

Ledbury and Eastnor

Service of Prayer and Dedication after the Civil Marriage of

N and N

Place and Date

Introduction

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

Hymn 1 -

Preface

N and **N**, you stand in the presence of God as man and wife to dedicate to Him your life together, that He may consecrate your marriage and empower you to keep the covenant and promise you have solemnly declared.

The Bible teaches us that marriage is a gift of God in creation and a means of His grace, a holy mystery in which a man and a woman become one flesh. It is God's purpose that, as husband and wife give themselves to each other in love throughout their lives, they shall be united in that love as Christ is united with His Church.

Marriage is given, that husband and wife may comfort and help each other, living faithfully together in need and in plenty, in sorrow and in joy. It is given, that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love and, through the joy of their bodily union, may strengthen the union of their hearts and lives. It is given as the foundation of family life in which children may be born and nurtured in accordance with God's will, to His praise and glory.

This is the meaning of the marriage you have made.

You now wish to affirm your desire to live as followers of Christ and you have come to Him, the fountain of grace, so that, strengthened by the prayers of the Church, you may be enabled to fulfil your marriage vows in love and faithfulness.

Let us keep silence and remember God's presence with us now.

All **Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love You,
and worthily magnify Your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

[Section used where there has been a previous marriage and divorce]

Prayers of Penitence

(N and N come to this service today acknowledging all that has gone before and has brought them to this place, including N's (and N's) first marriage(s), which sadly did not last.

In recognition of that, and of those things in all our lives that hinder us from knowing God's presence and love, we join together in a prayer of confession, asking for God's forgiveness, grace and strength.)

God so loved the world
that He gave His only Son Jesus Christ
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life;
and so to save us from our sins,
to be our advocate in heaven,
and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith,
firmly resolved to keep God's commandments
and to live in love and peace with everyone.

All **Lord God,
in our sin we have avoided Your call.
Our love for You is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.
Have mercy on us;
deliver us from Your judgement;
bind up our wounds
and revive us;
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

The Lord forgive *you your* sin,
unite *you* in the love which took Christ to the cross,
and bring *you* in the Spirit to His wedding feast in heaven.

All **Amen.**

The Collect

God our Father,
You have taught us through Your Son, Jesus Christ,
that love is the fulfilling of the law.
Grant to Your servants
that, loving You and one another,
they may continue in Your love until their lives' end:
through Jesus Christ Your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with You,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Dedication

The man and woman face the minister, who says

N and **N**, you have committed yourselves to each other in marriage
and your marriage is recognised by law.
The Church of Christ understands marriage to be,
in the will of God,
the union of a man and a woman,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish,
till parted by death.
Is this your understanding of the covenant and promise that you have made?

Husband and Wife **It is.**

Do you now wish to affirm the vows you have taken
and to dedicate that marriage here in the presence of God?

Husband and Wife **We do.**

The minister says to the husband

N, have you resolved to be faithful to your wife,
forsaking all others, so long as you both shall live?

Husband **That is my resolve, with the help of God.**

The minister says to the wife

N, have you resolved to be faithful to your husband,
forsaking all others, so long as you both shall live?

Wife **That is my resolve, with the help of God.**

Optional Section

The minister says to the congregation

N and **N** have affirmed here their Christian understanding and resolve
in the marriage which they have begun.
Will you, their families and friends,
support and uphold them in their marriage, now and in the years to come?

All **We will.**

The husband and wife kneel and say together

Heavenly Father,
we offer You our souls and bodies,
our thoughts and words and deeds,
our love for one another.
Unite our wills in Your will,
that we may grow together
in love and peace
all the days of our life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The minister says

Almighty God give you grace to persevere,
that He may complete in you
the work He has already begun,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Lord bless and watch over you,
the Lord make His face shine upon you
and be gracious to you,
the Lord look kindly on you and give you His peace
all the days of your life.

All **Amen.**

Bible Reading(s) -

Address -

[Hymn 2 – if 3 hymns used. Otherwise Hymn 2 is later.]

Prayers

Some or all of the following prayers may be said

Almighty God,
You send Your Holy Spirit
to be the life and light of all Your people.
Open the hearts of these your servants to the riches of His grace,
that they may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit
in love and joy and peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Heavenly Father,
maker of all things,
You enable us to share in Your work of creation.
Bless this couple in the gift and care of children,
that their home may be a place of love, security and truth
and their children grow up to know and love You in Your Son
Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Father of all life,
whose promise is to be the God of all the families of Your people,
give Your grace to **N** and **N** in their new life together
and bless those for whom they care.
Enfold them in Your love as they share in their new family,
that they may grow up in all things into Christ,
who gave Himself that all humanity might be made one in Him.

All **Amen.**

Heavenly Father,
we are Your children, made in Your image.
Hear our prayer
that fathers and mothers, sons and daughters,
may find in You and together the perfect love that casts out fear,
walk together in the way that leads to eternal life
and grow up together into the full humanity made possible
through Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

Eternal God, true and loving Father,
in holy marriage You make Your servants one flesh.
May their life together witness to Your love in this troubled world;
may unity overcome division,
forgiveness heal injury
and joy triumph over sorrow,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

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.**

Hymn 2 (or 3 if 3 hymns used)

Final Blessing

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.

or

May the Father from whom every family
in earth and heaven receives its name
strengthen you with His Spirit in your inner being,
so that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;
and the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

(Exit Music)