

MARRIAGE SERVICES

The Marriage Act 1961 provides that a marriage by an authorised celebrant who is a minister of religion 'may be solemnised according to any form and ceremony recognised as sufficient for the purpose by the religious body or organization of which he or she is a minister' (14 [1]).

Two forms for marriage are provided here which are variations from the services presently authorised by the Anglican Church of Australia.

The first is *An Australian Prayer Book* (1978) Second Form with slight modifications. The use of this service is intended to be in accordance with section 5(1) of the Canon Concerning Services 1992 which was adopted in the Diocese of Sydney by General Synod - Canon Concerning Services 1992 Adopting Ordinance 1998.

The second is a new form that provides for a more explicit expression of the different obligations of a man and a woman in Christian marriage. Ministers proposing use of this service ought consider section 5(3) of the Canon Concerning Services 1992 and in the case of doubt should seek authorization by the Bishop of the diocese as a permitted deviation from existing orders of service according to the provisions of Section 4 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia.

A LIST OF SUGGESTED BIBLE READINGS FOR USE AT A WEDDING

Genesis 1:26–2.4a *Made in God's image*

Genesis 2:18–24 *One flesh*

Song of Songs 2:8–14 *The lovers*

Psalms 128 *Happy are those who fear the Lord.*

Psalms 37:3–7 *The Lord is kind and merciful.*

Psalms 67 *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.*

Ephesians 3:14–21 *Grounded in love*

Ephesians 5:22–33 *Husband and wife in Christian marriage*

Colossians 3:12–19 *Everything in the name of Jesus*

1 Peter 3:1–9 *Harmony in marriage*

1 John 4:7–16 *The love of God*

Matthew 5:1–12 *True happiness*

Matthew 7:21–29 *Hearing and doing*

John 2:1–11 *Wedding at Cana*

John 15:9–17 *Abiding in Christ's love*

NOTES

1 If the Holy Communion is celebrated at the time of the marriage, the minister may incorporate the Marriage service as is most appropriate in the circumstances.

2 The Marriage Service may be preceded by the ministry of the word from the Communion Service even when the Holy Communion is not celebrated.

3 The minister's greeting at the commencement of the service may be given in the manner they consider appropriate.

4 The only impediments to a marriage which can be alleged which are recognised by God's law or the laws of this Commonwealth. Any person alleging an impediment on the occasion of a marriage must give an indemnity against any pecuniary loss, in the event of their allegation failing, which their action brings upon the parties. If such an allegation is made and an indemnity is given, the marriage must be deferred until the truth has been tried.

A SERVICE FOR MARRIAGE

FORM 1

The Wedding

The Preface
The Consent
The Wedding

Hearing God's word

Bible reading
Sermon

Prayers

Prayers
Conclusion

A SERVICE FOR MARRIAGE

FORM 1

THE PREFACE

1. *When all are assembled in the church, with the bridegroom and the bride standing before the minister, the minister greets them all, and then says.*

We have come together in the presence of God for the joining in marriage of this man N and this woman N.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said of marriage that 'From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.'

Marriage is the symbol of God's unending love for his people, and of the union between Christ and his Church. So the Apostle Paul teaches that the husband must love his wife as Christ loved the Church, and that the wife must give due honour to her husband.

Marriage should be honoured by all, and is not to be entered into lightly or carelessly, but with reverent and serious respect for those purposes for which it was instituted by God.

Marriage is a gift from God for human wellbeing, and for the proper expression of natural instincts and affections with which he has endowed us.

It is a life-long union in which a man and a woman are called so to give themselves in body, mind, and spirit, and so to respond, that from their union will grow a deepening knowledge and love of each other. In the joys and sorrows of life, in prosperity and adversity, they share their companionship, faithfulness, and strength.

In marriage a new family is established in accordance with God's purpose, so that children may be born and nurtured in secure and loving care, for their wellbeing and instruction, and for the good order of society, to the glory of God.

N and N have now come here to be joined in this holy union to which God has led them. They seek his blessing on their life together, that they may fulfil his purpose for them; and they ask us to support them in this prayer. If any person here can show why they may not lawfully be joined in marriage he should speak now, or hereafter remain in silence.

Speaking to the persons to be married, the minister says

I charge you both, as you will answer before God, that if either of you know any reason why you may not lawfully be joined together in marriage, you now confess it. For be assured that those who marry otherwise than God's word allows are not joined together by God, neither is their marriage lawful in his sight.

THE CONSENT

2. *There being no objection lodged, the minister then says to the man*

N, will you take N to be your wife,
to live together according to God's law?
Will you give her the honour
due to her as your wife
and, forsaking all others,
love and protect her,
as long as you both shall live?

The man answer

I will.

3. *The minister says to the woman*

N, will you take N to be your husband,
to live together according to God's law?
Will you give him the honour
due to him as your husband
and, forsaking all others,
love and protect him,
as long as you both shall live?

The woman answers

I will.

- [4. *The minister may ask*

Who brings this woman to be married to this man?

Answer

I do.

The minister may receive the woman's right hand from her father or her friend.]

5. *The minister causes the man to take the woman's right hand. The minister, together with all the people, says*

**God our Father, in your great love for humankind
you have given us the gift of marriage;
so bless these two persons as they pledge their lives to each other,
that their love may evermore grow
to be the true reflection of your love for us all;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

THE WEDDING

6. *The man, holding the woman's right hand in his, says*

I N, in the presence of God,
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,
as long as we both shall live.
This is my solemn vow and promise.

7. *The woman, taking the man's right hand in hers, says*

I N, in the presence of God,
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,
as long as we both shall live.
This is my solemn vow and promise.

8. *The minister receives the wedding ring[s], and may then say*

Grant, Lord, that *this ring/these rings* may be a token and constant sign of the pledge of love and faithfulness which these two persons make to each other; through Christ our Lord.

All say

Amen.

9. *The man places the ring on the ring finger of the woman, and holding it there, says*

N, with this ring I wed you;
with all that I am and all that I have I honour you;
in the name of God. Amen.

10. *Before they loose hands, the woman may respond*

N, I receive this ring
in token of our marriage.
May God enable us to grow in love together.

11. *If the woman gives a ring to the man, this procedure is to be repeated appropriately.*

12. *The man and the woman then kneel. The minister joins their right hands and says*

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

13. *The minister addresses the people*

Before God and in the presence of us all,
by solemn consent and promise,
by the giving and receiving of *a ring/s*,
and by the joining of hands,
N and N have now accepted each other in marriage.

In the name of God,
I declare them to be husband and wife.

14. *The minister then addresses the husband and wife, saying*

God the Father enrich you with his grace,

God the Son make you holy in his love,
God the Holy Spirit strengthen you with his joy.
The Lord bless you and keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

Blessed be the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; one God, to be praised for ever.

THE PRAYERS

15. One or more passages from Scripture (see note 4 on page 567) may be read; and an address may follow.

16. The minister says

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

**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.**

17. The minister continues

Almighty Father, giver of life and love, look in favour on all who are made one in marriage, and especially on these your servants as they enter into their new life together. In your love deepen their love; strengthen their wills to keep the promises they have made; that they may live to your glory and to the good of humankind; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

18. The minister says

Almighty Father, you have created us in your own image, and by your gracious gift humankind is increased. To N and N grant the blessing of children; and such wisdom and loving care in the nurture of their family, that they and their children may come to know you in their lives and give you praise and honour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

19. The minister and congregation say

Almighty God, Lord of the universe,
all love, strength, and understanding come from you;
so direct and govern us in body and soul
that we may strive to live according to your word
and to do everything that is agreeable to your will:
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen.**