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Statement of Approval

This marriage policy is prepared to provide administrative guidance concerning the preparation and administration of marriages at Chunga Church Christ. The policy is in line with the three-fold mission of Chunga Church of Christ namely;

- Edification
- Evangelism
- Benevolence

It is the desire of the Church that believers are edified through sound marriage teachings. The principles espoused in this policy are aligned with the Bible and in the event of any conflict, the Bible shall take supremacy at all times.

Signed for and on behalf of the Church:

Mr. Levy Siabunkululu

Elder

Mr. Moses Mang'wato

Elder

Date:.....

Definitions

Believer – A person who has gladly received the word of God (Romans 10:14), believe the word of God (Hebrews 11:6), repented of his/her sins (Acts 17:30), confessed the belief in Jesus Christ as the son of God (Acts 8:36-37), baptized by full immersion in the name of the Father, the son and the Holy spirit (Acts 2:38, Mathew 28:18-19) and lives faithfully as a Christian (1 Peter 2:9).

Unbeliever – Any person who doesn't meet the definition of a believer.

Desertion – Willful abandonment of one's spouse without consent, in violation of legal (as prescribed in the laws of Zambia) or moral obligations per Biblical scriptures.

Elders – Ordained men of God fulfilling the qualification in 1 Timothy 3:1-6. Elders are responsible for the spiritual welfare of the congregation, while deacons are seen as responsible for the none spiritual needs of the Church. Elders are assisted in the administration of various works by deacons.

Deacons – These are the ordained men of God fulfilling the Qualification in 1 Timothy 3:1-6. Deacons are responsible for the non-spiritual needs of the Church and serve under the supervision of the Elders who are assigned to direct specific ministries.

Chunga Church of Christ – A self-governing congregation of Christians registered as a Society in the republic of Zambia and is overseen by Elders whose Headship is the Lord Jesus Christ. Chunga Church of Christ is associated with other Churches of Christ world-wide through the common beliefs and practices.

Pre- marital Sex – Sexual activity practiced by people who are not married

Mentoring Couple – Married couples that are more extensively trained or experienced so that they are qualified to deal not only with couples who are preparing for marriage but also married couples who are seeking assistance in sustaining their marriages.

Member of Chunga Church of Christ – Is one that meets the definition of a believer above and is registered with the Church.

Instrumental Music – Music performed/played by a musical instrument or group of instruments

Non- Instrumental Music – Singing/music performed by one or more singers without instrumental accompaniment (a cappella).

Preamble

In keeping with our Church mission, the Elders of the Church shall provide instruction and guidance concerning sexual purity beginning with the youth and encompassing the entire Church body. In this policy, the Church undertakes to teach married and engaged couples on the following principles;

- Marriage preparation based on God's word.
- Encouragement and opportunities for existing marriages to be strengthened.
- Help for marriages that may be experiencing difficulties.
- Encouragement and opportunities for families to succeed in having strong marriages.

1.0 Marriage Preparation

In order for the Church to better prepare couples for a life-long marriage, all couples who desire to be married at Chunga Church of Christ will agree to a maximum of four (4) months of marital preparation which will include:

- Pre- marital counselling with the Elders/marriage and counseling committee
- Taking a pre- marital inventory (Questionnaire to be filled in by the couple)
- Participating in the inventory follow- up with the Elders/ marriage and counseling committee
- Mandatory pregnancy test

“By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established, through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures” - Proverbs 23:3-4

1.1 Faith commitment

Couples who wish to be married at Chunga Church of Christ must have a personal relationship with Christ and be committed to establishing a Christian home. *“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” – 2 Corinthians 6:14*

1.2 Pre- marital Sex

Pre- marital sex has no moral grounds, it is against God, and it is unsafe physically or emotionally. Although sex is pleasurable, it is designed by God to be enjoyed by two married people. In case of pre- marital sex resulting into pregnancy the marriage may not be performed. The church requires all persons intending to marry to remain celibate before being pronounced Husband and wife. To protect the integrity of the Church, a couple intending to marry will be required to testify before the elders and the marriage and counseling committee that they have not engaged in any pre-marital sex. And if they have, they will be required to confess their sin as prescribed by the scriptures before the marriage is commissioned. The final decision to perform the ceremony will be determined by the Elders.

“Obey those who have the rule over you and submit yourselves, for they keep watch over your souls as ones who must give an account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you” - Hebrews 13:17.

2.0 Abstinence from Pre- Marital Sex

Once a couple has entered into pre-marital preparations with Chunga Church of Christ, they will agree not to engage in pre-marital sex and not live together at any time prior to the wedding ceremony. The Elders will not perform the ceremony if the couple is cohabiting or not abstaining from pre-marital sex. *It is God’s will that you should be sanctified; that you should avoid fornication; that each of you should learn to control his/her own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen who do not know God; for God did not call us to be impure but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects His instructions does not reject man but God who gives you His holy spirit.*

3.0 Separation, Divorce, Reconciliation & Re-marriage

This section deals with issues of separation, divorce, reconciliation and re-marriage.

3.1 Separation

The Church desires that couples that are on separation are as much as possible reconciled to one another at the earliest opportunity. *“To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate*

from her husband. But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife". 1 Cor 7:10 – 11

3.2 Divorce

Chunga Church of Christ realizing God's position on divorce, (*"I hate divorce says the Lord God of Israel - Malachi 2:16*). The Church will take all necessary steps to have the couple reconcile their differences. Mat 19:4- 6, 1 Cor 7:10 – 11, Mat 5:31- 32

3.3 Reconciliation

The church will at all times seek to reconcile couples that are having challenges in their marriages as divorce has no Biblical backing in God's plan for marriage. Couples to be reconciled include but not limited to those going through separation/divorced among other marital problems. 1 Cor 7:10 – 11

3.4 Re- marriage

Re-marriages are just as valid and sacred to God as first marriages. The desire of Chunga Church of Christ is to help marriages with every opportunity to succeed. The following Bible criteria shall be followed when dealing with re-marriages:

- a. Former divorced spouse is deceased: - *"So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man"* – Romans 7:3, 1Cor 7:39

4.0 The Mentoring Couple

It is a requirement that any couple getting married at Chunga Church of Christ is assigned a mentoring couple. The elders/Marriage and counseling committee will identify a mentoring couple from the Church in consultation with the couple intending to marry and assign them for at least 4 months. The mentoring relationship will be extended for one year after the commissioning of the marriage. Mentor couples will support couples as they begin a new life. A mentoring couple will:

- a. Willingly share what they know and their personal experience
- b. Represent skill, knowledge, virtue and accomplishment because they have gone before the couple they are mentoring.
- c. Take a personal and a heartfelt interest in the other couple's development and well-being.
- d. Offer support, challenge, patience and enthusiasm while guiding the mentees to new levels of competence.
- e. Point the way and present tangible evidence of what the mentee couple can become.
- f. Expose the mentee couple to new ideas, perspectives and standards.

Couples who are not members of Chunga Church of Christ and are intending to have their marriage commissioned at Chunga Church of Christ (having met all the requirements to have their marriage commissioned at Chunga Church of Christ) may not be required to have a mentoring couple from Chunga Church of Christ. The elders will encourage such a couple to get a mentoring couple from their local congregation or from within Chunga Church of Christ.

5.0 The Wedding

The church shall conduct the marriage ceremony at the Church premises or any other venue determined appropriate by the couple in consultation with the elders. The wedding reception shall be the responsibility of the couple.

6.0 Traditional Marriage Counselors

The Church recognizes the existence and role played by traditional marriage counselors. Where a couple chooses to use a member of the Church as a traditional marriage counselor, the traditional marriage counselor shall be subject to this policy. In the event that there is a conflict between traditional rituals and Christian values, the *Chunga Church of Christ marriage policy* shall prevail. The traditional marriage counselor shall read out the policy to the family representatives of the couple who shall consent to a Christian marriage process. This is at the beginning of the 4 months' period.

7.0 Exclusions

7.1 Same sex marriages: We will not conduct marriages for people of the same sex. When God acknowledged that it was not good for man to be alone, He could have created for Adam a male companion but the union of two beings of the same sex was not divine design. God created a woman and said that for this reason shall a man leave his family and cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18,24,25)

7.2 Couples under the influence of Alcohol or Drugs: We do not marry couples if either person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than those prescribed by a doctor) before or during the rehearsal and/or wedding

Note: Any member of the wedding party who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to participate in the wedding ceremony being conducted at Chunga Church of Christ. Further there is to be no smoking or alcoholic beverages on the Church property or any venue chosen for the marriage blessing.

7.3 Instrumental Music: It is the desire of Chunga Church of Christ that we maintain the teaching of the Bible on non-instrumental music in the Church no matter the occasion. We believe that the marriage ceremony hosted in the church should not have any instrumental music accompanying the music played or sang.

Note: We encourage use of a public announcing system (PA) for purposes of amplifying the audibility of the non-instrumental (acapella) music being played or sang.

Annex 1: Pre- marital Counseling

Chunga Church of Christ desires that every couple married at our church by one of our elders are exposed to the important building blocks of a Christian marriage. We want the young couple to know what a healthy Christian marriage looks like and to evaluate whether or not God would have you marry your partner at this time.

The Pre-marital classes have been designed to be challenging, fun and practical. The focus of these classes is upon marriage, not the wedding. *“A wedding is a day..... a marriage is a lifetime”*

Topics include:

- Marriage Myths
- God’s Purpose for Marriage
- Leaving and Cleaving
- Who Wears the Pants
- What Is Love
- Personality
- Family Background
- Communications (2)
- Conflict Resolution (2)
- Boundaries in Marriage

It is our desire that you enter into marriage well informed about each of these important topics. Each weekly session will combine small group interaction, one on one with your partner and in depth teaching about these topics. These sessions will give you time to reflect upon and evaluate your relationship. You will discover that you are not alone. There are other couples living through similar stress and apprehension as marriage is approached. The time you put into these classes will show your future spouse how much you care about them. It will also show how much you want what God desires for your marriage.

The principles you will learn in this curriculum apply equally to all couples even if this is not your first marriage.

For couples who live outside Lusaka, the elders will make arrangements with elders living in that area to counsel the couple.

In addition to the pre-marital classes we also require all couples married at Chunga Church of Christ to complete a pre-marital inventory.

The inventory is a secular diagnostic tool we use to help engaged couples evaluate potential areas of strength and growth. It consists of a written inventory that both persons complete individually. Important insights into your views on a variety of issues are gained through the use of this inventory. The mentoring couple assigned to you or the elders performing your ceremony will give this inventory to you. The inventory is required at no cost to you.

Pre-marital Classes	Issues for Discussion
Class 1: Myths of Marriage	Students are taught about myths such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We expect exactly the same things in marriage - Everything good in our relationship will get better. - Everything bad in my life will disappear - My spouse will make me whole
Class 2: God's purpose for marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Couples are taught that marriage is a covenant and a commitment - Couples are taught about oneness and what God wants for marriage
Class 3: Leaving and Cleaving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How couples should leave - Basic reasons why it is difficult to leave - What cleaving means and what hinders it
Class 4 Who wears the pants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Husband and wife Biblical roles - Key responsibilities
Class 5 What is Love ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sexual intimacy in Marriage
Class 6: Personality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How different personalities relate to each other - Financial management
Class 7: Family Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How families affect us and our relationships
Class 8: Boundaries in Marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are boundaries ? - Laws of boundaries - Misuse of boundaries
Class 9: Communication I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is communication ? - Levels of Communication
Class 10: Communication II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How different types of people communicate - Sensing people versus intuitive people - Visual, auditory, and feeling - Amplifiers and condensers - Reflective listening
Class 11: Conflict Resolution I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why most conflict occurs - Understanding anger
Class 12: Conflict Resolution II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five styles of dealing with conflict - Steps to resolving conflict - Forgiveness
Class 13: HIV/AIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues concerning HIV/AIDS in marriage

Annex 2: Affirmation Sheet

Chunga Church of Christ Marriage Policy Sign off Sheet

The Church leadership has brought to my attention the importance of my compliance with the Chunga Church of Christ marriage policy. I understand that this policy sign- off sheet will be placed on the file and copy retained by myself.

I have read the Chunga Church of Christ marriage policy and agree to abide by the provisions set out in this policy at all times.

Sign- off by the couple intending to marry:

Name (Please Print)			
Signature		Date	

Name (Please Print)			
Signature		Date	

Sign-off by family representative (Where applicable)

Name (Please Print)			
Signature		Date	

Sign- off by Church representative

Name (Please Print)			
Signature		Date	

Name (Please Print)			
Signature		Date	