

THE CHRISTIAN CEREMONY

Christian couples want their wedding ceremony to be characterized not only by dignity, reverence, and joy, but by the very Spirit of Christ, Himself. Therefore, the Christian wedding service is an act of worship. The Christian wedding is a ceremony in which people, particularly you as bride and groom, come together to offer special thanks and praise and ask God's blessings upon your life together as husband and wife. The worship at a Christian wedding is always centered in Christ.

A Christian wedding is also a public act. It is the worship of all who are gathered to thank and praise, pray and implore God's blessing upon your marriage. Strange as this may sound at first, it means that your wedding is not for you alone. Those who come should not come as spectators, but as worshippers. This can be accomplished by including the congregation in songs or hymns and prayers. By emphasizing the congregational nature of the Christian wedding, you will be helping those who come to share your joy to be true participants in this most joyful occasion in your life.

Suggested Bible Readings

(Select 2 or 3 readings for your wedding service)

Psalms

Psalm 100
Psalm 103: 17-18
Psalm 128

Gospels

Matthew 19:4-6
Mark 10:6-9
John 2:1-2

Epistles

Romans 12:9-12
1 Corinthians 13
2 Corinthians 13:11
Ephesians 5:21-33
Colossians 3:12-14
Colossians 3:17-19
1 John 4:7-12

Old Testament Lessons

Genesis 2:18-24
Joshua 24:15
Ruth 1:16-17

Additional Reminders

- Email your wedding program in advance, prior to printing, to the officiating pastor for his review and approval.
- Slide presentations are not used during the wedding ceremony. .
- We can not schedule Saturday weddings later than 3:00 p.m.
- Alcohol is strictly prohibited on the church premises.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Pre-service music

Candle lighting

Usher in parents and grandparents

The Processional

The question to the parents

The Invocation:

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We are gathered together today as family and friends to celebrate with _____ and _____ as they make their promise as husband and wife. Let us rejoice with them and pray for God's blessings upon this joyful occasion.

The Prayer:

Lord, our God, creator of marriage and preserver of family love and harmony, we ask You to bless _____ and _____ as they enter the holy estate of marriage; give them Christian love and give them faithfulness to each other. Guide them by Your Holy Spirit that they may find joy together. Hear us for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

The Scripture Lessons:

Marriage is a holy estate, part of God's creation from the beginning. He created marriage for companionship and to reflect His perfect love. We know it is His will that we hold it in honor. Let us hear what the Word of God teaches about marriage and how Christians ought to live together in marriage:

The Scripture Lessons:

The Wedding Address by the Pastor

(Music - optional)

The Ceremony of Mutual Consent:

_____ and _____ ; you have come here today to be united in Christian marriage which consists in your mutual consent, honestly and freely given. It is your desire to live your life together in honor of God and His plan for marriage. Therefore, I ask you to declare in God's presence and in the presence of your family and friends the sincere intention you both have.

_____, will you have this woman to be your wedded wife, to live with her after God's plan for marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor her and keep her in sickness and in health? Will you forsake all others and remain faithful only to her so long as you both shall live?

Then answer: **I WILL.**

_____, will you have this man to be your wedded husband, to live with him after God's plan for marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor him, keep him in sickness and in health? Will you forsake all others and remain faithful only to him, so long as you both shall live?

Then answer: **I WILL.**

The Marriage Promise:

(Turn towards each other, and join both hands)

I, _____, in the presence of God and these witnesses, / take you _____, to be my wedded wife, / and promise you my faithfulness, / not to part from you, / till death parts us.

I, _____, in the presence of God and these witnesses, / take you _____, to be my wedded husband, / and promise you my faithfulness, / not to part from you, / till death parts us.

The Ring Ceremony:

Will you now exchange your wedding rings as a pledge and symbol of your love and faithfulness: REPEAT AFTER ME: **"Receive this ring, / as a pledge and a symbol, / of love and faithfulness."**

(Rings are placed on the hand as each says the above).

May the giving and receiving of these rings stand as a symbol of the sharing that ought to honor your marriage. May they remind you of your promises made this day, standing as a witness to all that you have been joined together as one.

The Pronouncement:

Knowing then that _____ and _____
have willingly consented to love and care for each other as husband and wife and
have promised the same before God and these witnesses, I pronounce them
husband and wife in the name (+) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
Spirit.

Those whom God has joined together, let no one separate.

(Unity Candle Ceremony - optional)

(Music - optional)

The Blessing: (bride and groom may kneel)

Even as the Lord God who created our first parents, Adam and Eve, and blessed
their union in marriage, may He bless and keep you always. May you serve Him
with a God-pleasing marriage and live together in Christian love until the end of your
lives.

The Prayer for the Bride and Groom:

Faithful Lord, source of love, send Your blessings upon _____ and
_____ that they may fulfill the vows they have made today. May
they reflect Your constant love in their life-long faithfulness to each other. From
Your grace and mercy, give them patience and understanding, true love and trust,
that they may celebrate life together in Your name. Amen.

Prayer for all Families:

Heavenly Father, You have blessed us with the gift of home and family life. Give a
special measure of strength and love to husbands and wives, parents and children,
young and old, that they may give loving support to each other. Renew all homes
and families with the new life that we have in Jesus Christ. In His name we pray.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer: *(spoken by all or sung)*

**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, forever and ever. Amen.

The Benediction:

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face to shine on you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. Amen.

(Bride and Groom may kiss each other)

(Bride and Groom turn and recess)

The Recessional