



FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLIES

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Connecting to Advance God's Kingdom

Policy and Procedures Regarding Marriage Privileges in FCA Canada

The following summary clarifies the process for obtaining marriage privileges within the FCA Canada.

1. Marriage privileges in Canada fall under provincial oversight and must be obtained within each provincial jurisdiction by the Secretary/Treasurer of the FCA on behalf of churches and members of the FCA.
2. The privilege of conducting marriage ceremonies must address two distinct aspects of marriage.
 - Marriages are performed as a legal requirement of the provincial statutes regarding marriage, and;
 - Marriages are performed as part of the divinely ordained covenant of marriage as recorded in the Holy Bible and expressed in the traditions of local churches within the FCA.

Annual marriage privileges are obtained only for ministers who, having complied with FCA and local church policy, are endorsed by the Fellowship of Christian Assemblies. The authority to obtain marriage privileges rests with the FCA Secretary/Treasurer or someone acting as his/her designate. It is a requirement of either *Vital Statistics* or the *Service* (province name i.e. – *Service Ontario*) that the person who obtains annual marriage privileges be a resident of that province. There may be very limited exceptions in some provinces.

3. Marriage privileges within the FCA are contingent upon renewal of the annual FCA membership. As a part of this renewal, FCA Ministers must affirm the statement **“By signing this registration card I am agreeing to follow the statement of faith and all policies and procedures of the FCA as outlined in the FCA handbook and as listed on the FCA website; [http://www.fcaministers.com/forms/canada/.](http://www.fcaministers.com/forms/canada/)”**
4. When annual membership in the FCA is not renewed marriage privileges are cancelled. Ministers who perform marriages without valid authorization can cause not only considerable inconvenience to couples but there may be legal implications as well.

5. Every minister must meet minimal licensing/ordination requirements as set forth by the FCA. This also includes ministers who have transferred their membership from another fellowship/denomination. It is incumbent on applicants for marriage privileges to be fully informed of FCA policy and doctrine before agreeing to abide by these policies.
6. Each minister who obtains provincial authorization to perform marriages is given a certificate of registration with a marriage license number. This document is their legal authorization to perform marriages and should be displayed in the minister's office. As a condition of receiving marriage privileges, the minister who is no longer authorized to perform marriages also agrees to return the certificate to the FCA Office.
7. Ministers who perform marriage ceremonies are required to provide the couple married with a duly signed Record of Solemnization of Marriage. This is part of the marriage license that has a perforated edge.
8. It is the responsibility of the minister to ensure that the marriage is performed in compliance with the terms of the government issued license. Completed Registration of Marriage documents must be sent to the provincial department of *Vital Statistics* (i.e. – or *Service Ontario* or *Service Alberta* etc.) **within 3 days** of performing the marriage.
9. With the licence and Registration of Marriage certificate, each minister is supplied with an instruction package outlining the provincial government's requirements when performing a marriage. FCA expects ministers to fully comply with these obligations.
10. Each minister is responsible to maintain an up-to-date Marriage Register. These can be purchased through a Christian book store or through the Provincial Government's Registrar Office.
11. Ministers performing marriages are required to familiarize themselves and abide by the specific requirements and guidelines of the *Provincial Marriage Act* within each province.
12. If a minister wishes to perform a marriage outside of their home licensed province, they must obtain a temporary marriage registration which is valid only for a specific date, time and place. Requests for temporary marriage privileges must be applied for at least eight weeks in advance of the wedding date.
13. No minister of the FCA will perform a same-sex marriage.
14. FCA does not provide marriage licenses for ministers outside of its membership because of the complexity of assuring the credibility of the credentialing process that is required of our members with regard to life, doctrine and ministry practice as detailed in the FCA Handbook.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NOTES:

- a. It is important for every minister to recognize that they are not performing just a religious ceremony, they are also performing a legal ceremony and they have a responsibility to do so in a professional and ethical manner.
- b. Every marriage performed by an FCA credentialed minister should be characterized by care and solemnity accorded all divinely instituted biblical ordinances. In light of God's intention for the covenant union of marriage, and its symbolism of Christ and the church, and with further consideration of the pain of failed marriages; ministers should ensure couples meet

the requirements of biblical marriage and the local church. Performing a marriage is moral, legal and religious responsibility that we should not take lightly.

- c. Ministers should encourage or require that every couple they marry have guidance and mentoring in the preparation for their union. Therefore it is strongly advised that every couple receive premarital counselling. It is also recommended that ministers make use of evaluation programs such as is offered through Enrich Canada in St. Albert, Alberta. Ministers are required to be trained to become facilitators (<http://www.enrichcanada.ca/?lang=en>).

Please contact the FCA office if you can help populate a list with a few other options

Wedding Ceremony of

**Groom's full name &
Bride's full name**

Date

Place



**Wedding Ceremony of
Groom's Full Name &
Bride's Full Name
Place
Date**

Entrance of the Clergy/Groom

Music begins

“Name of Song”

Processional

Name of those walking in

At the Front

Name of those at the front

Bride & Dad

Name of Bride and person giving her way

Lighting Unity Candle:

Name those lighting the candles

Welcome & Introduction:

Welcome. We are gathered together today in the presence of God to join in marriage **Groom's Full Name & Bride's Full Name** and to share in their happiness as they commit themselves to each another.

Marriage is a gift of God and a means of spreading His grace. It is God's purpose that as a husband and wife give themselves to each other in love, that they will become fully united.

The union of a man and woman in heart, body and mind is intended for their mutual comfort.

They are linked to each other's families, and they begin a new life together within that expanded community. It is a way of life that none should enter into lightly or but rather responsibly and thoughtfully.

Opening Prayer

Scripture Readings:

“Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.”

I Corinthians 13:4-8a

WEDDING MESSAGE

“Foundational Stones”

Text: Jeremiah 33:10-11

Life often has a number of interesting twists and turns. It often takes a series of difficulties and struggles in order for us to appreciate the wonderful blessings we also have been given. I’m sure we can all relate to the fact that we learned some of our greatest lessons in what has been called the school of hard knocks. This is being molded into the image of Christ.

There are three main things that I want to address today. These are three foundational stones that I have learned to build my life and marriage upon. I know you will also be able to identify with the truths that I want to bring forth from these solid foundations.

- I. FAITH FOR THE PAST**
- II. HOPE FOR THE FUTURE**
- III. LOVE FOR THE PRESENT**

I. FAITH FOR THE PAST

The first important stone is that of faith. It is not a faith in things or in other people or even in faith itself but rather having a solid faith in God. This is the kind of faith that is built upon past experiences. It's when you see God working in situations that seem impossible for anyone else to gain victory. You will never know the amount of faith you have until it is tried – often tried by fire.

You both have had to build upon this solid stone. It has kept you standing strong in the midst of many opposing forces. Jesus said that those who do this are like a wise man who builds his house upon the rock (Matthew 7:25).

I. FAITH FOR THE PAST (Contd.)

A Scripture verse of Jeremiah 33:10 – 11 is relevant to portions of your life. The context of these verses involved some of the most terrible days the city of Jerusalem had ever seen. They were being bombarded by the Babylonians. There was no place to escape. It was in the midst of this chaos that Jeremiah prophesied,

“There will be in her once more the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, and the voices of those who bring thank offerings to the house of the Lord saying, give thanks to the Lord Almighty for the Lord is good; his love endures forever.”

Jeremiah 33:10 – 11

The main reason that Jeremiah could instill faith within his people was because God had been faithful in the past. It is faith for the past that helps us to build for the future.

Faith in God will move the mighty Mountains
Faith in God will calm the troubled seas
Faith will make the desert like a fountain
Faith will bring the victory
So have faith in God . . .

II. HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

This leads me to the second foundational stone that we all need to build our lives upon – that is hope for the future. Jeremiah instilled that kind of hope into his people at a time when even God called the place “*a desolate waste.*” It was during that hopeless situation that God through his prophet spoke words of hope to heal their broken hearts.

I’m not suggesting that your lives are in such a desperate condition. But just think about this for a moment. If God can place hope into the lives of people who see nothing but doom and despair what can He do in your lives? You can rise to a level of hope that will indeed be an inspiration to those who are closest to you.

Our world needs a couple like you. You have survived when others have faltered. That is why I know you will have hope for the future. You will build upon that hope and no one and nothing will be able to stop you.

“Hope is the anchor of the soul, the stimulus to action, and the incentive to achievement.”

“God makes a promise - faith believes it, hope anticipates it, patience quietly awaits it.”

E.C. McKenzie
14,000 Quips and Quotes
p. 242

“Hope does not disappoint us”

Romans 5:5a

III. LOVE FOR THE PRESENT

I'm sure by now you see where I'm heading. We've talked about faith and hope which means we now need to look at the final foundational stone which is love.

“And now these three remain: faith hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

I Corinthians 13:13

“Love is the only service that power cannot command and money cannot buy.”

Frank Smead

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.”

I John 4:16

Love is a wonderful foundational stone to build upon. It just keeps giving back. It is a living stone. In fact, the more you give, the more you receive. It is probably the greatest heritage that you can pass on to your children and grandchildren. Hopefully you will see the results of the love that you give to each other and to them.

3214 Legends of Two Hebrew Brothers

*** There is a beautiful Hebrew legend of two brothers who lived side by side on adjoining lands. One was the head of a large family, the other lived alone. One night, the former lay awake and thought: *“My brother lives alone, he has not the companionship of wife and children to cheer his heart as I have. While he sleeps, I will carry some of my sheaves into his field.”*

At the same hour, the older brother reasoned: *“My brother has a large family, and his necessities are greater than mine. As he sleeps, I will put some of my sheaves on his side of the field.”*

Thus the two brothers went out, each carrying out his purposes and each laden with sheaves - and met at the dividing line. There they embraced.

Years later, at the very place stood the Jerusalem temple, and on the very spot of their meeting stood the temple's altar.

Dr. Paul Lee Tan
Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations

Charge to the Couple

Bride and Groom's first names, the **love** that God has placed into your hearts and the **loyalty** you continue to demonstrate to each other are the foundations of a happy and enduring home. During the days of your engagement you have given careful thought to have a **happy** and **healthy** marriage.

Legal Questions

It is the requirement of the law of (name of Province) that I ask if anyone present knows any legal reason why **Bride and Groom's first names** may not lawfully marry, you must now declare it.

Bride and Groom's first names, are you legally free to marry and have you come freely and willingly to be married here today?

Bride and Groom's first names: We have!

Exchanging of Vows

Groom's Vow

Bride's Vow

Exchanging of Rings

We read in the Scriptures that when God made a covenant with Noah, He set a rainbow in the sky as a token and said, "***I will look upon it that I may remember the everlasting covenant.***"

From this we learn that it is well for us, when we enter into a solemn agreement, to set apart some reminder of the promise which we have made.

Groom's first name what token do you give as evidence that you will keep your marriage vows? **A RING**

This ring is the token of your marriage covenant. It is made of precious and enduring metal, and thus fittingly represents the ties which bind husband and wife. The ring, and endless circle, until broken by some outside force, is a symbol of the unbroken "*union*" that should continue until broken by death.

Groom's first name, take this ring and place it upon the finger of your bride and say after me:

I give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you, my covenant to be your husband and to be faithful to you, and as a reminder of God's presence in your life.

Bride's first name, what token do you give as evidence that you will keep your marriage vows? **A RING**

You, too, have selected a ring with its symbolism of enduring ties and unbroken union.

Bride's first name, take this ring and place it upon the finger of **Groom's first name** and say after me:

I give you this ring as a symbol of my love for you, my covenant to be your wife and to be faithful to you, and as a reminder of God's presence in your life.

Song: "Name of Song"

Signing of the Register

Lighting of the Unity (Middle) Candle by (Groom's first name) & (Bride's first name).

Presentation of the Couple

Forasmuch as **(their first names)** have consented together in holy matrimony, and we have witnessed this pledge of faith in the sight of God, and they have declared the same by joining hands and by giving and receiving rings; I pronounce that they are husband and wife, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together let no one attempt to separate.

Saluting (Kissing) of the Bride

Prayer and Benediction

May the Lord bless you and keep you, May the Lord make His face to shine upon you and give you His peace.

Final Instructions:

- A group picture as well as individual pictures will take place immediately after the ceremony outside
- Meal will be served by invitation at (name and location)

Announcement of the Couple

It gives us great pleasure to introduce to you **Mr. & Mrs. (Groom's first and last name)**

Recessional: *Song:* "Name of Song"