

The Witnessing and Blessing of a Marriage

The Word of God

GATHERING

The couple joins the assembly.

ENTRANCE HYMN

OPENING ACCLAMATION

The Presider says the following, the People standing

OPTION A: Blessed be God

Presider Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People Blessed be God, now and for ever. Amen.

OPTION B: Blessed be the one

Presider Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People Glory to God for ever and ever.

OPTION C: The Lord is risen indeed (BCP): Easter

Presider Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

OPTION D: Christ is risen indeed (EOW): Easter

Presider Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.

OPTION E: The Lord is risen indeed (BCP): Vigil and Day of Pentecost

Presider Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

OPTION F: Christ is risen indeed (EOW): Vigil and Day of Pentecost

Presider Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia.

OPENING DIALOGUE

Presider Beloved, let us love one another,

People For love is of God.

Presider Whoever does not love does not know God,

People For God is love.

Presider Since God so loves us,

People Let us love one another.

OPENING ADDRESS

The Presider may address the assembly in these words

OPTION A: Dear friends

Dear friends in Christ, in the name of God and the Church we have come together today with *N. N.* and *N. N.*, to witness the vows they make, committing themselves to one another in marriage [according to the laws of the state *or* civil jurisdiction of _____]. Forsaking all others, they will bind themselves to one another in a covenant of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, remaining true to one another in heart, body, and mind, as long as they both shall live.

The lifelong commitment of marriage is not to be entered into lightly or thoughtlessly, but responsibly and with reverence. Let us pray, then, that God will give them the strength to remain steadfast in what they vow this day. Let us also pray for the generosity to support them in the commitment they undertake and for the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

OPTION B: Dearly beloved

Dearly beloved, in the name of God and the Church we have come together today with *N. N.* and *N. N.*, to witness the vows they make, committing themselves to one another in marriage [according to the laws of the state *or* civil jurisdiction of _____]. Forsaking all others, they will bind themselves to one another in a covenant of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, remaining true to one another in heart, body, and mind, as long as they both shall live.

The lifelong commitment of marriage is not to be entered into lightly or thoughtlessly, but responsibly and with reverence. Let us pray, then, that God will give them the strength to remain steadfast in what they vow this day. Let us also pray for the generosity to support them in the commitment they undertake and for the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

OPTION C: Dear friends / couple previously committed

Dear friends in Christ, in the name of God and the Church we have come together today with *N. N.* and *N. N.* to witness the sacred vows they make this day as they are married [according to the laws of the state *or* civil jurisdiction of _____], and reaffirm their commitment to one another. Forsaking all others, they will renew their covenant of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, remaining true to one another in heart, body, and mind, as long as they both shall live.

Let us pray, then, that God will give them the strength to remain steadfast in what they vow this day. Let us also pray for the generosity to support them in the commitment they undertake, and for the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

OPTION D: Dearly beloved / couple previously committed

Dearly beloved, in the name of God and the Church we have come together today with *N. N.* and *N. N.* to witness the sacred vows they make this day as they are married [according to the laws of the state *or* civil jurisdiction of _____], and reaffirm their commitment to one another. Forsaking all others, they will renew their covenant of mutual fidelity and steadfast love, remaining true to one another in heart, body, and mind, as long as they both shall live.

Let us pray, then, that God will give them the strength to remain steadfast in what they vow this day. Let us also pray for the generosity to support them in the commitment they undertake, and for the wisdom to see God at work in their life together.

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

OPTION A: The Lord be with you

Presider The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Presider Let us pray.

OPTION B: God be with you

Presider God be with you.
People And also with you.
Presider Let us pray.

OPTION A: God of abundance

God of abundance: assist by your grace *N.* and *N.*, whose covenant of love and fidelity we witness this day. Grant them your protection, that with firm resolve they may honor and keep the 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.*

OPTION B: Almighty and everliving God

Almighty and everliving God: look tenderly upon *N.* and *N.*, who stand before you in the company of your Church. Let their life together bring them great joy. Grant them so to love selflessly and live humbly, that they may be to one another and to the world a witness and a sign of your never-failing love and care; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, to the ages of ages. *Amen.*

OPTION C: O God, faithful and true

O God, faithful and true, whose steadfast love endures for ever: we give you thanks for sustaining *N.* and *N.* in the life they share and for bringing them to this day. Nurture them and fill them with joy in their life together, continuing the good work you have begun in them; and grant us, with them, a dwelling place eternal in the heavens where all your people will share the joy of perfect love, and where you, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, live and reign, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

OPTION D: Holy Trinity (for those who bring children)

Holy Trinity, one God, three Persons perfect in unity and equal in majesty: Draw together with bonds of love and affection *N.* and *N.*, who with *their families* seek to live in harmony and forbearance all their days, that their joining together will be to us a reflection of that perfect communion which is your very essence and life, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who live and reign in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

The Lessons

FIRST READING

OPTION A: Ruth 1:16–17

Reader A Reading from the book of Ruth.

Ruth 1:16–17

But Ruth said,

“Do not press me to leave you
or to turn back from following you!
Where you go, I will go;
where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people,
and your God my God.
Where you die, I will die—
there will I be buried.
May the LORD do thus and so to me,
and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!”

OPTION B: 1 Samuel 18:1b, 3; 20:16–17; 42a

Reader A Reading from the First book of Samuel.

1 Samuel 18:1b, 3; 20:16–17; 42a

The soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul.

Thus Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “May the LORD seek out the enemies of David.” Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him; for he loved him as he loved his own life.

Then Jonathan said to David, “Go in peace, since both of us have sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, ‘The LORD shall be between me and you, and between my descendants and your descendants, forever.’”

OPTION C: 1 Samuel 18:1–4

Reader A Reading from the First book of Samuel.

1 Samuel 18:1–4

When David had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father’s house. Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt.

OPTION D: Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

Reader A Reading from the book of Ecclesiastes.

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help. Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? And though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

OPTION E: Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7

Reader A Reading from the Song of Solomon.

Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7

My beloved speaks and says to me:

“Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;

for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away.

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;

for love is strong as death,
passion fierce as the grave.

Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a raging flame.

Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.

If one offered for love
all the wealth of one’s house,
it would be utterly scorned.

OPTION F: Micah 4:1–4

Reader A Reading from the book of the prophet Micah.

Micah 4:1–4

In days to come

the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised up above the hills.
Peoples shall stream to it,
and many nations shall come and say:
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
He shall judge between many peoples,
and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more;
but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees,
and no one shall make them afraid;
for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.

OPTION A: The Word of the Lord

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

OPTION B: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People Thanks be to God.

OPTION C: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.
People Thanks be to God.

OPTION F: No conclusion

PSALM

OPTION A: Psalm 65

Psalm 65

You are to be praised, O God, in Zion; *
to you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.
To you that hear prayer shall all flesh come, *
because of their transgressions.
Our sins are stronger than we are, *

but you will blot them out.
Happy are they whom you choose
and draw to your courts to dwell there! *
they will be satisfied by the beauty of your house,
by the holiness of your temple.
Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness,
O God of our salvation, *
O Hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the seas that are far away.
You make fast the mountains by your power; *
they are girded about with might.
You still the roaring of the seas, *
the roaring of their waves,
and the clamor of the peoples.
Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs; *
you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.
You visit the earth and water it abundantly;
you make it very plenteous; *
the river of God is full of water.
You prepare the grain, *
for so you provide for the earth.
You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges; *
with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.
You crown the year with your goodness, *
and your paths overflow with plenty.
May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing, *
and the hills be clothed with joy.
May the meadows cover themselves with flocks,
and the valleys cloak themselves with grain; *
let them shout for joy and sing.

OPTION B: Psalm 67

Psalm 67

May God be merciful to us and bless us, *
show us the light of his countenance and come to us.
Let your ways be known upon earth, *
your saving health among all nations.
Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.
Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, *
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide all the nations upon earth.
Let the peoples praise you, O God; *
let all the peoples praise you.
The earth has brought forth her increase; *
may God, our own God, give us his blessing.

May God give us his blessing, *
and may all the ends of the earth stand in awe of him.

OPTION C: Psalm 85:7-13

Psalm 85:7-13

Show us your mercy, O LORD, *
and grant us your salvation.
I will listen to what the LORD God is saying, *
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people
and to those who turn their hearts to him.
Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, *
that his glory may dwell in our land.
Mercy and truth have met together; *
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
Truth shall spring up from the earth, *
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.
The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, *
and our land will yield its increase.
Righteousness shall go before him, *
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

OPTION D: Psalm 98

Psalm 98

Sing to the LORD a new song, *
for he has done marvelous things.
With his right hand and his holy arm *
has he won for himself the victory.
The LORD has made known his victory; *
his righteousness has he openly shown in
the sight of the nations.
He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to
the house of Israel, *
and all the ends of the earth have seen the
victory of our God.
Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; *
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.
Sing to the LORD with the harp, *
with the harp and the voice of song.
With trumpets and the sound of the horn *
shout with joy before the King, the LORD.
Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, *
the lands and those who dwell therein.
Let the rivers clap their hands, *
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD,
when he comes to judge the earth.
In righteousness shall he judge the world *

and the peoples with equity.

OPTION E: Psalm 100

Psalm 100

Be joyful in the LORD, all you lands; *
serve the LORD with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.
Know this: The LORD himself is God; *
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise; *
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.
For the LORD is good;
his mercy is everlasting; *
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

OPTION F: Psalm 126

Psalm 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.
Then they said among the nations, *
“The LORD has done great things for them.”
The LORD has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.
Restore our fortunes, O LORD, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.
Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.
Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

OPTION G: Psalm 127

Psalm 127

Unless the LORD builds the house, *
their labor is in vain who build it.
Unless the LORD watches over the city, *
in vain the watchman keeps his vigil.
It is in vain that you rise so early and go to bed so late; *
vain, too, to eat the bread of toil,
for he gives to his beloved sleep.
Children are a heritage from the LORD, *
and the fruit of the womb is a gift.
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior *

are the children of one's youth.
Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them! *
he shall not be put to shame
when he contends with his enemies in the gate.

OPTION H: Psalm 133

Psalm 133

Oh, how good and pleasant it is, *
when brethren live together in unity!
It is like fine oil upon the head *
that runs down upon the beard,
Upon the beard of Aaron, *
and runs down upon the collar of his robe.
It is like the dew of Hermon *
that falls upon the hills of Zion.
For there the LORD has ordained the blessing: *
life for evermore.

OPTION I: Psalm 148

Psalm 148

Hallelujah!
Praise the LORD from the heavens; *
praise him in the heights.
Praise him, all you angels of his; *
praise him, all his host.
Praise him, sun and moon; *
praise him, all you shining stars.
Praise him, heaven of heavens, *
and you waters above the heavens.
Let them praise the Name of the LORD; *
for he commanded, and they were created.
He made them stand fast for ever and ever; *
he gave them a law which shall not pass away.
Praise the LORD from the earth, *
you sea-monsters and all deeps;
Fire and hail, snow and fog, *
tempestuous wind, doing his will;
Mountains and all hills, *
fruit trees and all cedars;
Wild beasts and all cattle, *
creeping things and wing'd birds;
Kings of the earth and all peoples, *
princes and all rulers of the world;
Young men and maidens, *
old and young together.
Let them praise the Name of the LORD, *

for his Name only is exalted,
his splendor is over earth and heaven.
He has raised up strength for his people
and praise for all his loyal servants, *
the children of Israel, a people who are near him.
Hallelujah!

OPTION J: Psalm 149:1-5

Psalm 149:1-5

Hallelujah!
Sing to the LORD a new song; *
sing his praise in the congregation of the faithful.
Let Israel rejoice in his Maker; *
let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.
Let them praise his Name in the dance; *
let them sing praise to him with timbrel and harp.
For the LORD takes pleasure in his people *
and adorns the poor with victory.
Let the faithful rejoice in triumph; *
let them be joyful on their beds.

FIRST READING

OPTION A: Romans 12:9–18

Reader A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Rome.

Romans 12:9–18

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

OPTION B: 1 Corinthians 12:31b—13:13

Reader A Reading from Paul's First letter to the Church in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 12:31b—13:13

And I will show you a still more excellent way.

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

OPTION C: 2 Corinthians 5:17–20

Reader A Reading from Paul's Second letter to the Church in Corinth.

2 Corinthians 5:17–20

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

OPTION D: Galatians 5:14, 22–26

Reader A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Galatia.

Galatians 5:14, 22–26

For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

OPTION E: Ephesians 3:14–21

Reader A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Ephesus.

Ephesians 3:14–21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in

your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

OPTION F: Colossians 3:12–17

Reader A Reading from Paul’s letter to the Church in Colossus.

Colossians 3:12–17

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

OPTION G: 1 John 3:18–24

Reader A Reading from the First letter of John.

1 John 3:18–24

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

OPTION H: 1 John 4:7–16, 21

Reader A Reading from the First letter of John.

1 John 4:7–16, 21

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live

through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

OPTION A: The Word of the Lord

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

OPTION B: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People Thanks be to God.

OPTION C: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.

People Thanks be to God.

OPTION F: No conclusion

HYMN

HOLY GOSPEL

All standing, the Deacon or Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

OPTION A: The Holy Gospel of our Lord / Matthew

People The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

OPTION B: The Holy Gospel of our Savior / Matthew

People The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

OPTION C: The Holy Gospel of our Lord / Mark

People The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

OPTION D: The Holy Gospel of our Savior / Mark

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Mark.
People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

OPTION E: The Holy Gospel of our Lord / Luke

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

OPTION F: The Holy Gospel of our Savior / Luke

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Luke.
People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

OPTION G: The Holy Gospel of our Lord / John

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

OPTION H: The Holy Gospel of our Savior / John

The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to John.
People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

OPTION A: Matthew 5:1-16

Matthew 5:1-16

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

OPTION B: Mark 12:28–34

Mark 12:28–34

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” Then the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; and ‘to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,’ and ‘to love one’s neighbor as oneself,’—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” After that no one dared to ask him any question.

OPTION C: Luke 6:32–38

Luke 6:32–38

“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

OPTION D: John 15:9–17

John 15:9–17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.”

OPTION E: John 17:1–2, 18–26

John 17:1–2, 18–26

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

“I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

“Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE SERMON

The Witnessing of the Vows and the Blessing of the Covenant

PRESENTATION

The couple comes before the assembly. If there is to be a presentation, the presenters stand with the couple, and the Presider says to them

Presider Who presents *N.* and *N.*, as they seek the blessing of God and the Church on their love and life together?
Presenters We do.
Presider Will you love, respect, and pray for *N.* and *N.*, and do all in your power to stand with them in the life they will share?
Presenters We will.

The Presider then addresses the couple, saying

N. and N., you have come before God and the Church to exchange and renew solemn vows with one another and to ask God's blessing.

The Presider addresses one member of the couple, saying

Presider N., do you freely and unreservedly offer yourself to N.?

Answer I do.

Presider Will you continue to live together in faithfulness and holiness of life as long as you both shall live?

Answer I will, with God's help.

The Presider addresses the other member of the couple, saying

Presider N., do you freely and unreservedly offer yourself to N.?

Answer I do.

Presider Will you continue to live together in faithfulness and holiness of life as long as you both shall live?

Answer I will, with God's help.

The assembly stands, the couple faces the People, and the Presider addresses them, saying

Presider Will all of you gathered to witness these vows do all in your power to uphold and honor this couple in the covenant they make?

People We will.

Presider Will you pray for them, especially in times of trouble, and celebrate with them in times of joy?

People We will.

THE PRAYERS

The Presider then introduces the prayers

Presider Then let us pray for N. and N. in their life together and for the concerns of this community.

A Deacon or another leader bids prayers for the couple.

Prayers for the Church and for the world, for the concerns of the local community, for those who suffer or face trouble, and for the departed are also appropriate. If the rite takes place in the principal Sunday worship of the congregation, the rubric concerning the Prayers of the People on page 359 of the Book of Common Prayer is followed.

Adaptations or insertions may be made to the form that follows. Brackets indicate a bidding that may be omitted.

OPTION A: Loving God

Leader For *N.* and *N.*, seeking your blessing and the blessing of your holy people; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For a spirit of loving-kindness to shelter them all their days; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For friends to support them and communities to enfold them; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For peace in their home and love in their family; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.
[Leader For the grace and wisdom to care for the children you entrust to them [*or* may entrust to them]; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.]
Leader For the honesty to acknowledge when they hurt each other, and the humility to seek each other's forgiveness and yours; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For the outpouring of your love through their work and witness; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For the strength to keep the vows each of us has made; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.

The leader may add one or more of the following biddings

[Leader For all who have been reborn and made new in the waters of Baptism; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.]
[Leader For those who lead and serve in communities of faith; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.]
[Leader For those who seek justice, peace, and concord among nations; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.]
[Leader For those who are sick or suffering, homeless or poor; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.]
[Leader For victims of violence and those who inflict it; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.]
[Leader For communion with all who have died [especially those whom we remember this day: _____]; Loving God,
People Hear our prayer.]

OPTION B: Lord, in your mercy

Leader For *N.* and *N.*, seeking your blessing and the blessing of your holy people; Lord, in your mercy,

People Hear our prayer.
Leader For a spirit of loving-kindness to shelter them all their days; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For friends to support them and communities to enfold them; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For peace in their home and love in their family; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.
[Leader For the grace and wisdom to care for the children you entrust to them [*or* may entrust to them]; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.]
Leader For the honesty to acknowledge when they hurt each other, and the humility to seek each other's forgiveness and yours; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For the outpouring of your love through their work and witness; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.
Leader For the strength to keep the vows each of us has made; Lord, in your mercy,
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[Leader For all who have been reborn and made new in the waters of Baptism; Lord, in your mercy,
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[Leader For those who seek justice, peace, and concord among nations; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.]
[Leader For those who are sick or suffering, homeless or poor; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.]
[Leader For victims of violence and those who inflict it; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.]
[Leader For communion with all who have died [especially those whom we remember this day: _____]; Lord, in your mercy,
People Hear our prayer.]

The Presider concludes the Prayers with the following or another appropriate Collect

Giver of every gift, source of all goodness, hear the prayers we bring before you for *N.* and *N.*, who seek your blessing this day. Strengthen them as they share in the saving work of Jesus, and bring about for them and for all you have created the fullness of life he promised, who now lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER

OPTION A: We now pray

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

OPTION B: We are bold to say

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

OPTION A: Our Father in heaven

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.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

OPTION B: Our Father, who art in heaven

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,
forever and ever. Amen.

The Marriage

THE VOWS

The People sit. The couple stands, facing the Presider.

Presider *N.* and *N.*, I invite you now, illumined by the Word of God and strengthened by the prayer of this community, to make your covenant before God and the Church.

Each member of the couple, in turn, takes the hand of the other and says

OPTION A: Care for you by the grace of God

In the name of God, I, *N.*, give myself to you, *N.*, and take you to myself. I will support and care for you by the grace of God: in times of sickness, in times of health. I will hold and cherish you in the love of Christ: in times of plenty, in times of want. I will honor and love you with the Spirit's help: in times of anguish, in times of joy, forsaking all others, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

OPTION B: Care for you

In the name of God, I, *N.*, give myself to you, *N.*, and take you to myself. I will support and care for you: in times of sickness, in times of health. I will hold and cherish you: in times of plenty, in times of want. I will honor and love you: in times of anguish, in times of joy, forsaking all others, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

If rings are to be exchanged, they are brought before the Presider, who prays using the following words

Let us pray.

Bless, O God, these rings as signs of the enduring covenant *N.* and *N.* have made with each other, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The two people place the rings on the fingers of one another, first the one, then the other, saying

OPTION A: In the name of God

N., 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 God.

OPTION B: In the name of the Father

N., 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.

If the two have previously given and worn rings as a symbol of their commitment, the rings may be blessed on the hands of the couple, the Presider saying

Let us pray.

By the rings which they have worn, faithful God, *N.* and *N.* have shown to one another and the world their love and faithfulness. Bless now these rings, that from this day forward they may be signs of the vows *N.* and *N.* have exchanged in your presence and in the communion of your Church, through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

PRONOUNCEMENT

The Presider joins the right hands of the couple and says

Now that *N.* and *N.* have exchanged vows of love and fidelity in the presence of God and the Church, I pronounce that they are married [according to the laws of the state *or* civil jurisdiction of _____]. and bound to one another as long as they both shall live. *Amen.*

BLESSING OF THE COUPLE

As the couple stands or kneels, the Presider invokes God's blessing upon them, saying

Let us pray.

Most gracious God, we praise you for the tender mercy and unfailing care revealed to us in Jesus the Christ and for the great joy and comfort bestowed upon us in the gift of human love. We give you thanks for *N.* and *N.*, and the covenant of faithfulness they have made. Pour out the abundance of your Holy Spirit upon them. Keep them in your steadfast love; protect them from all danger; fill them with your wisdom and peace; lead them in holy service to each other and the world.

The Presider continues with one of the following

OPTION A: God the Father

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you and mercifully grant you rich and boundless grace, that you may please God in body and soul. God make you a sign of the loving-kindness and steadfast fidelity manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior, and bring you at last to the delight of the heavenly banquet, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

OPTION B: God, the holy and undivided Trinity

God, the holy and undivided Trinity, bless, preserve, and keep you, and mercifully grant you rich and boundless grace, that you may please God in body and soul. God make you a sign of the loving-kindness and steadfast fidelity manifest in the life, death, and resurrection of our Savior, and bring you at last to the delight of the heavenly banquet, where he lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

THE PEACE

The Presider bids the Peace.

OPTION A: The peace of the Lord be always with you

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People And also with you.

OPTION B: The peace of Christ be always with you

Presider The peace of Christ be always with you.
People And also with you.

The Presider blesses the people. The Deacon, or in the absence of a Deacon, the Priest, dismisses them.

BLESSING

The Priest blesses the people, saying

OPTION A: The blessing of God . . . be upon you (BCP)

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

OPTION B: The blessing of God . . . be among you (BCP)

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

OPTION C: The peace of God (BCP)

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be among you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

OPTION D: The Lord bless and keep you (BCP)

The Lord bless you and keep you. *Amen.*
The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you. *Amen.*
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace. *Amen.*

OPTION E: The blessing, mercy, and grace of God (BCP)

The blessing, mercy, and grace of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

OPTION F: Holy eternal Majesty (EOW)

Holy eternal Majesty,
Holy incarnate Word,
Holy abiding Spirit,
Bless you for evermore. *Amen.*

OPTION G: May the blessing of the God of Abraham and Sarah (EOW)

May the blessing of the God of Abraham and Sarah, and of Jesus Christ born of our sister Mary, and of the Holy Spirit, who broods over the world as a mother over her children, be upon you and remain with you always. *Amen.*

OPTION H: God's Blessing be with you (EOW)

God's Blessing be with you,
Christ's peace be with you,
the Spirit's outpouring be with you,
now and always. *Amen.*

(source: Celtic)

OPTION I: The Wisdom of God (EOW)

The Wisdom of God
the Love of God
and the Grace of God
strengthen you
to be Christ's hands and heart in this world,
in the name of the Holy Trinity. *Amen.*

(source: Celtic)

OPTION J: Live without fear: your Creator has made you holy (EOW)

Live without fear: your Creator has made you holy, has always protected you, and loves you as a mother. Go in peace to follow the good road and may God's blessing be with you always. *Amen.*

(source: from Saint Clare)

OPTION K: Episcopal Blessing

Our help is in the Name of the Lord;
The maker of heaven and earth.
Blessed be the name of the Lord;
From this time forth for ever-more.

DISMISSAL

OPTION A: Let us go forth in the name of Christ

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People Thanks be to God.

OPTION B: Love and serve the Lord

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

OPTION C: Love and serve Jesus Christ

Go in peace to love and serve Jesus Christ our Savior.
People Thanks be to God.

OPTION D: Let us go forth into the world

Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.
People Thanks be to God.

OPTION E: Let us bless the Lord

Let us bless the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

OPTION F: Let us go forth in the name of Christ: Easter

Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION G: Love and serve the Lord: Easter

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION H: Love and serve Jesus Christ: Easter

Go in peace to love and serve Jesus Christ our Savior. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION I: Let us go forth into the world: Easter

Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION J: Let us bless the Lord: Easter

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION K: Let us go forth in the name of Christ: Ascension

Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION L: Love and serve the Lord: Ascension

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION M: Love and serve Jesus Christ: Ascension

Go in peace to love and serve Jesus Christ our Savior. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION N: Let us go forth into the world: Ascension

Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION O: Let us bless the Lord: Ascension

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION P: Let us go forth in the name of Christ: Easter 7

Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION Q: Love and serve the Lord: Easter 7

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION R: Love and serve Jesus Christ: Easter 7

Go in peace to love and serve Jesus Christ our Savior. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION S: Let us go forth into the world: Easter 7

Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION T: Let us bless the Lord: Easter 7

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION U: Let us go forth in the name of Christ: Vigil and Day of Pentecost

Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION V: Love and serve the Lord: Vigil and Day of Pentecost

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION W: Love and serve Jesus Christ: Vigil and Day of Pentecost

Go in peace to love and serve Jesus Christ our Savior. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION X: Let us go forth into the world: Vigil and Day of Pentecost

Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia.
People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

OPTION Y: Let us bless the Lord: Vigil and Day of Pentecost

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

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