

# The Marriage Service

## INTRODUCTION & THE WELCOME

*The minister may say*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
be with you

**All** and also with you.

*This sentence may be used*

God is love, and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them. 1 John 4.16

*This prayer may be said*

*All may say*

**God of wonder and of joy:  
grace comes from you,  
and you alone are the source of life and love.  
Without you, we cannot please you;  
without your love,  
our deeds are worth nothing.  
Send your Holy Spirit,  
and pour into our hearts  
that most excellent gift of love,  
that we may worship you now  
with thankful hearts  
and serve you always with willing minds;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

*A hymn may be sung.*

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

### PREFACE (1)

In the presence of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
we have come together  
to witness the marriage of N and N,  
to pray for God's blessing on them,  
to share their joy  
and to celebrate their love.

Marriage is a gift of God in creation  
through which husband and wife  
may know the grace of God.  
It is given  
that as man and woman grow together  
in love and trust,  
they shall be united with one another  
in heart, body and mind,  
as Christ is united with his bride, the Church.

The gift of marriage  
brings husband and wife together  
in the delight and tenderness of sexual union  
and joyful commitment  
to the end of their lives.

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

It is given as the foundation of family life  
in which children are [born and] nurtured  
and in which each member of the family,  
in good times and in bad,  
may find strength,  
companionship and comfort,  
and grow to maturity in love.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God,  
and blessed by the presence  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
with those celebrating a wedding  
at Cana in Galilee.

Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty  
which all should uphold and honour.  
It enriches society and strengthens community.  
No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly  
but reverently and responsibly  
in the sight of almighty God.

N and N are now to enter this way of life.  
They will each give their consent to the other  
and make solemn vows,  
and in token of this they will  
[each] give and receive a ring.  
We pray with them  
that the Holy Spirit will guide  
and strengthen them,  
that they may fulfil God's purposes  
for the whole of their earthly life together.

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

### PREFACE (2)

We have come together  
in the presence of God,  
to witness the marriage of N and N,  
to ask his blessing on them,  
and to share in their joy.  
Our Lord Jesus Christ was himself a guest  
at a wedding in Cana of Galilee,  
and through his Spirit he is with us now.

The Bible teaches us  
that marriage is a gift of God in creation  
and a means of his grace,  
a holy mystery  
in which man and woman become one flesh.  
It is God's purpose that,  
as husband and wife give  
themselves to each other in love  
throughout their lives,  
they shall be united in that love  
as Christ is united with his Church.

Marriage is given,  
that husband and wife  
may comfort and help each other,  
living faithfully together  
in need and in plenty,  
in sorrow and in joy.

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

It is given, that with delight and tenderness  
they may know each other in love,  
and, through the joy of their bodily union,  
may strengthen the union  
of their hearts and lives.

It is given as the foundation of family life  
in which children may be born and nurtured  
in accordance with God's will,  
to his praise and glory.

In marriage husband and wife belong to one another,  
and they begin a new life together in the community.  
It is a way of life that all should honour;  
and it must not be undertaken  
carelessly, lightly, or selfishly,  
but reverently, responsibly,  
and after serious thought.

This is the way of life,  
created and hallowed by God,  
that *N* and *N* are now to begin.  
They will each give their consent to the other;  
they will join hands  
and exchange solemn vows,  
and in token of this  
they will [each] give and receive a ring.

Therefore, on this their wedding day  
we pray with them,  
that, strengthened and guided by God,  
they may fulfil his purpose  
for the whole of their earthly life together.

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

### THE DECLARATIONS

#### *The minister says to the congregation*

First, I am required to ask anyone present who knows a reason why these persons may not lawfully marry, to declare it now.

#### *The minister says to the couple*

The vows you are about to take are to be made in the presence of God, who is judge of all and knows all the secrets of our hearts; therefore if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

#### *The minister says to the bridegroom*

N, will you take N to be your wife?  
Will you love her, comfort her,  
honour and protect her,  
and, forsaking all others,  
be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

*He answers:* I will.

#### *The minister says to the bride*

N, will you take N to be your husband?  
Will you love him, comfort him,  
honour and protect him,  
and, forsaking all others,  
be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

*She answers:* I will.

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

*The minister says to the congregation*

Will you, the families and friends of N and N,  
support and uphold them in their marriage  
now and in the years to come?

**All**            **We will.**

### THE COLLECT

*The minister invites the people to pray, silence is kept and the minister says the Collect*

God our Father,  
from the beginning  
you have blessed creation with abundant life.  
Pour out your blessings upon N and N,  
that they may be joined  
in mutual love and companionship,  
in holiness and commitment to each other.  
We ask this  
through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All**            **Amen.**

### READINGS

*At least one reading from the Bible is used.*

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

**On the third day there was a wedding in Cana** of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now!" Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

[John 2:1-11 NRSV](#)

**As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved**, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

[Colossians 3:12-17 NRSV](#)

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

**If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.** And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

[1 Corinthians 13:1-13 NRSV](#)

*Sermon*

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

### THE MARRIAGE

*A hymn may be sung.*

*The couple stand before the minister.*

### THE VOWS

*The minister introduces the vows in these or similar words*

N and N, I now invite you to join hands  
and make your vows,  
in the presence of God and his people.

Who brings this woman to be married to this man?

*The bride and bridegroom face each other.*

*The bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his.*

I, N , take you, N , to be my wife,  
to have and to hold  
from this day forward;  
for better, for worse,  
for richer, for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love and to cherish,  
till death us do part;  
according to God's holy law.  
In the presence of God I make this vow.

*They loose hands.*

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

*The bride takes the bridegroom's right hand in hers, and says*

I, N , take you, N , to be my husband,  
to have and to hold  
from this day forward;  
for better, for worse,  
for richer, for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love and to cherish,  
till death us do part;  
according to God's holy law.  
In the presence of God I make this vow.

*They loose hands.*

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

### THE GIVING OF RINGS

Heavenly Father, by your blessing  
let these rings be to N and N  
a symbol of unending love and faithfulness,  
to remind them of the vow and covenant  
which they have made this day  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All*            **Amen.**

*The bridegroom places the ring on the fourth finger of the bride's left hand and, holding it there, says*

N, I give you this ring  
as a sign of our marriage.  
With my body I honour you,  
all that I am I give to you,  
and all that I have I share with you,  
within the love of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*If rings are exchanged, they loose hands and the bride places a ring on the fourth finger of the bridegroom's left hand and, holding it there, says*

N, I give you this ring  
as a sign of our marriage.  
With my body I honour you,  
all that I am I give to you,  
and all that I have I share with you,  
within the love of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

*If only one ring is used, before they loose hands the bride says*

N, I receive this ring  
as a sign of our marriage.  
With my body I honour you,  
all that I am I give to you,  
and all that I have I share with you,  
within the love of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

### THE PROCLAMATION

*The minister addresses the people*

In the presence of God,  
and before this congregation,  
N and N have given their consent  
and made their marriage vows to each other.  
They have declared their marriage  
by the joining of hands  
and by the giving and receiving of rings.  
I therefore proclaim  
that they are husband and wife.

*The minister joins their right hands together and says*

Those whom God has joined together  
let no one put asunder.

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### THE BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

*The husband and wife kneel.*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God,  
for you have created joy and gladness,  
pleasure and delight,  
love, peace and fellowship.

Pour out the abundance of your blessing  
upon N and N in their new life together.  
Let their love for each other  
be a seal upon their hearts  
and a crown upon their heads.

Bless them in their work  
and in their companionship;  
awake and asleep,  
in joy and in sorrow,  
in life and in death.

Finally, in your mercy,  
bring them to that banquet  
where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**All**        **Amen.**

*The minister says to the couple*

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit,  
bless, preserve and keep you;  
the Lord mercifully grant you the riches of his grace,  
that you may please him both in body and soul,  
and, living together in faith and love,  
may receive the blessings of eternal life.

**All**        **Amen.**

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

*(Registration of the Marriage here or after the final blessing)*

### PRAYERS

*These or other suitable prayers are used*

Faithful God, holy and eternal,  
source of life and spring of love,  
we thank and praise you for bringing N and N to this day,  
and we pray for them.

Lord of life and love:

**All**        **hear our prayer.**

May their marriage be life-giving and life-long,  
enriched by your presence  
and strengthened by your grace;  
may they bring comfort and confidence  
to each other in faithfulness and trust.

Lord of life and love:

**All**        **hear our prayer.**

May the hospitality of their home  
bring refreshment and joy to all around them;  
may their love overflow to neighbours in need  
and embrace those in distress.

Lord of life and love:

**All**        **hear our prayer.**

May they discern in your word  
order and purpose for their lives;  
and may the power of your Holy Spirit  
lead them in truth and defend them in adversity.

Lord of life and love:

**All**        **hear our prayer.**

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

May they nurture their family with devotion,  
see their children grow in body, mind and spirit  
and come at last to the end of their lives  
with hearts content and in joyful anticipation of heaven.  
Lord of life and love:

**All**           hear our prayer.

*The prayers conclude with the Lord's Prayer.*

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

*A hymn may be sung.*

### THE DISMISSAL

*The minister says*

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love,  
defend you on every side,  
and guide you in truth and peace;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

*All*        **Amen.**

*Registration of the Marriage*