

Oseh Shalom Interfaith Wedding Policy

Approved and Adopted by the Board June 13, 2010 1 Tamuz 5770

- Interfaith weddings using Jewish rituals, symbols and ritual objects may be conducted at Oseh Shalom – i.e., in any part of our building or on our grounds.
- Only our rabbi may officiate at an interfaith wedding conducted at Oseh Shalom. Exceptions due to the rabbi's unavailability may be granted on a case-by-case basis by the rabbi in consultation with the Religious Vice-President and/or Religious Committee, as appropriate.
- Our rabbi may include Jewish co-officiants in an interfaith wedding held at Oseh Shalom. A clergy member of a different religious faith may not co-officiate at an interfaith wedding conducted at Oseh Shalom. Such co-officiation would be in violation of current Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association policy.
- Members or non-members of Oseh Shalom may hold an interfaith wedding ceremony at Oseh Shalom.
- Members or non-members wishing to hold an interfaith wedding at Oseh Shalom must state their intentions to create a Jewish home together. This determination will be made solely by our rabbi as a result of his discussions with the couple.
- The specific Jewish rituals, blessings, symbols and ritual objects used during an interfaith wedding held at Oseh Shalom shall be decided during discussions between the individual couple, our rabbi, and the outside officiant (if any).
- Notwithstanding any earlier reviews, this Policy will be formally reviewed by the Religious Committee three years after its adoption.

Notes:

1. The term "interfaith wedding", as used in this document, refers to the wedding of a couple, one of whom is Jewish, the other of whom is not.
2. The term "at Oseh Shalom" refers to the entire Oseh Shalom campus – i.e., the building and grounds.

Recommendations

1. The Task Force strongly affirms the values of inclusion and community, and recommends that Oseh Shalom actively explore additional ways to make our community even more welcoming and inclusive to interfaith couples.
2. The Task Force recommends that clear policies regarding the use of the building

be put in place and documented (or that already-existing policies be documented) ensuring that congregation members and congregational events be given scheduling priority over non-member events, and that non-members pay a higher fee for building rental than do members.

Values

Oseh Shalom is deeply committed to promoting and strengthening the survival and continuity of the Jewish people. We affirm that one key way to accomplish this task is to promote the creation and maintaining of Jewish households, where Jewish traditions, rituals and values are practiced and lived and can be transmitted to future generations.

We affirm that promoting and encouraging Jewish marriage is one key way of accomplishing this task. We also affirm that the survival and continuity of the Jewish people can and is being strengthened by interfaith couples who are creating Jewish households and living their lives according to Jewish values.

We affirm the importance of the values of *keiruv* (outreach), *hachlalah* (inclusivity) and welcoming, while maintaining our distinctiveness as a Jewish community.

By offering a couple who is committed to creating a Jewish household the opportunity to celebrate and sanctify their marriages at Oseh Shalom, we are reaching out our hand in welcome to that couple at a key moment in their lives, and showing k'vod (honor/respect) to the kedushah (sanctity) of the life choice they have made. We hope that, by welcoming a couple in this particular way, we will encourage them and their families to draw closer to Oseh Shalom and to Judaism.

We encourage the rabbi, during his meetings with a couple, to discuss the core values of Oseh Shalom and Reconstructionism, and to stress the importance of affirming those values through the rituals used at a wedding or commitment ceremony held at Oseh Shalom.