

## The Traditional Marriage Service

*(Adapted from the "Book of Common Prayer," this form, with modifications, has been used for centuries.)*

### Statement of Purpose

Dearly beloved: We have come together in the presence of God to witness the joining together of this man and this woman in holy matrimony. The sacred relationship of marriage was established by God in creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ adorned marriage by His presence and first miracle at the wedding of Cana of Galilee. The apostle Paul chose marriage to symbolize the union between Christ and His church, and holy Scripture commends marriage 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 to 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 soberly, deliberately, and in reverent fear before God.

Into this holy union, G \_\_\_\_\_ and B \_\_\_\_\_ now come to be joined.

### Declaration of Consent

TO GROOM: G \_\_\_\_\_, will you have this woman to be your wife; to live together in the holy 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 so long as you both shall live?

If so, answer, "I will."

TO BRIDE: B \_\_\_\_\_, will you have this man to be your husband; to live together in the holy 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 so long as you both shall live?

If so, answer, "I will."

TO CONGREGATION: Will all of you witnessing these promises do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their marriage?

If so, answer, "We will."

### The Giving of the Bride

TO THE BRIDE'S FATHER: Who is giving this woman to be married to this man? The bride's father answers, "I do," or "Her mother and I do." He then takes the bride's right hand and places it in the groom's left hand, and retires to his place and is seated.

### The Marriage Vows

*The minister will invite the bride and groom and their attendants to come forward before the altar. Then the minister shall say:*

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us that at the beginning of creation God "'made them male and female.' 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and shall

cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.' Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh."

You have come to be made husband and wife. Will you join hands, and repeat these vows after me?

*The groom repeats these vows as the minister instructs:*

I, G \_\_\_\_\_, take you, B \_\_\_\_\_ 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; as God is my witness. I give you my promise.

*The bride repeats these vows as the minister instructs.*

I, B \_\_\_\_\_, take you, G \_\_\_\_\_ 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; as God is my witness. I give you my promise.

### **Reading of Scripture**

The Word of God describes the kind of love we are to have, each for the other: "Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

*"Love never fails" (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)*

Having this love in your hearts, you have chosen to seal your vows by the giving and receiving of rings (a ring).

### **The Exchange of Rings**

*The minister shall ask for each ring and ask God's blessing as follows:*

Bless, O Lord, this ring to be a sign of the vows by which this man and 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 repeats as the minister instructs.*

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 nature of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **Prayer for the Bride and Groom**

Eternal God, creator and preserver of life, author of salvation, and giver of grace, look with favor upon this man and woman whom You make one flesh in holy matrimony

Grant that their wills be so knit together in Your will, and that their spirits be so knit with Your Spirit, that they each may grow in love and peace with You and with one another all the days of their lives.

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. Give them such fulfillment and 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. [Through Christ our Lord, amen.]

### **The Pronouncement of Marriage**

*Then the minister joins the right hands of husband and wife and says:*

Now that G \_\_\_\_\_ and B \_\_\_\_\_ have given themselves to each other by solemn vows, before us and before God as witness, and have shown their affection and trust by the giving and receiving of a ring (rings) and by joining hands. I pronounce that they are husband and wife, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate. Amen.

### **The Nuptial Kiss**

*Then the minister shall say to the bridegroom:*

You may kiss your bride.

### **The Benediction**

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord look upon you with His favor, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that you may so live together in this life, that in the world to come you will have life everlasting through Jesus Christ. Amen.