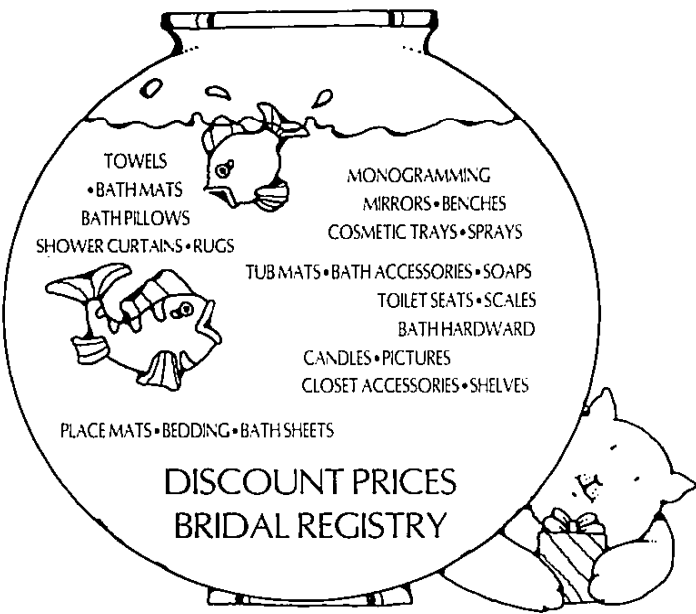


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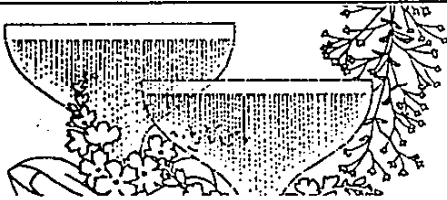
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Each time the Rev. Mackay Taylor talks with another engaged couple, the format is a little bit different.

# Sharing their very special concerns

The Rev. Mackay Taylor used to have a "fairly set format" when talking with engaged couples.

That's changed in the last few years. Today, each premarital session is as different as the pair getting married.

"I used to go through a whole number; it was really bad, as I recall," said the pastor of Northminster Presbyterian Church in Troy.

"I decided I was taking care of my needs instead of theirs."

As Dana Deane's minister, Taylor will marry her to Kevin O'Connor in June. Instead of a church ceremony, the wedding will take place in the garden at Addison Oaks, Oxford.

Originally, the couple intend to write their own wedding vows. Instead, they decided to go with an excerpt from the "Book of Common Worship" written in the 1600s but "still a delight," said the Presbyterian minister.

"It has dignity and simplicity and promises as well as vows that are identical for both people," he said.

Along with the "mechanics of the marriage ceremony," Taylor talks with engaged couples about their backgrounds and how they deal with problems.

"I think it's very important that they understand the significance of the families they come from. They're not going to escape that," said Taylor, who has known Ms. Deane since she was a child.

"Also, how they deal with conflict and emotions is important in any relationship — and this is certainly the most intimate."

two marriage requests, the minister tries not to judge relationships.

"I try to be attuned to what the particular couple is saying and would like to deal with," he said.

"The marriage is not what I do. Marriage is what the two of them agree to."

The only real pitch he gives is urging the couple to get the best help they can if the marriage doesn't go the way they hoped.

"I think back to when I got married. I didn't really know what I was doing."

Please turn to Page 23



O'Connor and Ms. Deane listen as the minister talks with them about their backgrounds and goals.

ALTHOUGH HE'S turned down