

# Support in Developing a Community Marriage Covenant

– Church Sector –



## Church Sector Strategies

*in cooperation with the*

## Great Commandment Network



GREAT COMMANDMENT NETWORK

**More than 200 Community Marriage covenants or policies have been signed across the United States, as clergy across the faith community come together in signing a marriage covenant. This strategy promotes unity around the marriage issue, increases visibility and has proven to be effective in reducing both divorce and co-habitation.**

Two different levels of support have been identified and through the Marriage CoMission initiative a 50% grant is available to assist with the costs.

### **Support Level 1:**

**Comprehensive materials and coaching** (Cost \$1,000.00: \$500 of which would be provided by the CoMission)

- Teleconference coaching in the CMP vision and potentials.
- Marriage Covenant information packets for the steering committee (used with faith community leaders in sharing vision and strategy).
- Coaching of city leaders in how to enlist key clergy from a cross-section of churches: Evangelicals, Mainline and Catholic, plus a broad ethnic involvement.

### **Support Level 2:**

**Level 1 support, plus personal and on-site coaching** (Cost \$2,000 plus travel: \$1,000 of which would be provided by the CoMission)

- As desired, up to five different teleconference/webcasts will be provided to encourage maximum church participation among Catholics, Mainline, Evangelicals, etc.
- Coaching in the actual design, drafting and editing of the Marriage Covenant will be provided.
- Coaching in promotion of the covenant signing to include press releases, media coverage, event planning.
- On-site participation in the covenant signing to speak, encourage, give media interviews, etc.

Note: The local covenant and information on church signers will be entered via the **committed.net** website and then made available through the Marriage CoMission.

For questions and additional information contact:  
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Central Texas

## Community Marriage Statement

Central Texas

### We Believe....

The marriage as God intends is foundational to a strong country and to the well-being of children. As leaders in the Christian community, it is our responsibility to encourage couples to set aside time for marriage preparation in addition to counseling or wedding plans. We acknowledge that wedding is but a day while marriage is for a lifetime. When a man and woman unite in marriage they enter into a covenant relationship, not only between each other but with God.

The Christian community has a continuing responsibility to help couples maintain the vows they exchange at the wedding. Existing marriages can be strengthened and enriched. Deeply troubled marriages can be saved. Those who are separated can be helped to reconcile. When God has joined together, let the church help hold together.

### Causes for Concern....

As ministers in Central Texas, we are concerned that loving marriages be established with God at the center. Almost 50% of all marriages are performed by ministers, and we are troubled by the high divorce rates (approximately 50%) and the alarming increase in the number of couples living together outside of marriage. Our goal is to strengthen and enrich marriages significantly and to prepare couples better who are planning to celebrate marriage. As marriages are strengthened, the overall well-being of children is improved.

### Therefore, we will....

- Assist families in providing positive relational role models for children.
  - Affirm sexual abstinence outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage.
  - Provide instruction in relationship skills to those seriously dating.
  - Encourage courtships of at least a year.
  - Provide premarital counseling to help couples prepare for marriage. Such preparation may include: Pre-marital assessments, couples therapy, "single simulators" workbooks, and pastoral care.
  - Encourage married couples to attend marriage enrichment retreats, conferences, and programs offered by local organizations. Separated couples especially will be encouraged to attend such events during the course of their lives.
  - Provide specific support and resources for currently troubled marriages, blended families and those who are separated.
  - Provide support for those who have lost a spouse to death or divorce.
  - Influence public attitudes, dialogue, and policy to support and positively portray marriage in our community, state and nation.
- In order to facilitate the above, we as leaders in the Christian community will seek to become better equipped to prepare couples for a lifelong marriage. Those of us who are married will take the lead in attending to the success and maintenance of our own.

Name

Date

Church