

Concerning this Publication

(May, 2012) This liturgy was developed at St. Andrew's Church (Anglican) in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. We believe it incorporates some of the best parts of our liturgical heritage but feel free to modify it for your own use. The parts in green are either optional or need to be edited. We personalize the liturgy for all of our couples and print this in a booklet format and present it to the couple as a keepsake from their wedding. You can contact us via our website at WeAreStAndrews.com.

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage

Concerning the Service

Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in the presence of God. Marriage symbolizes God's faithful love for his people, and the union between Christ and his Church. It is not to be undertaken to satisfy lustful passions, but in holiness and honor, duly considering God's purposes for marriage.

Firstly, God desires that a man and a woman, joyfully united as one flesh, may in every circumstance of life faithfully love and serve each other.

Secondly, God intends that children be born and nurtured in faithful and loving care, for their wellbeing and instruction, to the glory of God.

Thirdly, God gives marriage for the proper expression of sexual instincts and affections with which he has endowed us, that, living together in holiness, we may abstain from sexual immorality.

The church, rightly, joins together to witness the vows and to ask that God's purposes and blessing will be fulfilled in the couple's life.

At **St. Andrew's** it is required that one, at least, of the parties must be a baptized Christian; that the ceremony be attested by at least two witnesses; and that the marriage conform to the witness of Scripture and the laws of the State.

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage

¶ At the time appointed, the persons to be married, with their witnesses, assemble in the church or some other appropriate place.

¶ During their entrance, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung, or instrumental music may be played.

¶ Then the Minister, facing the people and the persons to be married, with the woman to the right and the man to the left, addresses the congregation and says:

Dearly beloved: We have come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the joining together of this man and this woman in Holy Matrimony. The bond and covenant of marriage was established by God in creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ adorned this manner of life by his presence

and first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. It signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, and Holy Scripture commends it to be honored among all people.

The union of husband and wife in heart, body, and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord. Therefore marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God.

Into this holy union **Man's Full Name** and **Woman's Full Name** now come to be joined. If any of you can show just cause why they may not lawfully be married, speak now; or else for ever hold your peace.

¶ Then the minister says to the persons to be married

I require and charge you both, as you will answer at the day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any reason, why you may not be united in marriage lawfully, and in accordance with God's Word, you do now confess it.

The Declaration of Consent

¶ The minister says to the woman

Woman'sName, will you have this man to be your husband; to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

¶ The Woman answers

I will.

¶ The minister says to the man

Man'sName, will you have this woman to be your wife; to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

¶ The Man answers

I will.

¶ The minister then addresses the congregation, saying

Families and friends, with God, you are witnesses to these promises. Will you do everything in your power to uphold **Woman'sName** and **Man'sName** in their marriage? Will you pray for them that they may live faithfully together as husband and wife until their life's end?

¶ The congregation responds

We will.

¶The minister may ask

Who presents this woman to be married to this man?

The Ministry of the Word

¶The minister then says to the people

Let us pray.

O gracious and everliving God, you have created us male and female in your image: Look mercifully upon this man and this woman who come to you seeking your blessing, and assist them with your grace, that with true fidelity and steadfast love they may honor and keep the promises and vows they make; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

¶Then one or more passages from Scripture are read.

Suggested readings

Genesis 1:26 28 (Male and female he created them)
Genesis 2:4 9, 15 24 (A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)
Song of Solomon 2:10 13; 8:6 7 (Many waters cannot quench love)
1 Corinthians 13:1 13 (Love is patient and kind)
Ephesians 3:14 19 (The Father from whom every family is named)
Ephesians 5:1 2, 21 33 (Walk in love, as Christ loved us)
Colossians 3:12 17 (Love which binds everything together in harmony)
1 John 4:7 16 (Let us love one another for love is of God)

¶Between the Readings, a Psalm, hymn, or anthem may be sung or said.

Matthew 5:1 10 (The Beatitudes)
Matthew 5:13 16 (You are the light...Let your light so shine)
Matthew 7:21, 24 29 (Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock)
Mark 10:6 9, 13 16 (They are no longer two but one)
John 15:9 12 (Love one another as I have loved you)

¶A sermon follows.

The Marriage

¶The Man, facing the woman and taking her right hand in his, says

In the Name of God, I, **Man'sName**, take you, **Woman'sName**, 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, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.

¶The Woman, still facing the man and holding his right hand says

In the Name of God, I, **Woman'sName**, take you, **Man'sName**, 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, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.

¶ They loose their hands.

¶ The minister asks God's blessing on a ring or rings as follows

Bless, O Lord, this ring to be a sign of the vows by which this man and this woman have bound themselves to each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ The giver places the ring on the ring finger of the other's hand and says

Woman'sName, I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Man'sName, I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

¶ Then the minister joins the right hands of husband and wife and says

Now that **Woman'sName** and **Man'sName** have given themselves to each other by solemn vows, with the joining of hands and the giving and receiving of a ring, I pronounce that they are husband and wife, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

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

¶ The people respond

Amen.

The Prayers

¶ The minister says

Let us pray together in the words our Savior taught us.

¶ People and Minister

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,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

☞The minister continues

Eternal God, creator and preserver of all life, author of salvation, and giver of all grace: Look with favor upon the world you have made, and for which your Son gave his life, and especially upon **Woman'sName** and **Man'sName** whom you make one flesh in Holy Matrimony.

Give them wisdom and devotion in the ordering of their common life, that each may be to the other a strength in need, a counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy.

Grant that their wills may be so knit together in your will, and their spirits in your Spirit, that they may grow in love and peace with you and one another all the days of their life.

Give them grace, when they hurt each other, to recognize and acknowledge their fault, and to seek each other's forgiveness and yours.

Make their life together a sign of Christ's love to this sinful and broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair.

Bestow on them, if it is your will, the gift and heritage of children, and the grace to bring them up to know you, to love you, and to serve you.

Give them such fulfillment of their mutual affection that they may reach out in love and concern for others. Grant that all married persons who have witnessed these vows may find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed.

Grant that the bonds of our common humanity, by which all your children are united one to another, and the living to the dead, may be so transformed by your grace, that your will may be done on earth as it is in heaven; where, O Father, with your Son and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign in perfect unity, now and for ever. Amen.

The Blessing of the Marriage

☞The husband and wife kneel and the minister says

Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us, to be born of a human mother, and to make the way of the cross to be the way of life. We thank you, also, for consecrating the union of man and woman in his Name. By the power of your Holy Spirit, pour out the abundance of your blessing upon **Woman'sName** and **Man'sName**. Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their life and in their death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that table where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home.

May God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that you may faithfully live together in this life, and in the age to come have life everlasting. Amen.

The Peace

¶ The minister invites the newly married couple to stand and says

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

¶ The people respond

And also with you.

¶ The newly married couple then greet each other, after which, if there is no Communion, the dismissal follows.

At the Eucharist

¶ If there be Communion, the service continues with the Prayer of Consecration. At the Communion, it is appropriate that the newly married couple receive Communion first, after the ministers.

¶ In place of the usual postcommunion prayer, the following is said

O God, the giver of all that is true and lovely and gracious: We give you thanks for binding us together in these holy mysteries of the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Grant that by your Holy Spirit, Woman'sName and Man'sName, now joined in Holy Matrimony, may become one in heart and soul, live in fidelity and peace, and obtain those eternal joys prepared for all who love you; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ As the wedding party leaves the church, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung; or instrumental music may be played.