



## Kearney Evangelical Free Church Wedding Policies

We consider it both an awesome privilege and an awesome responsibility to walk with you through the process of preparing to be married. This guidebook is intended to help the engaged couple in preparing for a memorable marriage ceremony and, more importantly, a life together that will last. The following includes information about the holiness of marriage, the importance of proper preparation for marriage, and the practical steps necessary for planning a ceremony here at the Kearney Evangelical Free Church. Due to the large size of our Church Body, our first priority for use of our facilities goes to those who are members or attendees of Kearney Evangelical Free Church and to children and grandchildren of members or attendees.

### **Preparation for a Life-long Commitment**

Because we believe that marriage is a holy and sacred gift from God, we desire that couples approach marriage according to a way that is pleasing to God. Therefore, Pastors here at Kearney Evangelical Free Church reserve the right to decline officiating a wedding if couples do not agree with the statements below:

#### **1. Statement of Belief**

The Bible makes it clear that a non-Christian should not be joined in marriage with a Christian because of the incompatibility of their spiritual lives. This comes from 2 Corinthians 6:14-16 and is often referred to as being unequally yoked. We require that both bride and groom individually come to an understanding and acceptance of Christ's sacrificial death (Romans 10:9-10). If you have questions about your faith please talk about this first with one of our pastors before proceeding with marriage plans. Jesus Christ is the only foundation for permanence in marriage. Therefore, it is our desire that anyone using these facilities for a wedding know Jesus as Lord and Savior. Ecclesiastes 4:12 says, "...A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." Jesus is that third strand in your marriage. We also believe that marriage is between one woman and one man for life.



## 2. Statement of Purity

It is our belief, based on what the Bible tells us, that the sexual relationship has been designed and intended for marriage. Therefore, we ask that you agree to abstain from any sexual relationship until after the wedding and have separate living conditions. These are standards set by God and we want His blessing on your marriage. (1 Timothy 4:12)

## 3. Statement of Preparedness

Marriage is a big step and should not be entered into hurriedly or without sufficient time to learn about each other and what makes a strong, lasting relationship. Therefore, we strongly recommend that the engaged couple seek Christian counseling in preparation for a lifetime of commitment. This is a requirement of our pastors as they walk through the marriage process with you. We use a comprehensive program called Prepare/Enrich to equip couples and give them insight into their relationship as husband and wife. Couples will individually complete an on-line inventory and then our trained counselor will work with the couple to discover their strengths and weaknesses as a couple so that they can grow together as they enter marriage. This process will begin about 6 months prior to the wedding date.

## 4. Covenant of Faithfulness

Along with this, we encourage you to find a place of involvement in Kearney Evangelical Free Church, as a part of the Body of Christ, and pursue a lifestyle of faithfulness. We have many small groups or Life Groups to help you **Connect, Build, and Release**. We want Kearney Evangelical Free Church to be a place that you can **Connect** to the Body of Christ, **Build** your faith and relationships in Life Group, and be able to share your faith as you **Release** into the world at large.

## 5. Compliance to Safety and Respectful Behavior

It is our wish to provide couples with a safe and welcoming environment for their wedding. Therefore, it is the responsibility and requirement of the Bride and Groom to inform all participants of the wedding ceremony that only respectful and safe behavior will be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, no loud or inappropriate language, no tobacco or alcohol products allowed on church





## Planning the Ceremony

**Date and Time:** The first step in planning your ceremony here at Kearney Evangelical Free Church after signing the above agreement is to set your date and time of the wedding and rehearsal. All scheduling will be done through our Office Coordinator. There are several dates which are reserved and for which a wedding will not be confirmed. Weddings will not be scheduled on Sundays or at other times when other regularly scheduled church activities take place. Vacation Bible School (or Kids Kamp) is a major ministry of our church and weddings will not be scheduled the weekend before or after VBS. No weddings will be scheduled on major holidays including Christmas day or Christmas Eve day, Memorial Day weekend, Labor Day weekend, or Easter weekend. If a holiday such as Independence Day falls on a Friday or Monday that weekend will not be scheduled for weddings. If a church activity is already scheduled for the same weekend as the wedding request, it will not be moved to accommodate the request nor will a confirmed wedding date be moved for a church activity. Remember also to reserve the time and space needed for your rehearsal and reception if it is to be held here. Rehearsals will take about one hour and will be conducted by the pastor in charge of the service. It is important for all to be prompt in arriving. A \$100 deposit will be required to set a date on the calendar. All Saturday wedding ceremonies must be completed, including clean-up by 8:00 pm with all personal items removed by then.

**Facilities:** Three spaces are available for a wedding ceremony depending on the size. The Worship Center is large and will hold up to 900 comfortably and is equipped with a platform and sound equipment. The Multi-Purpose room is smaller and is equipped with a stage and sound equipment. Seating will need to be set up to use this space. It will hold about 300 comfortably. The Quad room is a space that could be used to hold a small wedding with space for about 50, but does not have sound equipment or a stage area. The doors to the space where the wedding is to be held will not be opened to guests for seating until 40 minutes prior to the ceremony. Staff Security personnel will be provided previous to and during the ceremony. Gifts and cards need to be monitored and watched over by someone



assigned by you until loaded up by the wedding party. It is suggested that you have at least one host and hostess for the wedding. For a large wedding of over 200, two host and hostesses are suggested.

**Food service:** Two spaces are available for a reception or for a rehearsal dinner. The Multi-Purpose room and Quad room can both be set up with round dining tables and chairs. Both are close to the kitchen, which can be used to assist in preparing and serving food. All food and paper products must be provided by you, including condiments, coffee, tea, cream, sugar, plates, napkins, cups and glasses, and tableware. No items that belong to the church are to leave the church property.

It will be the responsibility of the couple (or those helping them) to leave the spaces used clean. Please do not take out the trash, as our staff will take care of that.

If caterers are used please make sure that arrangements have been made for them to deliver and set up the food. No open flames are allowed for cooking or food preparation or warming. The Café is not to be open during weddings nor is this space available for serving food, except that light refreshments for the wedding party during the time prior to the wedding on wedding day. Some couples like to provide such items as bottled water, crackers and cheese, and fruit for the wedding party to snack on during picture time prior to the wedding.

**Dressing:** Women will dress in Room 112. Men will dress in the Green Room at the back of the stage. An iron, ironing board and mirrors will be provided. You will need to bring any fans, extension cords, needles, thread, safety pins, scissors, etc. you anticipate needing. The dressing rooms will need to be cleared of the wedding party's items before the wedding starts. It is recommended that all items be taken to vehicles after the wedding party is dressed and ready before the ceremony begins, as often things get left behind in the rush after the ceremony.

**Following Ceremony:** All decorations, rose petals, aisles runners, etc. will need to be removed from the church directly following the ceremony. Often, these tasks are assigned by the bride and groom to the hosts/hostesses or to friends or family members so that they do



not have to worry about it at the end of their ceremony. Also, the couple will want to designate someone to be in charge of taking gifts and cards out of the church directly after the ceremony. If the wedding is held on a Saturday it needs to be planned so that the building can be vacated by 8:00 pm to allow for Sunday morning preparations.

## Elements of the Ceremony

**Kearney Evangelical Free Church Staff:** You can request a first choice of pastors to officiate your wedding but the decision will be made by our staff as there are many prior commitments to be considered. Besides for the pastor from our staff, you will also be provided with a Wedding Coordinator, Safety/Security personnel, set up and tear down crew if needed, sound and light technician and janitorial staff. All of the funds needed for their services are included in the fees as seen below.

**Flowers and Decorations:** Brides are welcome to decorate on the rehearsal day. The space will be prepared and ready for the bride and her party to start decorating by noon. There are a few items that the church has that you may use, including table clothes (to be laundered and returned the Monday following the ceremony), candelabra, candle lighters, light boxes, aisle runners (you will need white duct tape to secure them in place), and a few decorations. Please visit with the Wedding Coordinator about these items. There is a table that can be used for a candle or sand ceremony during the wedding. Flowers can be delivered anytime that the wedding party is there getting ready prior to the wedding. It is advisable that someone from your group be appointed to direct the florists as they arrive so flowers are placed correctly. No items are to leave church property except the table clothes to be laundered. If rose petals, real or artificial, are to be used be sure that someone picks them up directly after the ceremony. Please do not use rice, birdseed, or other grains to shower the bride and groom as they are leaving the building. Bubbles are acceptable.



**Photography and Video:** Weddings will not be videotaped by our personnel so please arrange for this if you want the ceremony recorded. During the ceremony, videotaping is only allowed from the back of the room. Remind your photographers that your wedding is a worship service and nothing should distract you and your guests from worshipping the Lord and enjoying the ceremony. Most times pictures are taken prior to the wedding. You will want to confer with your photographer about how much time they will need prior to the service. If the wedding is held on a Saturday it needs to be planned so that the building can be vacated by 7:00 pm to allow for Sunday morning preparations.

**Music:** As you are selecting the music for your ceremony, keep in mind that this is a worship service and the music chosen must be suitable. Only sacred, contemporary Christian hymns and classical instrumental music will be permitted. All music must be approved by the pastor officiating your service. He will be helping you with the order of service so you can discuss the number of song with him at that time. The Worship Center is equipped with a grand piano. Also, music stands will be available. A sound and light technician from our staff will be provided to operate sound and lights. No outside technicians are allowed. If you wish to use prerecorded music or video please provide it 2 weeks in advance of the wedding so it can be checked for compatibility with our equipment.

There are several musicians and soloists available that are on the Worship Arts Ministry team here at Kearney Evangelical Free Church. We can help you connect with them if you wish to ask them to be a part of your ceremony. Financial arrangements with any instrumentalist or vocalist you engage will be between you and them and is not included in the fees due to the church.



**KEFC Wedding Checklist:** Following is some information to help you prepare for your wedding day. There is a checklist for your use at the end so that you can check off each step as you go and even write in due dates to help with your planning.

- Contact the Office Coordinator, Linda Muhlbach, at the church at 308-237-5968, or at [linda@kefc.org](mailto:linda@kefc.org) to express interest in having your wedding at Kearney eFree Church. You will be directed to read the Wedding Policy.
- Obtain a Kearney eFree Church Wedding Policy by going to our website [www.kefc.org](http://www.kefc.org). Once you have read the policy and can adhere to the 5 agreements, discuss a date with Linda. Linda will provide you with a Qualifying Questionnaire and a Facility Request form.
- Approval and confirmation of pastor who will officiate the ceremony. Set an appointment through the Office Coordinator to meet with the pastor.
- Set date of wedding and rehearsal on Church Calendar. Pay \$100 deposit.
- Complete the Prepare Inventory sent by our Prepare Counselor. She will contact you to let you know the Inventory has been sent to your email addresses. She will then set the first counseling appointment after your information is completed. There will be a total of 4 appointments of 90 minutes each.
- Meet with pastor after Prepare appointments are completed.
- Meet with your KEFC Wedding Coordinator 6 weeks prior to wedding and again as wedding approaches if necessary.
- Wedding rehearsal.
- Wedding Day



## Bride and Groom Wedding Planning Checklist

*Date Completed*

- Contact Church Office Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_
- Read and sign Wedding Policy Agreement \_\_\_\_\_
- Complete Qualifying Questionnaire \_\_\_\_\_
- Complete Facility Use & Initial Information Forms \_\_\_\_\_
- Initial Meeting with Pastor \_\_\_\_\_
- Set date on Church Calendar with Office Coordinator and pay \$100 deposit and \$40 for Prepare in separate checks \_\_\_\_\_
- Complete Prepare Inventory \_\_\_\_\_
- Complete Prepare Counseling (4 sessions) \_\_\_\_\_
- Meeting 1 with Pastor - 2 months prior to wedding \_\_\_\_\_
- Meeting 2 with Pastor \_\_\_\_\_
- Meet with Wedding Coordinator - 6 weeks prior to wedding \_\_\_\_\_
- Additional meeting with Pastor if needed \_\_\_\_\_
- Pay remaining fees due - 30 days before wedding \_\_\_\_\_