

## Revised Marriage Policy

One of the challenges of being a member of a large church is that often people are unaware of what policies and practices are in place to serve the members of the congregation and the wider community. Over the past few years many Grace committees have been making an extra effort to ensure that members of the congregation are aware of the policies that are advanced within our congregation.

Last spring the Congregational Care and Growth Committee (CC&G Committee) decided to review Grace's wedding policy. It had been several years since the wedding policy had been revisited and in that time many changes have occurred within the country that impact the way that churches administer weddings. Although some people are under the assumption that the national church determines wedding policies, it is actually a decision that is made at the congregational level. With this in mind we thought it was important for our congregation to review our existing wedding policy.

To this end the CC&G Committee brought a draft of the revised marriage policy before the Council of Grace United in April. Members were requested to bring this draft back to their respective committees for feedback. Having gathered this feedback the CC&G Committee then met and made some changes that resulted in the final product that you will see before you in the next few pages.

Although it is the role of the Congregational Care and Growth Committee to administer the wedding policy, the policy ultimately belongs to the congregation. With that in mind, this policy will come before a congregational vote at the Annual Meeting in February. On Sunday, January, 17th there will be a meeting open to anyone in the congregation to address questions about the new policy.

Although the policy does not explicitly address the issue of same gendered weddings, it is the working assumption that this policy will apply equally to all couples requesting a wedding at Grace. In other words **all** couples will be married at Grace if they are members, adherents, or those with significant connections to Grace, and are able to fulfill the other expectations set out in the policy.

Therefore, the motion that will come before the congregation at the Annual Meeting in February will be as follows:

**That Grace United Church adopt the revised Marriage Policy (April 15, 2009) to be administered by the Congregational Care & Growth Committee and Worship Committee, recognizing that this policy makes possible same-gender marriages at Grace United Church and for off site marriages preformed by the ministry personnel of Grace United Church.**

### Marriage Policy Important Dates:

Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>

Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup>

Sunday, February

Sermons on Christian Understanding of Marriage  
After Worship Forum for Questions and Answers  
Regarding Marriage Policy

Annual Meeting and Marriage Policy Vote  
Date TBA