

# 1 Liturgy for Holy Union

2 *Adapted from Marriage Liturgy, Second Form, in A New Zealand Prayer Book.*

3

4

## 5 **Introduction and Declarations**

6

7 *The Priest says to the people*

8

9 We have come together

10 to ask God's blessing on *N.* and *N.*,

11 to witness their union

12 and to bring them our love and support.

13

14 I ask you now to pray for them;

15 and not just to pray today

16 or only in this place

17 but to pray in your hearts continually

18 and over the years.

19

20 It is praying, their prayers and ours,

21 which will fulfill God's purposes for *N.* and *N.*

22 Praying is an outlook, a sustained energy,

23 which creates a union

24 and makes love and forgiveness life-long.

25

26 Eternal love never fails;

27 our love needs to forgive and be forgiven.

28 as we pray and forgive we minister reconciliation.

29 Those who join together in holy union

30 are God's ministers to each other

31 of reconciliation and change.

32 As they grow together,

33 these two *men/women* foster one another's strengths,

34 they provide each other with the reassurance and love

35 needed to overcome their weaknesses.

36

37 From the beginning

38 God draws them now to a completely new life.

39 They become awake to each other,

1 aware of each other,  
2 sensitive to each other's needs.

3

4 *The Priest says to the couple*

5

6 *N. and N., you are welcome.*

7 Pray that God will uphold and cheer your life together,

8 that your promises be honored,

9 your words true,

10 now and in time to come.

11

12 For our part we ask you to make your public declaration.

13

14 *Each partner says in turn*

15

16 I love *N.*, and I want to be united with *her/him*.

17

18 *The Priest may say to the sponsors*

19

20 *N. and N., will you accept and support this union?*

21

22 *The sponsors respond*

23

24 We will. May God bless you both.

25

26 *The Priest may say to any children of the partners*

27

28 *N., will you help N. and N. in their life together?*

29

30 *Children*                      Yes, I will.

31

32 *The Priest may say*

33

34 May God's grace surround you

35 and keep you all,

36 and so we pray

37

38 The peace of God

39 which is beyond our understanding,

40 keep and guard over your thoughts and hearts.

41

1 God keep you friends with one another,  
2 forgiving one another in kindness.  
3  
4 May you follow Jesus in happiness or suffering.  
5 May hope keep you joyful.  
6 Stand firm in trouble.  
7 Be strong in prayer.

8  
9 May God make you compassionate and brave.

10  
11 Above all,  
12 may there always be love  
13 to bind and keep you whole.

14  
15

## 16 The Ministry of the Word

17  
18 *A suitable Reading (or Readings) follow here or before The Prayers.*

19  
20 *A homily or other response to the Readings may follow.*

21  
22

## 23 The Vows

24  
25 *The Priest may pray*

26  
27 Jesus, do for N. and N.  
28 as you did in Cana of Galilee.  
29 Take the old water, their busy individual lives,  
30 and turn them into gospel wine.

31  
32 *The partners face each other, join hands.*

33  
34 *One says*

35  
36 N, I take you to be my spouse (*or partner, or some equivalent term*).  
37 All that I have I offer you;  
38 what you have to give I gladly receive;  
39 wherever you go I will go.

1 You are my love.  
2 God keep me true to you always  
3 and you to me.  
4  
5 *The other says the same vow.*  
6  
7 *The Priest receives the rings and prays*  
8  
9 Christ our light,  
10 encircle these rings with your blessing,  
11 to show the love of N. and N.  
12 Bind them together  
13 and keep them in your love eternally.  
14  
15 *The giver places the ring on the other's finger and says*  
16  
17 N., this ring I give to you,  
18 with my body I honor you.  
19 God make me you true spouse (*or partner, or some equivalent term*)  
20 in the spirit of Jesus Christ.  
21  
22 *The Priest joins their hands together and says*  
23  
24 God so joined you together that nothing shall ever part you.  
25  
26 Blessed are you, heavenly Father:  
27 You give joy to this couple.  
28  
29 Blessed are you, Jesus our Redeemer:  
30 You have brought new life to us all.  
31  
32 Blessed are you, Holy Spirit of God:  
33 You bring us together in love.  
34  
35 Blessed are you, Creator, Savior, and Giver of life:  
36 One God to be praised for ever. *Amen.*  
37  
38 *The Priest continues*  
39  
40 N. and N.,

1 May Christ's love purify your love for each other,  
2 Christ's humanity keep you sensitive and practical.

3  
4 May the Light of the world illuminate your way ahead,  
5 the Bread of heaven nourish you,  
6 the true Vine enliven you.

7  
8 May Christ be the beginning  
9 of a new life, fulfilled and blessed life,  
10 and Christ the end.

11  
12 *The register may be signed here in the presence of the congregation.*

13  
14 *The Ministry of the Word may follow here.*

15  
16

## 17 **The Prayers**

18  
19 *The Priest may say to the couple*

20  
21 *N. and N., we welcome you now, united by your love and your vows.*  
22 *Pray, and we will pray with you.*  
23 *May God enrich the life you have chosen,*  
24 *and fulfill your hopes.*

25  
26 *Some or all of these petitions may be used, the People responding as indicated*

27  
28 *Gracious God we pray for N. and N. and give thanks that you have brought*  
29 *them together in love.*

30 *Spirit of God, bless this Union.*

31  
32 *We thank you for the love and care which[, through their parents,] has*  
33 *guided N. and N. to maturity, and prepared them for this commitment.*

34 *Spirit of God, bless this Union.*

35  
36 *Help them [to be wise and loving parents and] to grow together in*  
37 *faithfulness and honesty, in mutual support and patience.*

38 *Spirit of God, bless this Union.*

39

1 Make their life together a sign of your love in this broken world; may  
2 forgiveness heal injury and joy triumph over sorrow.  
3 *Spirit of God, bless this Union.*  
4  
5 Be with them in their work and renew them in their leisure.  
6 *Spirit of God, bless this Union.*  
7  
8 May they welcome into their home both friends and strangers and so reflect  
9 Christ's love for all people.  
10 *Spirit of God, bless this Union.*  
11  
12 In all their future together may they enjoy each other's lives and grow  
13 through the love they share. *Amen.*  
14  
15 *One or more of these prayers may be said*  
16  
17 Father of all: We thank you for this family,  
18 and for everything these parents  
19 and their children have to share.  
20 By your Spirit of peace draw them together  
21 and help them to be true friends to one another.  
22 Let your love surround them and your care protect them;  
23 through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*  
24  
25 Dear God: You are merciful and forgiving.  
26 Grant that *N.* and *N.*,  
27 their families, and all who care for them,  
28 may accept your generous love.  
29 Heal their memories, comfort them  
30 and send them all from here,  
31 renewed and hopeful. *Amen.*  
32  
33 Creator Spirit:  
34 We thank you for your gift of sexual love,  
35 by which this couple  
36 may express their delight in each other,  
37 find refreshment,  
38 and share with you the joy of creating new life.  
39 By your grace may *N.* and *N.* remain lovers,  
40 rejoicing in your goodness. *Amen.*

1  
2 God, the source (*or* author) of love:  
3 We pray now for all who are committed to each other in love.  
4 Through their love may they know your love,  
5 and so be renewed for your service in the world. *Amen.*

6  
7

## 8 **The Blessing**

9

10 *The Priest blesses the couple, saying*

11

12 All praise and blessing to you, God of love,  
13 Creator of the universe, maker of humankind in your likeness,  
14 Source of blessing for covenanted life [*or* all of life).  
15 All praise to you for you have created the love between two people,  
16 joy and gladness, feasting and laughter, pleasure and delight.  
17 May your blessing come in full upon *N.* and *N.*  
18 May they know your presence in their joys and in their sorrows.  
19 May they reach old age in the company of friends,  
20 and come at last to your eternal kingdom. *Amen.*

21

22 *Then the Priest blesses the People, saying*

23

24 And the blessing of God almighty:  
25 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,  
26 be with you and remain with you forever. *Amen.*

27

28

## 29 **The Peace**

30

31 *The Priest says*

32

33 The peace of the Lord [*or* Christ] be always with you.  
34 *People*           And also with you.

35

36 *The newly joined couple then greet each other, after which greetings may be exchanged*  
37 *throughout the congregation.*

38

39 *When Communion is not to follow, the couple and their attendants leave the church.*

40

1

2 **The Holy Communion**

3

4 *This rite may be used with any authorized liturgy for the Holy Eucharist.*

5

6

7 **The Dismissal**

8

9 *The Deacon gives a suitable dismissal.*