



The Bridge Church

SERVICES FOR MARRIAGE

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 organisation 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 to use this service ought to consider section 5(3) of the Canon Concerning Services 1992. In the case of doubt, they should seek authorisation 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

Psalm 128 Happy are those who fear the Lord.

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

Psalm 67 The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

Ephesians 3:14–21 Grounded in love

Ephesians 5:21–33 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

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.

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

The minister's greeting at the commencement of the service may be given in the manner considered appropriate for the occasion.

Only those impediments to a marriage can be alleged which are recognised by God's law or the laws of the Commonwealth of Australia. 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.

MARRIAGE FORM 1

THE PREFACE

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 no one separate.'

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 they 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

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 answers,
I will.

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.

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.

The minister invites 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

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.*

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.*

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.

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.*

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.*

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

The man and the woman may then kneel. The minister joins their right hands and says,

Those whom God has joined together let no one separate

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.*

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 WORD AND THE PRAYERS

One or more passages from Scripture (see page 114) may be read; and a sermon may follow.

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 forever. Amen.*

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.

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.

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.”

MARRIAGE FORM 2

PREFACE

The couple stands before the minister, who says this preface.

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

Marriage is the gift of God, who made us male and female and declared that when a man is united to his wife they become one flesh. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, 'what God has joined together, let no one separate.'

Marriage signifies God's faithful love for his people, and the union between Christ and his church. It should not be entered into lightly or carelessly, but seriously and thoughtfully, considering those purposes for which it was instituted by God.

Marriage was instituted so that a man and a woman might serve God together through an exclusive, lifelong commitment, which is the proper context for expressing sexual intimacy and affection. It was instituted so that children might be born and nurtured in a secure and loving environment, for their wellbeing and instruction and for the good order of society. And it was instituted for the mutual companionship, help and comfort of husband and wife, as they fulfill their responsibilities in marriage, both in prosperity and adversity.

As N and N enter this way of life, they seek God's blessing that his purposes for them may be fulfilled. Any person who can show why they may not lawfully be joined together in marriage should speak now, or hereafter remain silent.

Speaking to the persons to be married the minister says,

N and N I charge you both, as you will answer before God on the day of judgment, when the secrets of all our hearts shall be disclosed, 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, those who marry contrary to God's word are not joined together by God, nor is their marriage lawful in his sight.

The minister says to the man,

*N, will you give yourself to N, to be her husband, to live with her according to God's word?"
Will you care for her, provide for her, and love her
as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her,
and, forsaking all others, will you remain faithful to N
so long as you both shall live?*

The man replies,

I will.

The minister says to the woman,

*N, will you give yourself to N, to be his wife, to live with him according to God's word?
Will you love him, help him, and submit yourself to him, as the church submits to Christ,
and, forsaking all others, will you remain faithful to N, so long as you both shall live?*

The woman replies,

I will.

The minister may ask,

Who brings this woman to be married to this man?

The father (parents) respond,

I (we) do.

The minister prays,

God our Father,
thank you for the gift of marriage,
and for enabling N and N
to make this commitment.
Unite them in mutual love and companionship,
and keep them in holiness and devotion to one another.
We ask these things in the name of your Son,
the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

THE WEDDING

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

*With God and this congregation as my witnesses,
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, as long as we both shall live.
This is my solemn vow and promise.*

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

*With God and this congregation as my witnesses,

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 respect,
as long as we both shall live.
This is my solemn vow and promise.*

The minister invites the congregation to respond to these questions,

*Families and friends, with God, you are witnesses to these promises.
Will you do everything in your power to uphold N and N in their marriage?*

We will, God being our helper.

Will you pray for them that they may live faithfully together as husband and wife until their life's end?

We will.

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 I will love you, with all that I have I will serve you,
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

If the woman gives a ring she does so here.

The minister may invite the couple to kneel and says,

Let us pray.

*Eternal God, Creator and preserver of all, giver of all spiritual grace,
author of everlasting life, send your blessing upon N and N,
that, living faithfully together in love and peace, they may fulfil and keep
the vow and covenant they have made, of which this ring is/these rings are
a token and pledge through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The minister joins their hands and says,

*Before God and in the presence of us all, by mutual consent and solemn promises by the giving and
receiving of a ring/rings and by the joining of hands, this man, N, and this woman, N, have now
committed themselves to each other in marriage.*

*Therefore in the name of God I declare them to be husband and wife.
What God has joined together let no one separate.*

The minister then addresses the husband and wife, saying,

*God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless, preserve, and keep you;
the Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you
and fill you with all spiritual blessing, that you may so live together in this life,
that in the world to come you may have life everlasting. Amen.*

THE WORD AND THE PRAYERS

One or more passages from Scripture may be read and a sermon may follow.

Psalms 127 or 128 or a suitable hymn may be said or sung.

The minister says,

*As our Lord Jesus taught us, we pray together,
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.*

The minister or another person leads the congregation in prayer using these or other forms.

*God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
bless N and N by sowing the seed of eternal life in their hearts, that whatever they learn in your holy
word they may indeed fulfil.
Look on them from heaven and bless them as you blessed Abraham and Sarah,
that, obeying your will and secure in your protection, they may remain in your love to the end of
their lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Merciful Lord and heavenly Father, by your gracious gift humanity is increased.
Give to N and N the blessing of children.
Grant that, guarding their hearts, they may remain faithfully united in marriage
and see their children raised in the faith, to the praise of your holy name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*Almighty God,
you made man and woman to be united in one flesh, and so signified to us the union between Christ
and his Church.
Enable this man to love and cherish his wife, as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.
Give to this woman the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit in submitting to her husband, as
the church does to Christ.
Clothe them with faith, love, holiness and self-control.
May they bring joy to one another and blessing to many, as each serves the other in love,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The minister then prays,

Almighty God,

*who created our first parents and sanctified and joined them together in marriage,
pour upon you the riches of his love, sanctify and bless you, that you may please him both in body
and soul, and live together in holy love to your lives' end. Amen.*

*The congregation may join the minister in praying,
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.*

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