Wedding Policy
Ebenezer Mennonite Church

Wedding is a holy estate, ordained of God and most certainly a part of the Church's responsibility for oversight and care. Therefore, the wedding ceremony and celebrations attending it must be carefully and fittingly planned in consultation with the Pastor and must be observed within the standards of the church.

1. Marriage partners must be equally yoked (2 Corinthians 6:14). It is the policy of Ebenezer Mennonite Church to marry only couples where both parties have given testimony to saving faith in Jesus Christ and have given evidence of their conversion by church attendance and consistent Christian character.

2. Marriage is a commitment of faithfulness and trust for life (Matthew 19:4-6). We believe that it is the will of God that married persons remain married for life. Divorce is not a part of God's ideal nor was it ever part of God's plan. Although divorce is not God's ideal, the Bible permits divorce (and by implication remarriage) in certain cases. God allows divorce on the grounds of fornication (adultery or other sexual unfaithfulness) in order to protect the innocent party (Matthew 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15). Consequently, Ebenezer Mennonite Church will solemnize marriages of divorced persons when they have biblical grounds for divorce (fornication or adultery) and are the innocent party. If the divorce is not on biblical grounds, forgiveness and reconciliation should be pursued.

3. The Wedding Service is a Worship Service. Therefore, all activities held in connection with the wedding must be conducted appropriately in consideration of the sanctity of the event. Those married at Ebenezer Mennonite Church agree to the following limits to behavior.

   - Music must be appropriate for a worship service. Hymns, selections of praise, thanksgiving, devotion and love are permissible. Music selections should be submitted to the Pastor prior to the service for approval.
   - Foul language and indecent attire, smoking and drinking are not permissible.
   - The serving of alcoholic beverages and engaging in dancing will not be permitted at any wedding function on Church property. Furthermore, we strongly discourage the use of alcohol at any wedding function.

4. Couples wishing to be married at Ebenezer Mennonite Church must agree to attend a schedule of pre-marital counseling acceptable to the Pastor.

5. A Church Wedding is a joyous celebration of a couple's commitment to one another and a recognition of the Lord's blessing on this union. Therefore the following limits to behavior must apply:

   - A couple previously living together out-of-wedlock will not be married in the Church sanctuary.
   - A couple who have flaunted God's standard of premarital purity (demonstrated by pregnancy or other immoral behavior) will not be married in the church sanctuary.

6. Although there is willingness to accept a variety of suggestions in style and participants in the wedding service, these requirements must be met:

   - The order of service and wedding ceremony are finally in the control of the Senior Pastor of Ebenezer Mennonite Church or his delegated associate.
   - Guest clergy may participate in the wedding in association with one of Ebenezer's pastors. In cases where visiting clergy represent widely divergent theology or practice, their participation may be limited or curtailed.
   - Vows or other service items written by the couple may be used, but they must be submitted at least one week before the service for the Pastor's approval.

7. The limit of guests for persons using the Ebenezer Mennonite Crossroads Ministry Center for receptions is a maximum of 500 persons (around tables).

8. This is the policy of the Board of Deacons of Ebenezer Mennonite Church; questionable cases will be referred to the Deacons for final determination.

We agree to abide by these policies:

Prospective Groom: _____ _____
(Name) *(Date)*

Prospective Bride: _____ _____
(Name) *(Date)*

Note: Please return this form to the Pastor or church office. The wedding will not proceed without it being on file. *(Adopted: 7/19/01)*