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**THE MARRIAGE SERVICE**

**Preparation**
It is the custom and practice of the Church in Wales to offer preparation for marriage for couples who are soon to be married, as well as to be available for support and counseling in the years that follow.

**Legal Preliminaries**
A marriage according the rites of the Church in Wales normally takes place after the publication of banns. The banns are to be published in the church at the principal service on three Sundays during the three months before the marriage and must be read in the following form:

“I publish the Banns of Marriage between N of [the Parish of ] and N of [this Parish]. If any of you know(s) cause, or just impediment, why these two persons should not be joined together in Holy Matrimony, ye (you) are to declare it. This is the [first / second / third] time of asking.”

(A suitable prayer may be said.)

If those to be married live in different parishes, banns must be called in both parishes, and the minister of one parish shall not solemnize the marriage without the production of a Certificate of Banns from the minister of the other parish. The certificate must state that no impediment has been alleged. If the name of either of the persons to be married is on the Electoral Roll of a parish in which neither of them lives, the marriage may take place in that parish, provided that the banns have been published in that parish and in the parish or parishes in which they live.
If all civil and ecclesiastical conditions are satisfied, a common licence permitting the solemnization of matrimony without banns may be granted through a Surrogate. In exceptional circumstances, the Archbishop of Canterbury may grant a special licence which permits the solemnization without banns.

**Entry**
The bride may enter the church alone, or escorted by her father or a representative of the family or a friend, or the bride and groom may enter church together.

**Registration of the Marriage**
The law requires that the Registers be completed immediately after the solemnization of a marriage. This usually takes place at the end of the service, but may occur after the Blessing of the Marriage. The Registers must be signed by both parties to the marriage, the officiating minister, and two witnesses to the marriage.

**Holy Eucharist**
For communicant members of the Church it is appropriate that they receive communion soon after their marriage. For some this may make it appropriate for the marriage to take place within a Celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

**Non-Biblical Readings**
At the discretion of the Minister, appropriate non-biblical readings may be included.

**Ecumenical Provisions**
Where a minister of another Christian Church is to be invited to assist at the Solemnization of Matrimony, the Church in Wales minister who solemnizes the marriage must establish the absence of an impediment, direct the exchange of vows, declare the existence of the marriage, say the final blessing, and sign the Registers.
Impediment
If any person alleges an impediment which is recognized by God’s law or the laws of this land, he must give an indemnity against any pecuniary loss, in the event of his allegation failing, which his action brings upon the parties. If such an allegation is made and an indemnity given, the marriage must be deferred until the truth has been established. If no impediment is alleged, the Ministry of the Word follows.

BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE FOLLOWING A CIVIL CEREMONY

When two persons have contracted a marriage at a Civil Ceremony and wish to receive the blessing of the Church upon their union, the minister shall ask them to produce the certificate of their marriage. If the minister is satisfied that their union is not contrary to the laws of the Church in Wales, they shall proceed in the form following.

Banns are not called nor any entry made in the Register of Marriages

Husband and wife may arrive wearing wedding ring(s), or if they have not been previously worn, they may be blessed and put on at the service.

Husband and wife should enter the church together and sit together at the front of the church.

Appropriate and alternative Intercessions and Prayers may be used which reflect the faith of the couple.
Appendix 1

A LITURGY OF THE GATHERING

_Bride or Groom:_

We stand here today in the presence of so many people who have coloured the landscape of our lives, people who have accompanied us on our journey. We welcome you and thank you for being with us today.

_All:_

_May the Lord be with you on this joyful day._

_Bride or Groom:_

We thank our parents and families who have nurtured and nourished us, and helped to make us who we are. We welcome you and thank you for all you have given us.

_Parents and/or Family Members:_

May the Lord be with you in your life together.

_Bride or Groom:_

We stand in sorrow for all the friendships we have left behind, and all the mistakes we have made, and ask for God’s grace and forgiveness to flourish in our lives.

_Minister:_

May the Lord be with you and give you the confidence and courage to embrace his love.

_Bride or Groom:_

We stand here today in the presence of God, who has poured his love upon us, to ask for his blessing upon our marriage.
Appendix 2a

ALTERNATIVE INTRODUCTIONS TO THE MARRIAGE RITE

These may be adapted for use with the Blessing of a Civil Marriage by omitting the request for impediments to Marriage, and asking the couple if this is their understanding of Holy Matrimony.

i. In the beginning, God formed the earth and created the heavens. He breathed life into all living creatures, making man and woman in his own image. He has called us to live together in his covenant of love, bound together by his own promises. In marriage he has blessed his creation with a sign of love, and through the joys of married life he continues to bring order to the chaos of the world. Marriage provides family life with a firm foundation, and a loving embrace into which children are born and nurtured.

As we celebrate his creative love in this sacramental sign we pray that the breath of his Spirit may fill the lives of N and N, so that, bound by the promises they make, they will reveal the presence of Christ and serve him with faith and love.

If there is a valid reason why they should not be joined together in marriage you must declare it now.

The minister then addresses the couple:

If you know any reason why, according to the law of the land or of this church, you may not be joined together in marriage you must now make it known.
ii. God calls us all to live together in love, to draw closer to one another in respect and tolerance, in openness and honesty, to embrace his desire for the world and to create a community where Christ is at the heart of all we do and say.

Within that calling and covenant of love, God has blessed us with the gift of marriage, where husband and wife grow together to know God with one mind, to love him with one heart, to serve him with one spirit. Marriage is the foundation of family life and it is God’s will that children are born and nurtured within this loving, life long embrace of their parents. Within this family each person should find strength and sustenance, care and comfort for every circumstance of life. Through this gift of marriage, God desires to strengthen the whole community, bringing blessings to all.

Since God has graced us with such a gift, marriage should be revered and respected by all. No one should embrace marriage without deep considerate thought and awareness of all it entails. N. and N. have chosen to embrace this gift from God. We pray for them that the Spirit of God will guide and strengthen them so that his gift will flourish in their lives and, through them, to the whole community.

If there is a valid reason why they should not be joined together in marriage you must declare it now.

The minister then addresses the couple:

If you know any reason why, according to the law of the land or of this church, you may not be joined together in marriage you must now make it known.
iii. God lavishes his gifts upon us, filling us with his love, and calling us to live together to create a community where all are respected. Marriage is one of these gifts. It is given so that a man and a woman may pledge themselves to one another in a covenant of love, promising to live together for the rest of their lives. Marriage is the foundation of family life and the means through which God brings joy and stability to society, calling husband and wife to live according to his plan for the world, providing children with a loving home, where all within the family grow to know God and his love for them. Marriage should therefore be held in honour by all.

\( N \) and \( N \). stand before God, offering themselves to one another in marriage, asking God to bless their marriage. They do this after much thought and consideration. They also stand before you, their friends and family, inviting you to share their joy, and to encourage them in the way of life to which they have been called.

If there is any reason why you believe they should not be joined together you should now make it known.

*The minister then addresses the couple:*

If you know any reason why, according to the law of the land or of this church, you may not be joined together in marriage you must now make it known.
Appendix 2b

ALTERNATIVE INTRODUCTIONS TO THE BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE FOLLOWING A CIVIL CEREMONY

i. God calls us all to live together in love, to draw closer to one another in respect and tolerance, in openness and honesty, to embrace his desire for the world and to create a community where Christ is at the heart of all we do and say.

Within that calling and covenant of love, God has blessed us with the gift of marriage, where husband and wife grow together to know God with one mind, to love him with one heart, to serve him with one spirit. Marriage is the foundation of family life and it is God’s will that children are born and nurtured within this loving, life long embrace of their parents. Within this family each person should find strength and sustenance, care and comfort for every circumstance of life. Through this gift of marriage, God desires to strengthen the whole community, bringing blessings to all.

Since God has graced us with such a gift, marriage should be revered and respected by all. No one should embrace marriage without deep, considerate thought and awareness of all it entails. N and N have already embraced this gift from God and now ask God to bless their marriage. We pray for them that the Spirit of God will guide and strengthen them so that his gift will flourish in their lives and, through them, to the whole community.
ii. God lavishes his gifts upon us, filling us with his love, and calling us to live together to create a community where all are respected. Marriage is one of these gifts. It is given so that a man and a woman may pledge themselves to one another in a covenant of love, promising to live together for the rest of their lives. Marriage is the foundation of family life and the means through which God brings joy and stability to society, calling husband and wife to live according to his plan for the world, providing children with a loving home, where all within the family grow to know God and his love for them. Marriage should therefore be held in honour by all.

N and N stand before God as a married couple asking God to bless their marriage. They do this after much thought and consideration. They also stand before you, their friends and family, inviting you to share their joy, and to encourage them in the way of life to which they have been called.
iii. In the beginning, God formed the earth and created the heavens.
He breathed life into all living creatures, making man and woman in his own image.
He has called us to live together in his covenant of love, bound together by his own promises.
In Marriage he has blessed his creation with a sign of love, and through the joys of married life he continues to bring order to the chaos of the world.
Marriage provides family life with a firm foundation, and a loving embrace into which children are born and nurtured.

As we celebrate his creative love in this sacramental sign, we pray that the breath of his Spirit may fill the lives of N and N, so that bound by the promises they have already made, they will reveal the presence of Christ and serve him with faith and love.
We have come together in joy because N and N, who are already married to each other, want to ask God’s blessing on their marriage. Marriage is a gift of God through which husband and wife may grow together in the knowledge, love and service of God so that, united with one another in heart, body and mind, they may increase in love and trust. God joins husband and wife in life-long union 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 enriches society and strengthens community.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God, which all should uphold and honour. No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly, but reverently and responsibly in the sight of Almighty God.

N and N are now to enter this way of life. We pray with them that the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen them, that they may fulfil God’s purpose for the whole of their earthly life together.
Appendix 3

COLLECTS

i. Almighty God,  
    all hearts are open to you,  
    no secrets are hidden from you.  
    Purify us with the fire of your Holy Spirit  
    that we may love and worship you faithfully;  
    through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ii. God our Father,  
    through times and seasons and the turning of the years,  
    through prophets and patriarchs and holy men and women  
    you have revealed your plan for the world.  
    In Christ your plan is made clear, calling us to love one another  
    as he has loved us.  
    As we celebrate N and N’s love for one another and  
    rejoice in their life together, let their love flourish and blossom  
    and their lives reveal the spring time of your kingdom, where  
    all things are made new and brought to completion.  
    We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

iii. God our Father,  
    through the gentle flame of the Spirit, Christ has come  
    to make his home with us, to warm our hearts and make his presence  
    known to others.  
    May the marriage of N and N to one another be a sign  
    of how we are called to live, filled with joy and holiness  
    and delighting in all that Christ has taught us.  
    We ask this in the name of Christ the Lord. Amen.
iv. Loving Father,
you perfect our inadequacies and complete our joy,
you fulfil our needs and fill us with a desire to love.
Let your love now flow through our lives as our hearts
swell with joy on this wedding day.
May we be given a sign of the presence of Jesus,
the unseen guest, and drink the new wine of your kingdom.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

v. *(Not to be used with Alternative Introduction iii.)*
God our Father,
in the beginning you formed the earth and created
the heavens, and breathed life into all living creatures,
making man and woman in your own image.
You call us to live together in your covenant of love,
bound together by the promises you have made.
In marriage you bless your creation with a sign of your
love, and through the joys of married life you continue
to bring order to the chaos of the world.
As we celebrate your creative love in this sacramental
sign breathe your life upon N. and N so that bound by
the promises they make they will reveal the presence of
your Son and serve you with faith and love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

vi. Loving Father,
in your gift of marriage to the world you give us a sign
of your loving embrace to all who desire to follow the
way of your Son.
Through N and N’s life together may the outstretched
arms of Christ reach out to all they meet and give a
sign of your presence in the world;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.
vii. Father, your gift of love, above all other things, brings harmony and peace to the world: its faith has no bounds, its hope has no limits, it endures all things and delights in the truth. As we celebrate N and N’s love for one another and rejoice in the vows they have made (or: are to make) may they be clothed in the garments of love and be filled with the joy of knowing your presence in their lives. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

viii. Lord of life and Giver of joy, as we gather to celebrate the marriage of N and N, you call us to feast on your word, and drink the new wine of your kingdom. May the marriage we celebrate be a sign of the everlasting banquet of your Son where we rejoice in your presence forever our King and our God. Amen.

ix. God our Father, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the Law: grant to your servants N and N that, loving one another, they may remain in your love until their lives’ end; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and always. Amen
Appendix 4a

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD
Readings may be taken from one of the following sets of readings which are arranged by theme.

i. JOURNEY

Where you go, I will go

But Ruth said, ‘Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die; there will I be buried. May the Lord do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!’

May we grow old together

Tobias began by saying, ‘blessed are you, O God of our ancestors, and blessed is your name in all generations for ever. Let the heavens and the whole creation bless you for ever. You made Adam, and for him you made his wife Eve as a helper and support. From the two of them the human race has sprung. You said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make a helper for him like himself.” I now am taking this kinswoman of mine, not because of lust, but with sincerity. Grant that she and I may find mercy and that we may grow old together.’ And they both said, ‘Amen, Amen.’
Do not worry about your life

Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you - you of little faith! And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

Simple treasure

Do not be afraid, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
May Christ dwell in your hearts  

Ephesians 3.14-19

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

ii.  LOVE

My love, my fair one  

Song of Solomon 2. 8-14

The voice of my beloved! Look, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice. My beloved speaks and says to me: ‘Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle-dove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.
But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.
The love which binds together  Colossians 3. 12-17

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, for give each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Many waters cannot quench love  Song of Solomon 8. 6-7

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for love all the wealth of one’s house, it would be utterly scorned.
Love is from God

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Love and gratitude

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee’s house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment.
iii. JOY

Joyful in God

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasuring, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

A wedding feast

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, ‘They have no wine.’ And Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.’ His mother said to the servants, ‘Do whatever he tells you.’ Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, ‘Fill the jars with water.’ And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, ‘Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.’ So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, ‘Everyone serves the good wine first, and
then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.’ Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

iv. COMPANIONSHIP

Sharing in love

For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: Prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.
The bond of peace

Ephesians 4. 1-6

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

The new home

Mark 10. 6-9, 13-16

But from the beginning of creation, “God made them male and female.” “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.’ People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Two have a good reward

Ecclesiastes 4. 9-12

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help. Again, if two lie together, they keep warm; but how can one keep warm alone? And
though one might prevail against another, two will withstand one. A threefold cord is not quickly broken.
v. GOD

**Made in God’s image**

Genesis 1. 26-29a, 31a

Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.’ So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.’ God said, ‘See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

**Love that overflows**

Philippians 1. 9-11

And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that on the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.
I their God, they my people

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt - a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Bearing fruit

Jesus said ‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.
vi. **FAITH**

**A time for everything**

Ecclesiastes 3. 1-8

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant,
and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down,
and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn,
and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

**Love in truth and action**

1 John 3. 18-24

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.
And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

The celebratory feast

Revelation 19. 6-19

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunder-peals, crying out, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure’— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, ‘Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he said to me, ‘These are true words of God.’ Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, ‘You must not do that! I am a fellow-servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’

Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse! Its rider is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and
he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, ‘King of kings and Lord of lords’.

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, ‘Come, gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of the mighty, the flesh of horses and their riders - flesh of all, both free and slave, both small and great.’ Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against the rider on the horse and against his army.

The true blessed

Matthew 5. 2-11

Then Jesus began to speak, and taught them, saying: ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ‘Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ‘Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. ‘Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake’, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ‘Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
Hearing and doing

Matthew 7. 21, 24-27

‘Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord”, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

‘Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell - and great was its fall’

vi. FAMILY

Every family in Heaven and on earth

Ephesians 3. 14-19

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
What God has joined together

Mark 10. 6-9 (10-12) 13-16

But from the beginning of creation, “God made them male and female.” “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.’

(Then in the house the disciples asked him again about this matter. He said to them, ‘Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.’)

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

The families of the earth

Genesis 12. 1-3

Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’
Appendix 4b

Psalms

Psalm 37. 3-5

Trust in the Lord and be doing good:
dwell in the land and be nourished with truth.
Let your delight be in the Lord:
and he will give you your heart’s desire.
Commit your way to the Lord and put your trust in him:
and he will bring it to pass.

Psalm 67

God be gracious to us and bless us:
and make his face to shine upon us,
That your way may be known upon earth:
your saving power among all nations.
Let the peoples praise you, O God:
let all the peoples praise you.
O let the nations rejoice and be glad:
for you will judge the peoples righteously
and govern the nations upon earth.
Let the peoples praise you, O God:
let all the peoples praise you.
Then shall the earth bring forth her increase:
and God, our own God, will bless us.
God will bless us:
and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.
Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes / to the / hills:
from / where is my / help to / come?
My help comes / from the / Lord:
the / maker of / heaven and / earth.
He will not suffer your / foot to / stumble:
he who watches / over you / will not / sleep.
Behold, he who keeps watch / over / Israel:
shall / neither / slumber nor / sleep.
The Lord himself / watches / over you:
the Lord is your shade / at your / right / hand,
So that the sun shall not / strike you by / day:
neither the / moon by / night.
The Lord shall keep you / from all / evil:
it is / he who shall / keep your / soul.
The Lord shall keep watch over your going out
and your / coming / in:
from this time / forth for / ever/more.
Appendix 5

ALTERNATIVE PRAYERS / DECLARATIONS OVER THE RINGS

i. May the rings you wear be a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, a sign of your shared lives and the honour you have for each other.

ii. May these rings you have exchanged continue to be a sign of unending love, and remind you that you are one flesh, bound together in a holy covenant, where love has no end, and God’s presence has no bounds.

iii. When you were married, these rings (this ring) you now wear were (was) exchanged as a sign of your love and faithfulness to one another. May they (it) continue to be a sign of the promises you have made, and the marriage you have asked God to bless. Amen.
Appendix 6

PRAYERS OF BLESSINGS OVER THE COUPLE

i. When you wake and when you sleep, when you work and when you rest, when you agree and when you fail to agree, when you are together and when you are apart, when your are at home and when you are far away, may Christ surround you and unite you in his love.

And may God bless you and keep you, fill you with his grace, and bring you to the joy of everlasting life. Amen.

ii. May your home be lit with the love of God, so that when it is dark his love will glow and dispel the shadows of the night.

May the doors of your hearts always be open, so that Christ is welcomed and given a home.

May your home be warmed by the gentle flame of the Spirit, so that your love for each other will always be alive and full of passion.

And may God bless you and keep you, fill you with his grace, and bring you to the joy of everlasting life. Amen.

iii. When your house is filled with laughter or when it is sad and low, may you always be aware of the Lord’s presence who comes to make his home with you.

And may God bless you and keep you, fill you with his grace, and bring you to the joy of everlasting life. Amen.
iv. May all who pass through the doors of your home be touched by the love that you have for one another.

May all whom you call family find a place where they discover how to love and have the freedom to live as God desires.

May all who sit at your table be nourished by the love of Christ who welcomes all who are in need.

And may God bless you and keep you, fill you with his grace, and bring you to the joy of everlasting life. Amen.

v. May God the Father bring his blessing to your home.

May Christ fill your hearts with love that overflows.

May the Spirit enfold you in his love and knit you together as one.

And may God bless you and keep you, fill you with his grace, and bring you to the joy of everlasting life. Amen.

vi. May your love for each other be exclusive; but never exclude those who are in need.

May your love for each other be precious; but never fail to burn in the ordinary situations of life.

May your love for each other grow and mature; but never forget the foundations of your life together.

And may God bless you and keep you, fill you with his grace, and bring you to the joy of everlasting life. Amen.
Appendix 7

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSIONS

The prayers usually include the following themes:

- Thanksgiving
- Spiritual growth
- Faithfulness, joy, love, forgiveness and healing
- Children, other family members and friends.

Silence should be kept after each bidding.
Appropriate responses may be used, for example:

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Lord, hear us.
Lord, graciously hear us.

We pray to you, O Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

The prayer ends with a suitable collect said by the minister or the following, either:

Merciful Father,
accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

or:

In all their future together may they enjoy each other’s lives and grow through the love they share.
These things we ask through Christ our Lord. Amen.
Faithful God, 

holy and eternal, source of life and spring of love, 

we thank and praise you for bringing N and N to this day, 

and we pray for them. 

Lord of life and love: 

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: 

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: 

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: 

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: 

hear our prayer.
ii. Filled with joy for N and N, let us pray for their life together.

May their love for each other be their food and drink. May their respect for each other be the source of their joy.

Lord of hearth and home. or Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer this day.** Hear our prayer.

May their understanding of each other be the foundation of forgiveness. May their passion for each other be a flame that brings light in the darkness.

Lord of hearth and home. or Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer this day.** Hear our prayer.

May their commitment to each other be their security. May their faith in Christ be the focal point of their house and home.

Lord of hearth and home. or Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer this day.** Hear our prayer.

May their openness to each other be a source of peace. May their honesty bring harmony to the difficulties they encounter.

Lord of hearth and home. or Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer this day.** Hear our prayer.

May the Lord always have a place within their home. May he have a say in all they do.

Lord of hearth and home. or Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer this day.** Hear our prayer.

*If the service does not take place within the Liturgy of the Eucharist then the Intercessions may be concluded with the following:*

Christ draws us closer to the Father, in an intimate communion of love, and so in his words we raise our voices in prayer: **Our Father ...**
iii. Let us pray for N and N, that throughout their married life together they may always keep the promises they have made.

May the walls of their home offer them security and stability but never shut out the concerns of the world. Lord God, giver of all that is good. 
**Hear our prayer.**

May the lights of their home glow with a love that invites and lights up the lives of all who pass by. Lord God, giver of all that is good. 
**Hear our prayer**

May the doors of their home be open to all who come in the name of the Lord, where they are welcomed with generous warmth and undying love. Lord God, giver of all that is good. 
**Hear our prayer.**

May their children be nurtured in love, so that their family life will inspire the whole community with an example of what it means to follow the Lord. Lord God, giver of all that is good. 
**Hear our prayer.**

*If the service does not take place within the Liturgy of the Eucharist then the Intercessions may be concluded with the following:*

May their life together be a sign of the loving embrace of the Lord who has poured his spirit into our hearts crying, ‘Abba, Father,’ so that we can raise our voices with one heart and mind, and say together: **Our Father ...**
Appendix 8

FORM FOR ADDITIONAL CONSECRATION

Holy Father,
hear the prayer and thanksgiving
which we offer through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who took bread (and) the cup and said:
This is my body (and this is my) blood.
We also take this bread (and) wine
and pray that by your Word and Spirit it may be for us
the sacrament of the body (and) blood of Christ. Amen.