

# **CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE**

From the *Book of Common Worship*  
Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

## **ENTRANCE**

## **SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE**

I John 4:16

God is love,  
and those who abide in love,  
abide in God,  
and God abides in them.

Ps. 118:24

This is the day that the Lord has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Ps. 106:1

O give thanks, for the Lord is good.  
God's love endures forever.

## **STATEMENT ON THE GIFT OF MARRIAGE**

We gather in the presence of God  
to give thanks for the gift of marriage,  
to witness the joining together of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
to surround them with our prayers,  
and to ask God's blessing upon them,  
so that they may be strengthened for their life together  
and nurtured in their love for God.

God created us male and female,  
and gave us marriage  
so that husband and wife may help and comfort each other,  
living faithfully together in plenty and in want,  
in joy and in sorrow,  
in sickness and in health,  
throughout all their days.

God gave us marriage  
for the full expression of the love between a man and a woman.  
In marriage a woman and a man belong to each other,  
and with affection and tenderness  
freely give themselves to each other.

God gave us marriage  
for the well-being of human society,  
for the ordering of family life,  
and for the birth and nurture of children.

God gave us marriage as a holy mystery  
in which a man and a woman are joined together,  
and become one,  
just as Christ is one with the church.

In marriage, husband and wife are called to a new way of life,  
created, ordered, and blessed by God.  
This way of life must not be entered into carelessly,  
or from selfish motives,  
but responsibly, and prayerfully.

We rejoice that marriage is given by God,  
blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and sustained by the Holy Spirit.  
Therefore, let marriage be held in honor by all.

## **PRAYER**

Gracious God,  
you are always faithful in your love for us.  
Look mercifully upon \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
who have come seeking your blessing.  
Let your Holy Spirit rest upon them  
so that with steadfast love  
they may honor the promises they make this day,  
through Jesus Christ our Savior.  
**Amen.**

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTENT (addressing bride and groom individually)**

\_\_\_\_\_, understanding that God created, ordered,  
and blessed the covenant of marriage,  
do you affirm your desire and intention to enter this covenant?

**I do.**

## **AFFIRMATIONS OF THE FAMILIES**

Do the members of the families who are present  
give your blessing to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
and promise to do everything in your power to uphold them in  
their marriage?

**We do.**

## **AFFIRMATION OF THE CONGREGATION**

Will all of you witnessing these vows  
do everything in your power  
to uphold \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in their marriage.

**We will.**

## PRESENTATION OF THE BRIDE

Who presents this woman to be married to this man?

The presenter of the bride says: **I do.**

(If the brides' father is the presenter, he may say:  
**Her mother and I do.**)

## SCRIPTURE READING

### VOWS

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
since it is your intention to marry,  
join your right hands,  
and with your promises  
bind yourselves to each other as husband and wife.

The man says:

**I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife;  
and I promise,  
before God and these witnesses,  
to be your loving and faithful husband;  
in plenty and in want;  
in joy and in sorrow;  
in sickness and in health;  
as long as we both shall live.**

The woman says:

**I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my husband;  
and I promise,  
before God and these witnesses,  
to be your loving and faithful wife;  
in plenty and in want;  
in joy and in sorrow;  
in sickness and in health;  
as long as we both shall live.**

## EXCHANGE OF RINGS (OR OTHER SYMBOLS)

What do you bring as the sign of your promise?

By your blessing, O God,  
may these rings be to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
symbols of unending love and faithfulness,  
reminding them of the covenant they have made this day,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Each says to the other:

**This ring I give you,  
as a sign of our constant faith  
and abiding love,  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.**

## PRAYER

Eternal God,  
Creator and preserver of all life,  
author of salvation, and giver of all grace:  
look with favor upon the world you have made and redeemed,  
and especially upon \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Give them wisdom and devotion  
in their common life,  
that each may be to the other  
a strength in need,  
a counselor in perplexity,  
a comfort in sorrow,  
and a companion in joy.

Grant that their wills  
may be so knit together in your will,  
and their spirits in your Spirit,  
that they may grow love and peace  
with you and each other  
all the days of their life.

Give them grace,  
when they hurt each other,  
to recognize and confess 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,  
that unity may overcome estrangement,  
forgiveness heal guilt,  
and joy conquer despair.

[Give them, if it is your will,  
the gift of children,  
and the wisdom to bring them up  
to know you, to love you,  
and to serve you.]

Grant that all who witnessed these vows today  
may find their lives strengthened,  
and that all who are married  
may depart with their own promises renewed.

Enrich with your grace  
all husbands and wives, parents and children,  
that, loving and supporting one another,  
they may serve those in need  
and be a sign of your kingdom.

Grant that the bonds by which all your children  
are united to one another  
may be so transformed by your Spirit  
that your peace and justice may fill the earth,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

or

Eternal God,  
without your grace no promise is sure.  
Strengthen\_\_\_\_\_and\_\_\_\_\_

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with patience, kindness, gentleness,  
and all other gifts of your Spirit,  
so that they may fulfill the vows they have made.  
Keep them faithful to each other and to you.  
Fill them with such love and joy  
that they may build a home of peace and welcome.  
Guide them by your Word  
to serve you all their days.

Help us all, O God,  
to do your will in each of our homes and lives.  
Enrich us with your grace  
so that, supporting one another,  
we may serve those in need  
and hasten the coming of peace, love, and justice on earth,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

**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 debts,  
as we forgive our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power and the glory, forever.**

**Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF MARRIAGE**

Before God  
and in the presence of this congregation,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
have made their solemn vows to each other.  
They have confirmed their promises by the joining hands  
[and by the giving and receiving of rings].  
Therefore, I proclaim that they are now husband and wife.

Blessed be the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit now and  
forever.

Those whom God has joined together  
let no one separate.

## **CHARGE AND BLESSING**

### **CHARGE TO THE COUPLE**

See Col. 3:12-14

As God's own,  
clothe yourself with compassion,  
kindness, and patience,  
forgiving each other  
as the Lord has forgiven you,  
and crown all these things with love,  
which binds everything together in perfect harmony

Col. 3:17

Whatever you do, in word or deed,  
so everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,  
giving thanks to God through him.

### **BLESSING**

See Num. 6:24-26

The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord be kind and gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor  
and give you peace

### **Amen**

The grace of Christ attend you,  
the love of God surround you,  
the Holy Spirit keep you,  
that you may live in faith,  
abound in hope,  
and grow in love,  
both now and forevermore.

### **Amen.**