

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

(At the day and time appointed, the persons to be married shall stand together, the man on the right hand and the woman on the left, as they face the minister.)

In the Word of God we read: "A wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding" (John 2:1-2).

Dear Friends, we have come together in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, to attend the uniting of this man and this woman in holy matrimony. This state is not to be entered unadvisedly or lightly, but discreetly, reverently, and in the fear of God. Forasmuch as marriage is ordained of God, it is necessary for those who enter the marriage covenant to consider with reverent mind and heart what the Word of God teaches about it.

The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18).

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Haven't you read, that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?" (Matthew 19:4-5).

The highest goal you can have before you is spoken through the Apostle Paul: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her," and "the wife must respect her husband" (Ephesians 5:25, 33b).

Who gives this woman in marriage?

(Father, or other appointed person, answer, I DO)

_____ and _____ you are about to assume mutual relationships and responsibilities, and to pledge to each other your undying devotion and fidelity. The union into which you are now to enter is the closest and tenderest into which human beings can come. It is a union founded upon mutual understanding and love, and to Christian people it is a union in the Lord. Since marriage is God's institution, and is intended for the happiness and welfare of mankind, it is fitting that we seek His blessing upon your marriage.

Let us pray.

Our gracious and loving Heavenly Father, You have taught us that if in all our ways we acknowledge You, You will direct our paths. We come therefore to seek Your guidance and blessing upon these Your servants, now to be joined in the bonds of matrimony. Help each to live for the other, O God, and grant that each may enrich the other's life. Unite their hearts, we pray so that no storm of life will be able to shake their faith in each other, or in You. Be with them in sunshine or shadow, in joy or sorrow, and may their home be Your abiding place, and You their constant guest, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

(Then the minister shall say to the man:)

Will you _____ in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, take _____ to be your wedded wife, to live together after God's Word in the holy state of matrimony? Will you love, honor, and cherish her, in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity, and forsaking all others, cleave only unto her, so long as you both shall live?

If so answer, "I WILL."

(Then the minister shall say to the woman:)

Will you _____ in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, take _____ to be your wedded husband, to live together after God's Word in the holy state of matrimony? Will you love, honor, and cherish her, in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity, and forsaking all others, cleave only unto her, so long as you both shall live?

If so answer, "I WILL."

(Then the minister shall say:)

Since you _____ and _____ have promised to take each other as husband and wife, please join your right hands and repeat the marriage vows in the presence of God and these witnesses.

(Then the man shall say:)

I, _____ take you _____ to be my wedded wife, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's Holy Word, and to you do I pledge my love and devotion.

(Then the woman shall say:)

I, _____ take you _____ to be my wedded husband, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's Holy Word, and to you do I pledge my love and devotion.

THE RING SERVICE

(To the man:)

What do you give as a sign of your love and sincerity?

The man: A Ring.

(Places the ring in the groom's right hand, who in turn passes it in the minister's right hand.)

(To the woman:)

What do you give as a sign of your love and sincerity?

The woman: A Ring

(Places the ring in the bride's right hand, who in turn places it in the minister's right hand.)

(Then the minister shall say:)

Let these rings be to you both a symbol of the purity and permanence of true wedded love, and a seal of the sacred vows you have taken this day, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(To the man:)

You will place the ring on the third finger of the left hand, and repeat the following vow:

_____ receive this ring in token and pledge of my constant faith and abiding love, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(To the woman:)

You will place the ring on the third finger of the left hand, and repeat the following vow:

_____ receive this ring in token and pledge of my constant faith and abiding love, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Then the minister shall say:)

Join your right hands.

(Then shall the minister lay his right hand upon their joined hands, and say:)

Because you _____ and _____ have thus consented together in holy wedlock, I therefore, in accordance with the Word of God and the laws of this (commonwealth/state*), pronounce you husband and wife together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. "What God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matthew 19:6).

Let us pray: *(The couple may kneel.)*

Eternal God, send Your blessing upon these Your servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in Your name. May they live faithfully together, sincerely perform and keep the vows and covenant between them made. Grant them grace to live according to Your Word; strengthen them in constant fidelity and true affection toward each other; sustain and defend them in all trials and temptations, and help them so to pass through this world in faith toward You, in communion with Your Holy Church, and in loving service one to the other, that they may forever enjoy Your heavenly benediction, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, we pray. Amen.

(Here, the Lord's Prayer may be used.)

(Then shall the minister give the benediction:)

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace (Numbers 6:24-26).

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all (2 Corinthians 13:14).

**(Only Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky are officially commonwealths; all others are states.)*