

To Celebrate Marriage

Opening Words for A Wedding Ceremony

We have come together today to witness the marriage of N to N, to celebrate their happiness and to assure them of our love and support.

In marriage,
we bless God
who gave us our humanity,
who created us, men and women,
in felicity and joy.

Blessed be God
who brings us together
that our desires
may find ripe fulfilment;

Blessed be God
who makes us one
that in our mutual love
we may cherish one another.

In marriage,
we bless God
for his faithfulness
and celebrate God's constancy
in free commitment to a shared life
and mutual exchange of promises;

In marriage,
we bless God
for his gift of grace in Jesus Christ,
that in our frail consistency,
relations are refashioned
by his self-giving love;
In marriage,
we bless God
who gives us a future and a hope;
who gives us children,
sets us in community
and calls us in society
to new beginnings.

Blessed be God for the precious gift of love.

Fleur Houston

A Blessing for a Wedding

Blessed are you, God our Maker;
You create joy and gladness,
pleasure and delight;
you make this man and this woman
companions in love.

Bestow your blessing on N and N,
that they may know your presence with them
in times of joy and in times of sadness.
May their home be filled
with laughter and tenderness.
May they be tender with one another's dreams
and remain faithful and true to one another
for the rest of their lives.

So may this marriage be a sign of blessing
in the world around.

Fleur Houton

At a Wedding

You are trusted forever with the intimacies of one another.

You won't hold grudges.

You will love the other even when unlikeable.

You will see the small child within.

You will look for the divine potential inside.

How sacred, to be held in the night,
by someone who thanks God for you,
by someone you feel blessed to hold.

Your marriage is an opportunity,
to grow in love and friendship,
to entrust all your faith and loyalties,
and with this understanding you shall flourish,
together,
forever.

Donna Lee

A Marriage Service

Greeting

Grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ
be with you all.

Statement

Friends, we have come together today in God's presence
and as his congregation – and becauseN..... and
.....N..... want us here. They have discovered a love for
each other which has depth and worth and beauty, and
today in God's presence, and surrounded by us who are dear
to them, they come to make a lifelong commitment to that
love they know for each other. When two people share
a special love, which is rooted firmly in trust and respect,
there is a unique opportunity to grow and find fulfilment

together and personally. We call that loving committed relationship “marriage”, and we treasure it as a great gift from God. Today we have gathered to supportN’s and.....N’s love for each other with our love for them both – and to celebrate and share in their happiness.

Hymn

Prayer

Caring God, whose name is Love, we have assembled in your presence to celebrate the love which has grown between ...N..... andN..... We thank you for the happiness they are discovering with each other, and for the delight that there happiness brings to us who care about them as family and friends.

We thank you for the love which has shaped each of us, and for the people who have opened themselves to us, who have affirmed our worth and made possible our fulfilment. We thank you for our capacity to love which makes us your children. Above all we thank you for that great demonstration of your loving word made flesh in a vulnerable infant, a suffering servant, a crucified Christ. Forgiving, accepting God who liberates us from the shackles of our own selfishness and shows us Christ in others, renew us for loving and serving and caring, and help us to know Christ afresh in all we share in today.

Amen

Affirmations

For the couple:

.....N..... andN....., I ask you now to affirm your willingness to become partners together in the covenant of marriage. Will you accept each other as partners in marriage, each of you committing yourself to a lifelong covenant of faithful love – accepting and sharing the tasks and troubles, and joys and triumphs of your life together?

Response – I will – I will

For the children of a previous relationship:

State the names,

the promises made today by your mother/father and
N..... affect your lives as well, and so I ask you – Will you help them, love them and give them your trust? Will you welcomeN..... as a member of your family, and accept your place in his/her family?

Response – I will

For the congregation:

Family members and friends, gathered to share today's joy, I invite you now to pledge your loving support for ...N..... andN..... in the covenant commitment they are about to enter, by standing now and saying together – “We do”.

PRAYER

Loving God who makes all things new, may your Spirit transform us now. ForN..... andN....., may our presence and love be a manifestation of your presence with them and your love for them as they enter their marriage. Give them renewed confidence and help them to know that you, with us, are celebrating their happiness today – through Jesus Christ.

Amen

VOWS *(the couple face each other holding right hands)*

.....N....., please make your vow toN.....

.....N....., please make your vow toN.....

(vows may be printed on cards so that the couple can read them with expression but without prompt or pressure. The following vows have been used but celebrants must ensure that the vows chosen comply with the marriage laws pertaining in their part of the United Kingdom.)

1

In the presence of God and this congregation, I, N , receive you, N , as my wife in marriage. I will respect you, honour you, and look for your fulfilment. I promise you my lifelong love and loyalty, and commit myself to you now in trust and partnership.

In the presence of God and this congregation, I, N , receive you, N , as my husband in marriage. I will respect you, honour you, and look for your fulfilment. I promise you my lifelong love and loyalty, and commit myself to you now in trust and partnership.

2

I, N , accept you, N , to be my wife. I promise to share my love with you, openly, honestly and kindly, and to accept you as you are. I promise to honour and tenderly care for you – to cherish and encourage your fulfilment through our life together. I shall listen and speak the truth with you. I shall always be your friend, to love you and be in love with you, as long as we both shall live.

I, N , accept you, N , to be my husband. I promise to share my love openly, honestly and kindly and to accept you as you are. I promise to honour and tenderly care for you – to cherish and encourage your fulfilment through our life together. I shall listen and speak the truth with you. I shall always be your friend, to love you and be in love with you, as long as we both shall live.

3

I, N , receive you, N , as my wife in Christian marriage; and in the presence of God, and before this congregation, I promise to be a loving, faithful, and dutiful husband to you, as long as we both shall live.

I, N , receive you, N , as my husband in Christian marriage; and in the presence of god, and before this congregation, I promise to be a loving, faithful, and dutiful wife to you, as long as we both shall live.

Exchange of Rings

As tokens of the covenant into which you have just entered these rings are given and received. They are symbols of encircling love and unending faithfulness.

Declaration of Marriage

.....N..... andN..... have made sacred promises to each other; and have symbolised their union by joining hands and by exchanging rings. I pronounce them to be husband and wife, in the name of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Blessing

May God shield you on every steep,
may Christ keep you on every path,
may the Spirit strengthen you in every pass.
The love and affection of heaven be yours,
the love and affection of the saints be yours,
the love and affection of the angels be yours—
mildly and generously,
each night you lie down
each morning you rise.

Amen

Reading(s)

Prayer

Gracious and loving God, you have created humankind in your image, teaching us to love. In mutual commitment and partnership, you work to let a unique love grow and bear fruit. We praise you for all the love in our lives and for all that you make possible in marriage. We thank you for the life that you have given to ...N..... andN....., and pray for them now joined as husband and wife. Give them strength and patience and humour together.

Guide them through life's pain and fear, and in success and achievement may their love only mature. May the individuality of their characters enrich each day the marriage they have begun to build. May their honesty and consideration for each other never flag and may they always be able to open their hearts and home to friends and strangers. Through hope or disappointment, through tears or in laughter may their life be enriched and their love grow. Keep them and us faithful to you throughout this life, and then welcome us anew in your eternal kingdom.

Amen

Hymn

Benediction

Go in peace, and may grace, light and hope be with you all in the blessing of God – Father, Son and Spirit – now and always.

Amen

Alan Paterson

A Blessing at a Wedding

Let the promises of today make you strong
Let the joy of today fill your lives
Let the hope of today give you courage
Let the memory of today live in your hearts.
Go hand in hand into the world, staying true to your dreams,
with love overflowing
And the blessing of Father, Son and Spirit is with you always.

Melanie Frew

A Blessing for A Marriage

Living God, Creator of Humankind,
Bless N and N as they go on their way together
in love and unity of purpose.

Loving Christ, Creator of Compassion,
Bless N and N as they develop their skills
to that their love will bring wholeness to people.

Refreshing, Resilient Spirit, Creator of Vitality,
Bless and encourage them to engage in lively activity
and to seek justice throughout their lives,
to turn disappointments into challenges,
to transform darkness into light,
to root their ideals in the ground that they walk.
Go in Grace
with Confidence
and know Peace.

Amen

Geoffrey Duncan