



## **Phoenix Community Church United Church of Christ**

### **Preparation for Weddings / Covenant Unions**

#### **A. The couple requests a covenant union / wedding.**

We provide an information packet to the couple. If after reviewing this material the couple wants Phoenix Community Church to share in their service, they should schedule an appointment with the pastor.

#### **B. The couple meets with the pastor two to three times.**

These and other issues may be discussed:

- Welcome, getting acquainted; arranging dates.
- How did you meet? What brought you to this point?
- What plans do you have for the ceremony?
- What is your faith story/spiritual journey?
- Who are your family/friends? How are they involved in this?
- Family of origin exercises.
- Discussion about union/marriage as soul work.
- Renewal issues for couples who have lived together for years.
- The meaning of covenant?
- Define faithfulness.
- Are you free of previous commitments?
- Name 5 ways your relationship will be different because you have a public ceremony.

#### **C. The couple is encouraged to attend classes on relationship skills if available.**

We highly recommend couples seek out and complete one or more classes on relationship skills in order to improve communication around critical issues. Possible topics that may be of interest include:

- Communications skills
- Listening skills
- Conflict resolution skills
- Intimacy levels
- Information about open/closed systems
- Discussion about drug and alcohol use and domestic violence
- Discussion about sickness, sexually transmitted diseases, medical and sexual history
- Discussion about forgiveness and old hurts
- Children

- Role expectations
- Managing differences in age, class, ethnic group, religious tradition, etc.

**D. The couple meets with a liturgist.**

A person from Phoenix, probably the pastor, meets with the couple to plan the ceremony. Some couples might do most of the work on their own; some will want Phoenix to prepare most of the service. This step may require more than one meeting. The couple is responsible for preparing and providing a bulletin for the service, if desired.

**E. The couple meets with the pastor again.**

This meeting would cover these issues:

- Reviewing the ceremony plans; proofing the bulletin
- What are you promising to each other?
- If you are no longer willing to keep those promises, what will you do?
- What would be cause to end the relationship?
- What have you learned throughout this process?
- How have you changed?
- Any other loose ends ...?

**F. The ceremony at last!**

Scheduling a rehearsal before the day of the ceremony is also recommended.