sacrament of St. John's Reformed Church and the supervision of the consistory of the St. John's Reformed Church (*RCA Liturgy*). Final discretion on whether or not a couple may be married at St. John's Reformed Church lies within the purview of these two authorities.

Marriage License: Responsibility for obtaining a legal license of marriage *within the proper time frame* lies solely with the couple to be married. It must be presented to the minister the day of the wedding. It is the responsibility of the couple to provide the required witnesses for signing. Mailing/delivery of the license to the proper authority is the responsibility of St. John's Reformed Church.

Intake Form: All couples considering wedding at St. John's Reformed Church are required to fill out an intake form in order that St. John's might better serve the couple to be married. The intake form remains with the pastor and is held in pastoral confidence.

Premarital Preparation Sessions: All couples that are being married for the first time (this applies where either one or both have never been married) are required to participate in at least three premarital sessions with the minister (or another program/provider recognized by the minister). A longer ten-session program is offered for couples requesting this. Second marriage couples are strongly encouraged to seek pre-marital counseling from a licensed marriage and family counselor. All premarital marriage preparation, presupposes a Christian couple seeking a Christian wedding ceremony. All premarital preparation sessions, pastoral counseling sessions/materials, and conversations of a pastoral and/or sensitive nature are held in strict confidence by the pastor.

Wedding Rehearsal: While it is not required, in most cases it is advisable and strongly recommended that couples schedule a wedding rehearsal one or two days before the wedding in order to insure that participants are comfortable with the ceremony.

Ministers Who May Officiate: Ordinarily the installed Minister of Word and Sacrament of St. John's will officiate at marriage ceremonies held at St. John's Reformed Church. Ministers in good standing within the Reformed Church of America are also permitted to officiate with the approval of consistory. Formula of Agreement ministers (ELCA, UCC, and PCUSA) in good standing with their prospective ecclesiastical bodies may also be extended professional courtesy by the consistory of St. John's in special circumstances. Clergy members belonging to the greater intra-faith and inter-faith communities may also be invited to participate under the direction of the Minister of Word and Sacrament and supervision of the consistory of St. John's Reformed Church.

Posting Material Online: The minister, consistory, and staff of St. John's respectfully ask that discretion, decency, kindness, and common courtesy are exercised when posting images online related to your wedding event at St. John's Reformed Church.