

# Ashland NE Community Marriage Policy

Proclamation and Policy Adopted March 20-21, 2009

**Representing various faith communities, we share a common concern regarding marriage. We believe:**

- God established the sanctity and companionship of marriage
- God intends the bond of husband and wife to last a lifetime
- Religious leaders have a responsibility to participate in and to promote premarital preparation in an effort to improve the understanding and mutual commitment of couples who wish to be married.
- Religious leaders have a responsibility to participate in and to support activities designed to strengthen and nourish existing marriages.
- Religious leaders have a responsibility to participate in and support activities designed to restore troubled marriages.

**Therefore we agree and covenant to:**

Encourage teenagers and single adults to practice sexual abstinence and support programs which encourage sexual abstinence.

1. Offer relationship instruction to seriously dating couples teaching them how to establish their relationship on a firm foundation and helping them to avoid common mistakes such as pre-marital sex and cohabitation.
2. Provide engaged couples the best *marriage insurance* we know by:
  - a. requiring four to six months of marriage preparation;
  - b. requiring six counseling sessions, with two devoted to the use of a premarital inventory and others utilizing a scriptural approach to substantive issues such as finance, sex, communication, and conflict resolution;
  - c. encourage attendance at retreats designed to help improve communication skills and establish their marriage with God at the center.
4. Offer two post-marital counseling sessions with clergy or mentors, six months and a year after the wedding.
5. Train mature married couples to serve as mentors to work with seriously dating couples, engaged couples, and newlyweds on a couple-to-couple basis.
6. Encourage all married couples to attend retreats, classes and other activities designed to enrich their marriage.
7. Develop or support ministries for separated and divorced couples which provide a foundation on which their relationship can be restored.
8. Take this policy back to be ratified by our congregation and/or the appropriate boards.
9. Encourage other clergy to support this policy.

**We agree and covenant to** cooperate with other congregations and organizations to share resources and to create a positive climate for marriage ministry.

Ashland Baptist Church, St. Mary's Catholic Church, First Christian Church (DOC),  
American Lutheran Church, Riverview Community Church, Cedar Hill Methodist Church,  
Ashland United Methodist Church, First Congregational Church, Swedeburg Covenant Church,  
several other area congregations, Ashland Ministerial Association, City of Ashland - City Council & Mayor

**CONTACT:** Ashland Ministerial Association at (402) 944-3554 or e-mail an Ashland Area Pastor

