

Kirk of the Keys Presbyterian Church, Marathon, Florida

Wedding Policy for Rev. Dustin Sedlak

Revised September 29, 2011

Congratulations on your engagement! Congratulations on your upcoming wedding. This is a very special time for you both, one that will go by so quickly. I am excited to get to know you both, and I look forward to meeting with you during this exciting part of your lives. Please take a few minutes to read through these details and policies. Thank you.

Dustin

A. Introduction

*Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. **For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship.** In a service of Christian marriage, a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.*

-- The Presbyterian Book of Order W-4.9001

A service of Christian marriage is more than a social convention. It is an ordinance of the Church and a witness to the world of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I have adopted this policy in order:

To enable couples married at Kirk of the Keys Presbyterian Church to understand the nature of their Christian commitment;

To insure that the facilities of the church are used in keeping with the Directory for Worship of the Book of Order;

To bear a faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

B. Who may be considered for marriage by Rev. Sedlak and/or at Kirk of the Keys Presbyterian Church?

Because marriage is an act of Christian discipleship, both the man and the woman seeking marriage should be professing Christians. At a minimum, either the man or the woman must be a professing Christian. In order to honor the sanctity of marriage, couples living together will usually not be eligible for marriage, since this is not in line with God's perfect will for a couple.

Because marriage takes place within the life and work of a Christian community, couples should ordinarily be active members of Kirk of the Keys or another Christian church.

Exception: Non-members and former members of KOTK Presbyterian Church who wish to be married in the sanctuary must apply to the pastor, who may exercise discretion in deciding who may enter the discernment process. Non-member residents of Marathon agree to be active in the life of the Kirk for at least three months

before beginning the discernment process, until at least the date of the wedding. Those residing in other communities should be active members of a local church.

C. Discernment Process

The discernment process may begin as early as one year, but no later than four months, prior to a proposed marriage date.

- Those wishing to begin the process of discernment must first complete an application. When the application papers are returned to the church office, a *tentative* date for the wedding may be placed on the church calendar. **This date should not be publicized, nor should invitations be sent until the discernment process is completed and the pastor's approval has been given. The discernment process is outlined in the following four points.**
- The couple meets with the pastor of the Church.
- Pre-Marital Counseling: the pastor may refer the couple to a counselor to help the couple prepare for marriage, or the pastor may conduct the counseling. If the counseling is not conducted by the pastor, the couple shall give permission for the counselor to provide a report to the pastor. A **minimum of four, one-hour counseling sessions** is suggested. The pastor will provide materials (books and a workbook) for the couple to complete before the final meeting with the pastor. If the couple is not local, then they are responsible for fulfilling this requirement from the pastor/church where they are active.
- The couple meets again with the pastor. If the pastor is convinced of the couple's commitment, responsibility, maturity, and Christian understanding, he may approve the marriage. If the pastor deems the marriage unwise, he shall assure the couple of the Church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony. (Book of Order W-4.9002b).
- If the pastor approves the marriage; the wedding date is confirmed on the church calendar.

D. The Marriage: A Service of Worship

Christian marriage should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship. As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the pastor. With the approval of the session, the Lord's Supper may be celebrated during the marriage service, and the invitation to the Table will be given to all baptized Christians. With the approval of the session, the marriage service may also take place during the Service for the Lord's Day.

The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The man and the woman shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage. A charge may be given. Other actions common to the community and its cultures may

appropriately be observed when these actions do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. The service concludes with a benediction. -- Book of Order W-4.9004

E. Ministerial Leadership

Ordinarily the pastor or one of the ministers affiliated with the Church will have the privilege of conducting weddings in its sanctuary. The invitation for another minister to take part in the service must come from the pastor. Couples should not invite other clergy to take part in the service before consulting the pastor.

F. Order of Service

The pastor must approve the order of service. All parts of the ceremony should be appropriate to Christian worship and acceptable offerings to God.

G. Off-Campus Locations

The pastor may perform the ceremony at a location other than the church at the request of the couple to be married.

H. Music

Such music as accompanies the service should direct attention to God, who sanctifies marriage, and special care should be taken to assure that it is suitable and reverent. The singing of hymns by the congregation is encouraged. Secular love songs and music inappropriate for worship will not be permitted. All music must be approved by the pastor or the organist. Wedding music may be provided by an organist, pianist or other musical groups. While we are pleased to offer suggestions to you, making arrangements for scheduling and payment of services remains the responsibility of the wedding party. The suggested guideline for a donation for the church organist is \$150.00

I. Church Campus

Wedding parties will be responsible for the order of the church property for the next service. This is especially important for weddings held on Saturdays. All properties of florists, caterers, or other persons employed to assist with the wedding shall be removed immediately after the wedding.

J. Rehearsals

If a rehearsal is held, the pastor shall be the director. Rehearsals for Saturday weddings will take place on Friday at 5:00 p.m. "Wedding coordinator" or other persons playing a supportive role shall be under the direction of the pastor.

K. Scheduling

Weddings shall be scheduled through the church office.

L. Honoria/Donation

Shall be given to the pastor prior to the start of the wedding ceremony.

M. Alcohol

The Kirk of the Keys prefers that no alcohol is permitted on the church grounds.

N. Wedding Coordinator.

The Kirk of the Keys is pleased to offer the services of our wedding coordinator for each wedding and wedding rehearsal. A donation of \$50.00 for the wedding coordinator is recommended.

O. Music.

Music may be provided by an organist, pianist or other musical groups. While we are pleased to offer suggestions to you, making arrangements for scheduling and payment of services remains the responsibility of the wedding party.

P. Rental of Church Sanctuary and/or Fellowship Hall.

A security deposit of \$300.00 is required in order to reserve your wedding on the church calendar. This deposit will be fully refunded after the wedding, as long as all above policies have been honored.

The donation that we suggest for use of the sanctuary is \$750.00. The use of the fellowship hall is \$250.00. This does not include honoraria for minister, wedding coordinator or musicians.

By signing below, I signify that I have read and understood, and further declare that I am willing to follow the requirements of the document: *“Kirk of the Keys Presbyterian Church, Marathon, Florida. Wedding Policy for Rev. Dustin Sedlak.”*

Please sign and date this sheet and return it to the church office as soon as possible. Thank you!

Bride-to-Be: _____

Date: _____

Groom-to-be: _____

Date: _____