

**Third City Christian Church – Cohabitation Plan**

***Our belief and teaching…***

As a church, we want to help couples see that this design by God for marriage is best, and is worth embracing (Hebrews 13:4a). It is for this reason that we ask that couples who are living together prior to marriage move apart until their wedding day. While this decision might seem an inconvenience, it should never interrupt our willingness to obey God and His Word. We strongly believe this sacrifice will set you as a couple on a new trajectory to enter marriage with as strong and godly of a foundation as possible as you walk forward in obedience to His design for marriage (Psalm 119:9, Matthew 7:24).

The primary reason for our position is that God wants each married couple to learn and discover what it means to be one flesh (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:6, Ephesians 5:31). Being one flesh can only be properly nurtured in the context of marriage. Of course, there are many ways in which we may create our own substitute for this by living together, engaging in premarital sex, running a household together, etc (Ephesians 2:3). These only offer a lesser alternative to God’s intended design for marriage. If Third City can help you brainstorm ideas as you move apart, please let us know. We want to help you in making this decision.

We believe in marriage as God has created it. Obedience to scripture is as vital and foundational to a healthy marriage. It will reflect the goodness and love of our father God to a sinful world. It is our hope that we can come beside you with our premarital coaching to lay a firm foundation for your marriage that will be a blessing for generations.

If you are not willing to part for the duration of time before the wedding, we will still be glad to provide premarital counseling to you, however, we will not officiate the wedding.

***Create a plan…***

This is a great opportunity to sit, discuss and create a plan with your fiancé for how the next few months will look leading up to the wedding day. Please detail your plan for abiding with our cohabitation policy. It should include a plan for sexual abstinence and details such as where each will live for the duration of your engagement. While we will encourage you in this and check in with you regarding it, ultimately it is not up to us to police a couple’s decision. It is our duty to teach and encourage every couple regarding choosing what God has designed (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

*(Complete your plan on the back…)*

***Our Plan is...***

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We will initiate this plan beginning on this date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Groom’s Signature Date Bride’s Signature Date

(\*This plan should be completed before TCCC Building Contracts are signed.)

**Please Return to:**

Third City Christian Church

ATTN: Marriage Ministry

4100 W 13th St

Grand Island, NE 68803

**Further Resources to Explore:**

*Books:*

Reclaiming Intimacy by Heather Jamison

The Ring Makes All the Difference by Glenn Stanton

A Lasting Promise by Dr. Scott Stanley

*Blogs:*

<http://slidingvsdeciding.blogspot.com>

*Online Articles:*

<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/marriage/preparing-for-marriage/test-driving-marriage/maier-on-cohabitation>

<http://www.familylife.com/articles/topics/marriage/getting-married/choosing-a-spouse/the-cohabitation-complication>