

Draft wedding service for the marriage of *Bride's Full Name* and *Groom's Full Name* at *Anychurch, Anytown*

This document is an aid to help you discuss your wedding ceremony with your Vicar. There are many more choices you could make about hymns and readings that are not offered through the online Ceremony Planner. Your Vicar is trained and experienced to advise you on your unique ceremony, so do discuss other options with them.

Because your Vicar knows your church building so well, and wants to get to know you and your preferences too, they may adapt the service in terms of some of the words used and the order of the service. You may find that your final order of service has variations from this outline, but this draft should be a good starting point for the three of you. Wishing you God's blessing and all the riches of his grace for your forthcoming marriage!

The Marriage Service

The Welcome

The minister welcomes the people using these or other appropriate words:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you
All: and also with you.

This sentence may be used

God is love, and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them. 1 John(4.16)

This prayer may be said

All:

God of wonder and of joy:
grace comes from you,
and you alone are the source of life and love.
Without you, we cannot please you;
without your love, our deeds are worth nothing.
Send your Holy Spirit,
and pour into our hearts
that most excellent gift of love,
that we may worship you now
with thankful hearts
and serve you always with willing minds;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

You chose **First hymn choice** as your first hymn. This is just a guide. You might like to discuss other choices with your Vicar.

Preface

These words or alternative wording are used

In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we have come together
to witness the marriage of Bride's Name and Groom's Name,
to pray for God's blessing on them,
to share their joy
and to celebrate their love.

Marriage is a gift of God in creation
through which husband and wife may know the grace of God.
It is given
that as man and woman grow together in love and trust,
they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind,
as Christ is united with his bride, the Church.

The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together
in the delight and tenderness of sexual union
and joyful commitment to the end of their lives.
It is given as the foundation of family life
in which children are [born and] nurtured
and in which each member of the family, in good times and in bad,
may find strength, companionship and comfort,
and grow to maturity in love.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God,
and blessed by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ
with those celebrating a wedding at Cana in Galilee.
Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty
which all should uphold and honour.
It enriches society and strengthens community.
No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly
but reverently and responsibly in the sight of almighty God.

Bride's Name and Groom's Name are now to enter this way of life.
They will each give their consent to the other

and make solemn vows,
and in token of this they will [each] give and receive a ring.
We pray with them that the Holy Spirit will guide
and strengthen them,
that they may fulfil God's purposes
for the whole of their earthly life together.

The Declarations

The minister says to the congregation

First, I am required to ask anyone present who knows a reason why these persons may not lawfully marry, to declare it now.

The minister says to the couple

The vows you are about to take are to be made in the presence of God,
who is judge of all and knows all the secrets of our hearts;
therefore if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry,
you must declare it now.

The minister says to the bridegroom

Groom's Name, will you take Bride's Name to be your wife?
Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her,
and, forsaking all others,
be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

He answers

I will.

The minister says to the bride

Bride's Name, will you take Groom's Name to be your husband?
Will you love him, comfort him, honour and protect him,
and, forsaking all others,
be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

She answers

I will.

The minister says to the congregation

Will you, the families and friends of Bride's Name and Groom's Name, support and uphold them in their marriage now and in the years to come?

All: We will.

The Collect

The minister invites the people to pray, silence is kept and the minister says the Collect

God our Father,
from the beginning
you have blessed creation with abundant life.
Pour out your blessings upon Bride's Name and Groom's Name,
that they may be joined in mutual love and companionship,
in holiness and commitment to each other.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

The Reading(s)

You chose **One Bible reading listed here**. This is the minimum number of readings you'll need for your church wedding. If you'd like more, talk to your Vicar about others you might like.

The Sermon

The marriage

You chose **Second hymn choice** as your second hymn. This is just a guide. You might like to discuss other choices with your Vicar.

The couple stand before the minister.

The Vows

The minister introduces the vows in these or similar words

Bride's Name and Groom's Name, I now invite you to join hands and make your vows, in the presence of God and his people.

The bride and bridegroom face each other.

The bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his.

These words, or alternative, are used

I, Groom's Name, take you, Bride's Name,
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,
till death us do part;
according to God's holy law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.

They loose hands.

The bride takes the bridegroom's right hand in hers, and says

I, Bride's Name, take you, Groom's Name,
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,
till death us do part;
according to God's holy law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.

They loose hands.

The Giving of Rings

The minister receives the ring(s), and says this prayer or an alternative prayer.

Heavenly Father, by your blessing
let these rings be to Bride's Name and Groom's Name
a symbol of unending love and faithfulness
to remind them of the vow and covenant
which they have made this day;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The bridegroom places the ring on the fourth finger of the bride's left hand and, holding it there, says

Bride's Name, I give you this ring
as a sign of our marriage.
With my body I honour you,
all that I am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

If rings are exchanged, they loose hands and the bride places a ring on the fourth finger of the bridegroom's left hand and, holding it there, says

Groom's Name, I give you this ring
as a sign of our marriage.
With my body I honour you,
all that I am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

If only one ring is used, before they loose hands the bride says

Groom's Name, I receive this ring
as a sign of our marriage.
With my body I honour you,
all that I am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Proclamation

The minister addresses the people

In the presence of God, and before this congregation
Bride's Name and Groom's Name have given their consent
and made their marriage vows to each other.

They have declared their marriage by the joining of hands
and by the giving and receiving of rings.

I therefore proclaim that they are husband and wife.

The minister joins their right hands together and says

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

The Blessing of the Marriage

The husband and wife kneel. The minister may use the following blessing or an alternative one

Blessed are you, O Lord our God,
for you have created joy and gladness,
pleasure and delight, love, peace and fellowship.
Pour out the abundance of your blessing
upon Bride's Name and Groom's Name in their new life together.
Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts
and a crown upon their heads.
Bless them in their work and in their companionship;
awake and asleep,
in joy and in sorrow,
in life and in death.
Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that banquet
where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home.
We ask this through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

The minister says to the couple

God the Father,
God the Son,
God the Holy Spirit,
bless, preserve and keep you;
the Lord mercifully grant you the riches of his grace,
that you may please him both in body and soul,
and, living together in faith and love,
may receive the blessings of eternal life.

All: Amen.

Registration of the Marriage

You chose **Third hymn choice** as your third hymn. This is just a guide. You might like to discuss other choices with your Vicar.

Prayers

These or other suitable prayers are used. The prayers usually include these concerns and may follow this sequence:

Thanksgiving

Spiritual(growth)

Faithfulness, joy, love, forgiveness And healing

Children, other family members and friends

Faithful God,
holy and eternal,
source of life and spring of love,
we thank and praise you for bringing Groom's Name and Bride's Name to this day,
and we pray for them.

Lord of life and love:

All: hear our prayer.

May their marriage be life-giving and life-long,
enriched by your presence and strengthened by your grace;
may they bring comfort and confidence to each other
in faithfulness and trust.

Lord of life and love:

All: hear our prayer.

May the hospitality of their home
bring refreshment and joy to all around them;
may their love overflow to neighbours in need
and embrace those in distress.

Lord of life and love:

All: hear our prayer.

May they discern in your word
order and purpose for their lives;
and may the power of your Holy Spirit
lead them in truth and defend them in adversity.

Lord of life and love:

All: hear our prayer.

May they nurture their family with devotion,
see their children grow in body, mind and spirit
and come at last to the end of their lives
with hearts content and in joyful anticipation of heaven.

Lord of life and love:

All: hear our prayer.

The prayers conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

All:

**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.

**Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.**

Amen.

(or)

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

All:

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

You chose **Fourth hymn choice** as your fourth hymn. This is just a guide. You might like to discuss other choices with your Vicar.

The Dismissal

The minister says

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love,
defend you on every side, and guide you in truth and peace;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All: Amen.

To the Vicar :

Thank you for taking the time to look through this Ceremony Planner, available on www.yourchurchwedding.org. This is a new development being piloted by the Archbishops' Council's Weddings Project. It shows couples the flexibility of a CofE wedding and encourages their involvement in making choices. It is also designed to provide you with helpful information about the couple's preferences, but emphasises that you are best placed to advise them on their unique ceremony. We'd be pleased to hear what you think about the Planner, and whether you and the couple found it helpful.

To find out more and send us your comments, visit www.yourchurchwedding.org/project.

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