

St Mark's and Putnoe Heights Church
Bedford

The Marriage Service

Orders of Service
for use in our churches

Notes for the Marriage

Entrance of the Bride

The bride may enter the church escorted by her father or a representative of the family, or the bride and groom may enter church together.

Registration of the Marriage

The law requires that the Registers are filled in immediately after the solemnization of a marriage. This may take place either after the Blessing of the Marriage or at the end of the service.

Giving Away

The traditional ceremony is optional. Instead at the vows the minister may say

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

Ecumenical Provisions

Where a minister of another Christian Church is invited to assist at the Solemnization of Matrimony, the permissions and procedures set out in Canon B 43 are to be followed. The Church of England minister who solemnizes the marriage must establish the absence of impediment, direct the exchange of vows, declare the existence of the marriage, say the final blessing, and sign the registers. A minister invited to assist may say all or part of the opening address, lead the declarations of intent, supervise the exchange of rings, and join in the blessing of the marriage. He or she may also read a lesson and lead all or part of the prayers.

Marriage Service—New Form

Introduction and Welcome

Verse of Scripture

God is love, and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them. 1 John 4:16

Opening Prayer

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.

The Marriage

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.

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 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.

Let us pray

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. Amen.

Minister: Who gives this woman to be married
Person giving Bride 'I Do'

***The Minister takes the hand of the bride from the hand
of the person giving away and joins it with the groom
The groom 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.
and this is my solemn 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.
and this is my solemn vow.

They loose hands.

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

***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 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 minister pronounces the blessing

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.

The Blessing

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.

Prayers

Almighty God you gave marriage to be a source of blessing and joy and we thank you for the marriage vows which we have celebrated between _ N _ and _ N , here today. Be present with them in their married life and bind them together through their love for each other. Give to them joy in one another and bring them by this joy to share in your creative and redeeming love. Protect them from evil, surround them with peace and may they and each one of us draw strength from understanding the deep love which you have for us.

We pray especially for this the marriage of _ N _ and _ N , and yet we pray for all of those marriages represented here today as we seek to follow your perfect will for our lives. May we know your presence and peace in our homes, that unity may overcome division, forgiveness heal injury, and joy triumph over sorrow. We seek by your presence to be faithful to one another and to you, that our love may endure and grow strong; that we may be to each other a strength in need, a comfort in sorrow and companions in joy.

Lord we know that the human love which we share this day is only a shadow, a reflection of the love which you have for each one of (us), your children. Give to each of us in times of difficulty the assurance you promise that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from

Marriage Service—Old Form

This service is virtually identical with the service in the Prayer Book proposed in 1928.

INTRODUCTION

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God and in the face of this congregation, to join together this man and this woman in Holy Matrimony; which is an honourable estate, instituted of God himself, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church; which holy estate Christ adorned and beautified with his presence, and first miracle that he wrought, in Cana of Galilee, and is commended in Holy Writ to be honourable among all men; and therefore is not by any to be enterprised, nor taken in hand, unadvisedly, lightly, or wantonly; but reverently, discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of God, duly considering the causes for which Matrimony was ordained.

First, It was ordained for the increase of mankind according to the will of God, and that children might be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy name.

Secondly, It was ordained in order that the natural instincts and affections, implanted by God, should be hallowed and directed aright; that those who are called of God to this holy estate, should continue therein in pureness of living.

Thirdly, It was ordained for the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

Into which holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. Therefore if any man can shew any just cause, why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace.

Speaking unto the persons that shall be married the Priest shall say

I require and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgement when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any impediment, why ye may not be lawfully joined together in Matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured, that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God's word doth allow are not joined together by God; neither is their Matrimony lawful.

If no impediment be alleged, then shall the Priest say unto the man

N, wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together according to God's law in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour and keep her, in sickness and in health? and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

The man shall answer I will.

Then shall the Priest say unto the woman

N, wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband, to live together according to God's law in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love him, comfort him, honour and keep him, in sickness and in health? and, forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him, so, long as ye both shall live?

The woman shall answer I will.

Then shall the Priest say

Who giveth this woman to be married to this man?

VOWS

Then shall they give their troth to each other in this manner. The Priest, receiving the woman at her father's or friend's hands, shall cause the man with his right hand to take the woman by her right hand, and to say after him as follows

I, N, take thee, N,
to my wedded 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;
and thereto I plight thee my troth.

Then shall they loose their hands; and the woman, with her right hand taking the man by his right hand, shall likewise say after the Priest, one or other of these vows

I, N, take thee, N,
to my wedded 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, **or** (to love, cherish and obey)
till death us do part,
according to God's holy law
and thereto I give thee my troth.

RINGS

Then they shall again loose their hands; and a ring or rings shall be laid upon the book. Before delivering the ring the Priest may say

Bless, O Lord, these rings, and grant that those who give and receive them shall remain faithful to each other, and abide in thy peace and favour, and live together in love until their lives' end. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And the Priest, taking the ring (s), shall deliver it to the man, to put it upon the fourth finger of the woman's left hand. And the man, holding the ring there, and taught by the Priest, shall say

With this ring I thee wed;
with my body I thee honour;
and all my worldly goods with thee I share:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then shall the Priest take and shall deliver it to the woman, to put it upon the fourth finger of the man's left hand. And the woman, holding the ring there, and taught by the Priest, shall say

With this ring I thee wed;
with my body I thee honour;
and all my worldly goods with thee I share:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Then shall they both knell down and the Priest shall say

O Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, giver of all spiritual grace, the author of everlasting life: Send thy blessing upon these thy servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in thy name; that, living faithfully together, they may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant betwixt them made, whereof this ring given and received is a token and pledge; and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws; through Jesus Christ our Lord. All **Amen.**

Then shall the Priest join their right hands together, and say

Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

Then shall the Priest speak unto the people

Forasmuch as *N* and *N* have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have given and pledged their troth either to other, and have declared the same by giving and receiving of a ring, and by joining of hands; I pronounce that they be man and wife together, In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

And the Priest shall add this Blessing God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you; and so fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. **Amen.**

Bible Readings suggested for use in a marriage

Old Testament and Apocrypha

Genesis 1.26-28
Song of Solomon 2.10-13; 8.6,7
Jeremiah 31.31-3
Tobit 8.4-8

Epistles

Romans 7.1,2,9-18
Romans 8.31-35,37-39
Romans 12.1,2,9-13
Romans 15.1-3,5-7,13
1 Corinthians 13
Ephesians 3.14-end
Ephesians 4.1-6 I,
Ephesians 5.21-end
Philippians 4.4-9
Colossians 3.12-17
1 John 3.18-end
1 John 4.7-12

Gospels

Matthew 5.1-10
Matthew 7.21,24-end
Mark 10.6-9,13-16
John 2.1-11
John 15.1-8
John 15.9-17

Psalms

Psalm 67
praise you.
Psalm 121
Psalm 127
Psalm 128

