

# SERVICE OF MATRIMONY

from the King's Chapel Book of Common Prayer

The marriage service at King's Chapel is a descendant of the wedding liturgy used in ancient Europe.

Ours is deeply rooted in the tradition of the Church universal and resembles the most common wedding service used in Christianity. This service therefore is the rite by which king, queens and commoners, princes, professors and paupers, merchants and medicants have been married for over a thousand years. King's Chapel welcomes and celebrates the marriages of all couples regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation. Wording can be adjusted to best reflect the couple. The words and prayers in the service can be changed in consultation with the clergy.

---

## **PRELUDE**

## **PROCESSIONAL**

*When the persons to be married and the congregation are assembled, the Minister shall say:*

## **INVOCATION**

The Peace of God be upon this house, and on all who enter herein.

## **OPENING WORDS**

Dearly beloved, we are gathered together in the sight of God and before the face of this congregation, to join together this man and this woman [*or N. and N.*] in holy matrimony, which is an honorable estate, instituted by God at the time of our innocency; which holy estate Christ adorned with his presence and first miracle which he wrought in Cana of Galilee. And, therefore, it is not by any to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Into this estate come these two persons now to be united.

If anyone can show just cause why they should not lawfully be joined together, speak now or forever hold your peace.

*Then the Minister may say:*

## **QUESTIONS**

I require and charge you both here in the presence of God that if either of you know any reason why you may not lawfully be joined in marriage you do now confess it.

*Then the Minister shall say to the man:*

N., wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance, in the estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?

*The man shall answer:*

I will.

*Then the Minister shall say to the woman:*

N., wilt thou have this man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance, in the estate of matrimony? Wilt thou love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?

*The woman shall answer:*

I will.

*Then the Minister may say to the people:*

Family and friends of N. and N., you who are about to witness their vows, I charge you to stand by them, uphold them, and make them the continuing gift of your love and prayers. Will you accept this charge and so support them?

*The People shall answer:*

We will.

*Then the Minister may say:*

Who bringeth this woman to be married to this man?

*The person or persons accompanying the woman shall respond. This section is optional.*

*Here shall be read one or more lessons from scripture. Additional readings [non-scripture] may follow.*

## **READINGS**

*Then a sermon, or homily, may be preached.*

## **HOMILY**

*The couple and their attendants may enter the chancel.*

*Then the man and the woman shall join hands, and the man shall say:*

## **EXCHANGE OF VOWS**

I, N., take thee N., to my wedded 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, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; this is my solemn vow.

*Then the woman shall say:*

I, N., take thee N., to my wedded 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, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; this is my solemn vow.

*The Minister shall take the ring for the woman and say:*

## **GIVING OF RINGS**

Bless, O Lord, this ring, that he who gives it and she who wears it may abide in thy peace and continue in thy favor until their life's end. *Amen.*

*The Minister shall give the ring to the man who shall place it on the fourth finger of the woman's left hand, saying:*

With this ring I thee wed, and to thee only do I promise to keep myself, so long as we both shall live, in the name of God. *Amen.*

*Then the Minister shall take the ring for the man and say:*

Bless, O Lord, this ring, that she who gives it and he who wears it may abide in thy peace and continue in thy favor until their life's end. *Amen.*

## PRAYERS

*Here the Minister may say one or more of the following prayers, the couple kneeling or standing.*

### FOR THE COUPLE

O eternal God, creator and preserver of all mankind, giver of all spiritual grace, the author of everlasting life; send thy blessing upon these thy servants, whom we bless in thy name. Enable them to perform the covenant which they have now made in thy presence. May they seriously attend to the duties of the new relation in which they stand to each other, that it may be to them a state of holiness and comfort; may they live together in peace and love; and wilt thou, the God of peace and love, be always with them, and lead them in the paths of innocence and virtue to eternal life. May their hearts be united in the closest bonds of love and purity; may they be a blessing and comfort to one another, sharers of each other's joys, consolers of each other's sorrows, and helpers to one another in all the changes of the world; and grant that they may so faithfully discharge the duties which belong to the condition in which they have entered, that they, and all committed to their care, may meet together in that world of perfect felicity which thou hast revealed to us by Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*Or this:*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, the fountain of all joy, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, we thank thee for the sacred and tender ties which these thy servants have now taken up on themselves. May all their loved ones, here assembled or absent, rejoice in the bonds which have united them. We ask that in joy or in sorrow, in pleasant ways or trials, they may ever acknowledge thy guiding hand and be obedient to thy laws. May they be comfort and joy, counsel and strength to each other through all the chances and changes of this world. Trusting in thee and in each other, united by thy holy Spirit, may they walk together in faith, hope, and love; and may the benediction of heaven crown their happiness. *Amen.*

### FOR THE GIFT OF CHILDREN\*

O almighty God, creator of all mankind, who alone art the wellspring of life, bestow upon these thy servants, if it be thy will, the gift and heritage of children, and grant that they may see their children brought up in thy faith and fear, to the honor and glory of thy holy name. *Amen.*

### FOR CHILDREN BY A PREVIOUS MARRIAGE\*

Heavenly Father, we ask thy blessing upon the home to be established, and especially upon *N.*, that [*he, she, they*] may feel secure in the affection that binds this family together. May they grow in love and loyalty, and in the years ahead have cause to thank thee for a home made safe by love and care, and this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*\*These prayers are optional.*

## FOR THE CONGREGATION

Almighty God, bless this congregation and all the marriages and the friendships shared and sustained that build up human life. Grant that our love for each other may be our best gift to thee. *Amen.*

*Here at the Minister's direction the congregation may pause for silent prayer, and such intercessions as may be desired.*

*Here the Minister and People may say the General Thanksgiving. This prayer is also optional.*

## GENERAL THANKSGIVING

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we thine unworthy servants do give thee most humble and hearty thanks for all thy goodness and lovingkindness to us and to all people. We bless thee for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all, for thine inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. And we beseech thee, give us that due sense of all thy mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we may show forth thy praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to thy service, and by walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord; in whose name we ascribe unto thee all honor and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Then the Minister shall say:*

Now as Christ has taught us, let us pray.

*And the People shall say with the 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.*

*Then, all standing, the Minister shall say:*

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

Forasmuch as N. and N. have consented together in wedlock and have witnessed the same before God and this company and have engaged and pledged themselves to each other, and have declared the same by the giving and receiving of a ring, by the exchange of vows, and by joining hands, I now pronounce that they are husband and wife. Those whom God hath joined together, let no one put asunder. And let all the people say "Amen."

*The People shall say:*

Amen.

*Here a hymn may be sung, and if the couple desire it, Holy Communion may be celebrated.*

*The Minister shall bless the couple, saying:*

## **BLESSING**

The Lord God almighty bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and fill you with spiritual benediction and grace; that you may so live together in this life, that in the world to come you may have life everlasting. *Amen.*

*Then the Minister shall say this benediction:*

## **BENEDICTION**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace, now and for ever. *Amen. (Numbers 6:24-26)*

*Or this:*

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. (I Corinthians 13:14)*

## **PRESENTATION & KISS**

## **RECESSIONAL**

## **POSTLUDE**

## LESSONS FOR MATRIMONY

### **Old Testament**

Gen. 1:26-28, 31a

2:18-25

Isa. 40:27-31

Jer. 31:31-34a

S. of S. 2:8-10, 14, 16a

8:6-7a

Tobit 8:1-10

Sirach 26:1-14, 13-16

### **Psalms**

19, 23, 67, 103, 121, 128

### **Epistle**

Rom. 12:1-10

I Cor. 13

Eph. 5:21-33

Col. 3:12-17

I John 4:7-12 (*or* 16)

### **Gospel**

Matt. 5:1-12

6:25-33

7:21, 24-27

Mark 10:6-9

Luke 12:22-31

John 2:1-11

15:9-12