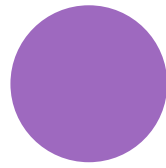


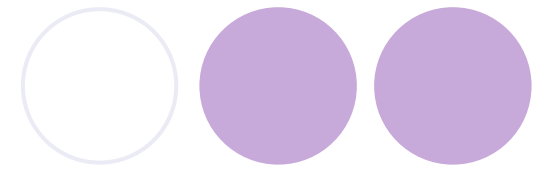


The wedding service will, at a minimum, include a description of God's prescription for marriage, vows of lifelong commitment and love toward one another, and a prayer of God's blessing on the marriage. This is a minimum expectation for a marriage to be performed in the Grantham Church by any officiant as a Christian minister of the Gospel.



If your officiating minister is not a member of the Grantham Church pastoral staff, he or she will need to complete a Ministers Confirmation of Premarital Counseling form and return it to the church office prior to your wedding.

The Grantham Brethren in Christ Church
421 Grantham Road
P.O. Box 295
Grantham, PA 17027
717-766-0531
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Marriage Policy at the Grantham Brethren in Christ Church



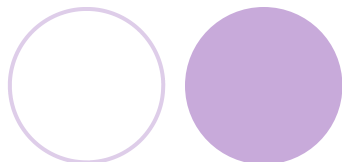
Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife...
—Genesis 2:24

General Guidelines

We believe that marriage is a unique and holy covenant established by God. *“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”* (Ephesians 5:31) Furthermore, marriage has the exalted role of being a visible picture of Christ’s relationship with His church. *“This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church.”* (Ephesians 5:32) Therefore, we hold marriage in the highest esteem and desire as a Christian community to help support and sustain lifelong marriages. We take seriously our responsibility to help couples prepare for and live out their commitment to one another.

In order to properly honor God and the marriage covenant, we affirm the following guidelines (Hebrews 13:4):

1. Couples should schedule an initial interview with a pastor at least six months prior to their anticipated wedding date. (Hebrews 13:4)
2. Both parties should give witness to personal faith in Christ. (2 Corinthians 6:1-14)



3. Couples should be living apart and abstaining from sexual contact. If they have been sexually active they must commit to abstinence from the time of the initial interview until they are married. (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)
4. Couples should complete a minimum of 7-10 hours of premarital counseling offered through the church or a recognized alternative. (Ephesians 5:21-33)
5. Couples should be actively participating in the life of Grantham BIC or another fellowship and be committed to church attendance after their wedding. (Hebrews 10:25)
6. Individuals divorced after coming to faith in Christ should provide a written or verbal account of the circumstances of their divorce to the pastor. (Matthew 5:31-32, 1 Corinthians 2:2, and 1 John 1:9)
7. Couples should commit to an interview with the pastor six months to one year following their wedding. (Hebrews 13:17)
8. Couples should abide by the fee, scheduling, and building use guidelines which are available through the church office.

Other Considerations

The pastor will always maintain the right, at any time, to not perform a wedding. The pastor is accountable to God for his or her active endorsement of a marriage and, thus, must not be controlled by mere social expectations, though he or she will seek to honor them when possible under God. Several reasons for not performing a marriage are:

- If the pastor believes the couple has not sufficiently addressed any potentially harmful issues in their relationship.
- If one person is a Christian and other is not a Christian (The scripture forbids the “mismatching” of a believer in Christ to an unbeliever. See 2 Corinthians 6:14.).
- If the couple has not sufficiently completed premarital counseling.
- If either person has been married before and has not sufficiently sought reconciliation with a former spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-11, 15). This does not necessarily require remarriage to the former spouse (though it could), but at the least it requires confession of any past offenses.

