



KARIS CHURCH

Wedding/Premarital Counseling Policies

Karis would love to be a part of your big day. That wedding day, though, is just the first day of your marriage, and that union between you and your spouse requires much preparation and serious help along the way. We don't just want to help you tie the knot. We want it to stay tied. And we want it to be as joyful and fruitful as God intends. We would love to help. Read on to learn about our approach to helping you prepare for your wedding day and your future marriage.

Important Steps:

1. Meet with a Karis Wedding Representative to discuss Karis wedding policies and procedures. Complete this step before finalizing a wedding date.
2. Read and sign the attached application as a couple, affirming Karis wedding policies.
3. Read all book and article assignments before the assigned dates.
4. Participate as a couple in five counseling sessions with a Karis elder (or other elder-approved individual couple). The elder's wife may participate, but that arrangement may not always be possible.
5. Plan your wedding ceremony in consultation with, and with the approval of, that elder.
6. Complete all necessary documents and coordinate with a Karis Wedding Representative if using Karis facilities for your ceremony, rehearsal dinner or reception.
7. Get married!

Karis Wedding Policies

The elders of Karis greatly enjoy performing weddings, counting them a great privilege. However, experience in wedding counseling, planning, and execution has led to the implementation of the following policies. Please read & sign.

1. Weddings officiated by Karis elders will be for Karis members only. This is partially to protect and best utilize the elders' time, but primarily to ensure Karis can provide ongoing encouragement to that couple and hold them accountable to their covenant vows.
2. Related, Karis elders do not perform private or family-only weddings. The body of believers should be included in the ceremony. Although it is not always necessary or practical to invite every member of Karis, the elders strongly encourage the couple to place the highest value on reserving an accommodating wedding site, over against secondary expenses like meals, decorations, etc.
3. Couples to be married by Karis elders must complete all facets of the Karis premarital counseling curriculum. Each couple will participate in five sessions of counseling. This course is intended not only to prepare the couple for marriage, but also to ensure that the eldership can endorse the union in good conscience. All assignments for the class must be completed before the ceremony.
4. Participation in the counseling sessions does not guarantee that the wedding ceremony will be performed. The elder's commitment to preside over the wedding ceremony is contingent upon the couple's adequate completion (determined by the elder) of the five premarital counseling sessions. Therefore, he reserves the right to choose, at any time, not to endorse the potential marriage and perform the ceremony.
5. The wedding ceremony must be planned in conjunction with, and approved by, the elder performing it. Although there is some flexibility in the service's liturgy and in the vows' content, the traditional elements and vows are strongly preferred. Although the couple may request a sermon text for the ceremony, the elder officiating will make the final decision.
6. As the ordinances are meant for the church and not as private exercises or for unbelievers, Karis weddings will not include the Lord's Supper.
7. All wedding dates must be cleared with the Karis elders before beginning premarital counseling. It is highly recommended that dates not be chosen and facilities not be booked before receiving approval.
8. An official wedding planner with sufficient expertise must be provided by the couple. The Karis elders will assist with the planning of the ceremony outline and will officiate the wedding ceremony, but all other planning and execution is the sole responsibility of the couple.
9. The couple must schedule a meeting with the Karis Wedding Representative to go over policies and procedures if using Karis facilities.
10. Due to the strain placed upon church volunteers, as well as a desire to preserve and honor Sunday Gathering participation, Karis elders are not, under any circumstances, able to perform Sunday weddings.
11. The bride and groom may not have been divorced, unless there were sufficient biblical grounds (as determined by the Karis elders).

We agree to all the above policies. We understand that the Karis elders' commitment to preside over the ceremony is contingent upon our adequate completion of the entire premarital counseling curriculum, and that they reserve the right to choose, at any time, not to endorse the potential marriage and perform the ceremony.

Date Signed: _____ Approved Wedding Date: _____
Groom's Name: _____ Signature: _____
Bride's Name: _____ Signature: _____
Counselors: _____
Officiating Elder: _____ Karis Wedding Representative: _____

Marriage Classes & Counseling

Five teaching/counseling sessions by a Karis elder, covering the essentials of a healthy marriage. Each is required and cannot be made up.

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
	<p>Approaching Marriage through the Lens of the Gospel (Introduction, Family Worship)</p> <p>Note: <u>“Marriage Preparatory Inventory” must be completed (individually) before the session.</u></p>	<p>Questionnaire Discussion Piper, 1-40</p>
	<p>Marriage that Displays the Gospel: Covenantal Framework, Problem of Divorce</p>	<p>Piper, 41-72 Ricucci, 15-28; Mahaney, Anderson articles</p> <p>Rough Ceremony Outline Due</p>
	<p>Different by Design for the Gospel: Biblical Roles, Gender Differences</p>	<p>Piper, 73 -116 Helopoulos articles</p> <p>Final Ceremony Outline Due, Vows Chosen</p>
	<p>Applying the Gospel through Communication & Conflict</p>	<p>Piper 117- 146 ; Ricucci, 67-114 Mohler, Powlison articles</p> <p>Rough Ceremony Program Due</p>
	<p>Applying the Gospel in Money & Sex</p>	<p>Piper, 147-177 Ricucci, 115-156; Wilson, Alcorn and Burkett articles</p> <p>Final Ceremony Program Due</p>

Required Books & Articles

Participants must read the following required texts and articles as assigned, before the sessions outlined above. Articles will be posted to the Marriage Class group on The City prior to each session. Books may be purchased from the Karis Book Table.

Required Books

Piper, John. *This Momentary Marriage: A Parable of Permanence* (Crossway, 2009)
Ricucci, Gary and Betsy. *Love That Lasts: When Marriage Meets Grace* (Crossway, 2006)

Required Articles

Alcorn, Randy. "Money: Why Is It So Important To God?" in *Money, Possessions and Eternity* (Tyndale House, 2003)
Anderson, Charles and Michael Sleasman. "Putting It into Practice: Weddings for Everyday Theologians" in *Everyday Theology: How to Read Cultural Text and Interpret Trends* (Baker Academic, 2007)
Burkett, Larry. "If You Read Nothing Else, Read This!" in *Family Financial Workbook* (Moody, 2002)
Helopoulos, Jason. "11 Reasons to Worship with your Family" (from TheGospelCoalition.org)
Helopoulos, Jason. "The What, When, and How of Family Worship" (from TheGospelCoalition.org)
Mahaney, Carolyn. "Modesty On Your Wedding Day" (from GirlTalkHome.com)
Mohler, Albert. "Deliberate Childlessness: Moral Rebellion with a New Face" (from AlbertMohler.com)
Powlison, David. "Getting to the Heart of Conflict: Anger, Part 3" (*Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Vol.1, No. 1, Fall 1997)
Wilson, Jared. "Steps to Grace-Driven Sex" (from GospelDrivenChurch.blogspot.com)

Other Recommended Reading

Harvey, Dave. *When Sinners Say "I Do": Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage* (Shepherd Press, 2007)
Keller, Timothy. *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* (Dutton Adult, 2011)
Tripp, Paul David. *What Did You Expect? Redeeming the Realities of Marriage* (Crossway, 2010)
Wilson, Douglas. *Reforming Marriage* (Canon Press, 1995)