

MARRIAGE, BRIDAL AND BABY SHOWER POLICY

Biblical Basis for Marriage: “And the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make for him a helper comparable to him.’”

Genesis 2:18 NKJV

CBC leadership believes strongly that marriage is one of the most important commitments that a person will make in their earthly years, and must not be entered into lightly. Second to their commitment to God, the marriage bond is one that is to be life-long, and lived under the guidance of Biblical principles. As a church body, we are called by God to honor the couple who conducts their courtship and marriage under the authority of the Bible. Therefore, all gatherings that are connected with a couple in a relationship must adhere to Biblical standards and morals. The church, under the guidance of God, cannot honor living together, or emulating family outside of the bond of marriage. This would include wedding and baby showers, as well as wedding rehearsals and ceremonies. (There may be some situations when special living arrangements are agreed upon by the couple and pastoral counselor. However, the Biblical moral and relationship standards will not be compromised.)

Belief:

God has intended that Christians only marry those who are Christian (II Corinthians 6:14). Both the bride and groom will confirm their belief in Jesus Christ as Savior, and honor His Word in their lives prior to entering the marriage relationship.

Purity:

The sexual relationship has been designed for couples who are married; therefore, both engaged individuals are asked to abstain from any sexual relationship until after their wedding. In the case of cohabitation, the couple must live separately for a minimum of one month prior to their wedding. If a couple agrees to live separately, then **during the period of their separation** they will have full access to church facilities for showers. No facility usage may be offered as a couple lives together.

Service:

God's Word is adamant about believers serving Him. The church is given as an avenue to serve the Lord, but also to strengthen a couple's walk with Him. It is CBC's desire that a couple find a church to serve in and pursue faithfulness to God, each other, and His church.

Divorce:

In a fallen world, divorce has impacted many family situations. The Bible permits divorce under certain circumstances, including adultery and abandonment by an unbelieving spouse. If a divorce has occurred for other reasons, then forgiveness in that situation must be sought from the Lord. Pastors will counsel and lead the parties through this process.

Officiants Who are Not Pastors of Clifford Baptist Church:

If a couple would desire to have an officiant who is not a CBC pastor, that individual must meet with a pastor of CBC to discuss his personal view of theology regarding marriage. The CBC pastor will then give clearance or denial of the officiant's leadership in the marriage ceremony. If a CBC pastor is familiar with the officiant's ministry and theology, he may give consent to the officiant without such a meeting. The officiating pastor will, in most cases, conduct all pre-marital counseling.

Counseling:

All couples getting married must go through counseling with the pastor who is performing the wedding. The pastor will determine the number of sessions that will take place. All couples must complete the enclosed questionnaire prior to counseling sessions, or usage of church facilities.

I have read and agree to the guidelines set forth in this Marriage, Bridal and Baby Shower policy.

Signature _____ Date _____

(In order to proceed in reserving the facility in accordance with these guidelines, sign and return this form to the Ministry Assistant during office hours for the Reservation Contract.)