

Congregation Keneseth Israel
Policies, Practices and Guidelines

Policy, Practice or Guideline: Clergy Performing at Life-Cycle Events

Source: Religious Practice Committee

Date Adopted: 12/2006

Dates Revised: 3/2024

- I. Introduction: Initial guidelines for clergy performing life-cycle events were established by the Executive Committee. Currently, the Board of Trustees maintains this responsibility. They can be superseded in individual cases by a joint decision among the Clergy, Executive Director and Temple President.
- II. Policy Statement: It is the policy of KI to provide Clergy support for Congregants and their families during life-cycle events and in times of need.
- III. History: It has been the history that prior to any life cycle event, the member and or their families will discuss the content and special details of the ceremony with the Clergy. The purpose of which is to assure the needs and preferences of the participants do not conflict with the personal and professional beliefs of the Clergy. Further, it is intended that through mutual dialogue a richer understanding and appreciation of Reform Jewish rituals will be experienced.
- IV. Definitions:
 - a. Members in good standing – Annual dues & financial obligations owed by the members are fully paid on or before the expiration of the fiscal year for which they are due unless prior arrangements are made with the Administrator and/or Financial Secretary.
 - b. Immediate family – Children or parents of members. This does not include siblings, grandparents, or grandchildren.
 - c. Life-cycle events include, at the discretion of the Clergy, interfaith marriages as well as same-sex marriages which have been legally recognized in Pennsylvania since May 20, 2014, when a U.S. federal district court judge ruled that the Commonwealth's 1996 statutory ban on recognizing same-sex marriage was unconstitutional.

V. Procedure:

- a. Clergy will be available for all life-cycle events for members in good standing and their immediate families without a fee. Donations to the clergy's discretionary fund are acceptable.
- b. Events held at KI may be subject to a Facilities, materials, and Security fees.
- c. B'nai Mitzvah are performed only for member families.
- d. Clergy, at their discretion, will perform baby naming for non-immediate family members and for non-members. One year of free membership will be offered to the parents of the baby.
- e. Only members and their immediate family may use the sanctuary for life-cycle events.
- f. Even if a former member owns a cemetery plot, they cannot use the sanctuary for the funeral service unless they have immediate family who are current members.
- g. Clergy have the discretion to perform life-cycle events for anyone who requests their services, as long as it does not interfere with their job responsibilities at KI.
- h. If a clergy member performs a life-cycle event outside KI, they are entitled to both a fee for the services rendered and payment of their expenses by the non-member family, both of which they may keep.

VI. Reference:

- a. By-laws of Congregation Keneseth Israel, Article 4, § 2. Revenues & Gifts