



Community Marriage Covenant for Faith Partners

We, the undersigned Faith based leaders of Fairfield County, believe:

God has established the sanctity and companionship of marriage in scripture. • God intends the marriage bond of husband and wife to be a lifelong union. • As religious leaders, we have a responsibility to participate in and to provide premarital preparation to improve the understanding and mutual commitment of couples being married. • As religious leaders, we have a responsibility to strengthen and nourish existing marriages. • As a community association, we have adopted the following framework for preparing couples for marriage and supporting marriage in our community:

Our Goals:

1. We shall provide educational opportunities for our children on the foundation and significance of marriage.
2. We will promote and encourage education in high schools on the value of marriage, relationship skills, and budgeting.
3. We will encourage a courtship of at least one year.
4. We agree to normally require four to six months for marriage preparation prior to the wedding date.
5. We agree to normally require five to six months for remarriage preparation including skills training for couples considering re-marriage.
6. We shall require 12 to 15 hours of premarital counseling sessions, using appropriate tools, inventories [such as FOCCUS or PREPARE] and mentoring to prepare couples for the covenant of marriage. Skills of communication, conflict resolution, and faith-based principles for successful marriages will be taught.
7. We agree to encourage newlyweds to attend two post-marital sessions with a clergy and/or a mentor couple within the first year of marriage.
8. We agree to provide marriage enrichment opportunities and resources. Collectively, we will provide an annual marriage enrichment opportunity for married couples in our community. We will work together to assure that cost will not be a barrier to participating couples.
9. We will train couples whose own marriages once nearly failed, to mentor couples in current crisis, potentially saving 80% to 90% of them.
10. When only one spouse wants to save the marriage, we will help reconcile separated couples by giving him/her a workbook course, such as "Marriage 911 –First Response," to be taken with a friend of the same gender over 12 weeks. It has been shown that this can help the spouse to grow so much personally and spiritually that they attract back their errant mate in more than half the cases.
11. We will help stepfamily parents be successful by creating a Stepfamily Support Group to help couples with stepchildren learn how to make these marriages successful. This saves four of five stepfamilies which normally divorce at a 70% rate.
12. We will appoint a Lead Mentor Couple who will coordinate the church's program, and serve as a "Marriage Champion" to collaborate with countywide marriage efforts that implement the mission of the Community Marriage Covenant.
13. We agree to encourage and support opportunities for families to receive Family Counseling and will support and encourage those in abusive or destructive situations to seek safe and appropriate support.

I personally commit to the pursuit of these goals. I will pursue their further endorsement and incorporation by community organizations with which I am associated.

Representative's Name _____

(Signature)

(Print Name and Title)

Organization _____

Date _____

The Fairfield County Community Marriage Covenant was developed in cooperation with Marriage Savers which has helped the clergy of more than 200 cities create a similar covenant. To contact Marriage Savers, write to 9311 Harrington Dr., Potomac, MD 20854 or call 301 469-5873. www.marriagesavers.org

A public version of this Community Marriage Covenant is available for those in a community or government organization.