

The Marriage Service - Headings for Order of Service

- Headings in **Bold** are normally included; others are optional.
- The question and response to the congregation can be printed, but this is not usually necessary (see full order)
- Readings can be printed in full.
- Words of hymns printed in appropriate place, depending on how many you chose (see full order)
- Any prayers and prayer responses which the congregation will say should also be included (see full order)

Introduction

The Welcome

Preface

The Declarations

The Collect

Readings

(Sermon – or see below)

The Marriage

The Vows

The Giving of Rings

The Proclamation

The Blessing of the Marriage

Registration of the Marriage

(Sermon)

Prayers

The Dismissal (**The Blessing**)

The Marriage Service – full order

Points at which there are options are marked in blue.

Introduction

The Welcome

The minister welcomes the people using these or other appropriate words

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 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.

Preface

There are 2 versions, either of which can be used – see next page

Version 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. 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.

Version 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. 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 Declarations (If the bans have been properly called, there is no reason why objections should arise at this stage!)

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 (This section can be printed in order)

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 minister may then say: Who brings this woman to be married to this man?

The person escorting the bride puts her hand into the bridegroom's hand.

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.

A hymn may be sung. This can come here or between readings or before or after sermon!

The Readings (Can be printed in full. Names of readers can be included)

At least one reading from the Bible is used.

The Sermon (Can come after the Registration)

The Marriage

The couple stand before the minister.

The Vows

(There are alternative versions but these are the ones usually used)

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 and says:

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 (Prayers depend on how many rings)

The minister receives the ring(s), and says:

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 another suitable one.

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 Registration of the Marriage

A hymn or psalm or other music may be used.

(The Sermon and a hymn may be included here)

The Prayers These or other suitable prayers are used. The prayers usually include these concerns:

- Thanksgiving
- Spiritual growth
- Faithfulness, joy, love, forgiveness and healing
- Children, other family members and friends

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.

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](#). There are 2 versions.

Version 1

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**All Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Version 2

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**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.**

A hymn may be sung.

The Dismissal (The Blessing)

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.

The bride and bridegroom turn to face the congregation and lead the way out of the church.