

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

*Here are key texts of the marriage service.
They come in order shown, but not all
necessarily together.*

The Pastoral Introduction

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. 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 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 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.

The Marriage 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.

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 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 Giving of Rings

The minister receives the ring(s), and says this prayer or the prayer

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.

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 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.

The Blessing of the Marriage

The husband and wife kneel. The minister may use the following blessing or one of here

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. **Amen.**