

Thanksgiving for the Marriage of Patricia and John: 26 December 2013

The minister says ...

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

and also with you.

God is love, and those who live in love live in God
and God lives in them.

God our Father,
you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law;
grant to your servants Patricia and John that, loving one another,
they may continue in your love until their lives' end;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

We have come together in the presence of God
to give thanks with Patricia and John for 44 years of married life,
to ask his forgiveness for all that has been amiss,
to rejoice together and to ask for God's blessing.
As our Lord Jesus Christ was himself a guest at the wedding in Cana of Galilee,
so through his Spirit he is with us now.

Marriage is a gift of God in creation and a means of his grace;
it is given that a husband and wife may comfort and help each other,
living faithfully together
in times of need as well as in plenty,
in sadness and in joy,
in sickness and in health;
it is given that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love.
In marriage a couple belong together and live life in the community;
it is a way of life created and hallowed by God, that all should honour.
Therefore we pray with them
that, strengthened and guided by God,
they may continue to fulfil his purpose for their life together.

Silence for reflection on shared experiences, good and bad.

Readings from the Song of Solomon, part of chapters 1 and 2

Stu reads ...

Behold, thou art fair, my love;
behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.
Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant:
also our bed is green.
The beams of our house are cedar,
and our rafters of fir.

Anna reads ...

The voice of my beloved!
behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains,
skipping upon the hills.
My beloved spake, and said unto me,
Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Caroline reads ...

For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;
the flowers appear on the earth;
the time of the singing of birds is come,
and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
the fig tree putteth forth her green figs,
and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.

Dan reads ...

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.
O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock,
in the secret places of the stairs,
let me see thy countenance,
let me hear thy voice;
for sweet is thy voice,
and thy countenance is comely.

Jenny reads...

My beloved is mine, and I am his:
he feedeth among the lilies.
Until the day break, and the shadows flee away,
turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe
or a young hart upon the mountains.

Psalm 121

Everyone reads together ...

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh even from the Lord,
Who hath made heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved:
And he that keepeth thee will not sleep.
Behold, he that keepeth Israel
shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord himself is thy keeper:
the Lord is thy defence upon thy right hand.
So that the sun shall not burn thee by day,
neither the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil:
Yea, it is even he that shall keep thy soul.
The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in
from this time forth, even for evermore.

The minister says to the couple

I invite you now to recall the vows that you made at your wedding.

John and Patricia face each other and hold hands.

John says ...

I, John, took you, Patricia , to be my wife ...

Patricia says ...

I, Patricia, took you, John, to be my husband ...

Patricia and John say together ...

... to have and to hold from that day forward,
for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish,
till death us do part, according to God's holy law,
and this was our solemn vow.

Today, in the presence of our loving family,
we affirm our continuing commitment to this vow.

The minister says to the family ...

Will you, the family of Patricia and John
continue to support and uphold them
in their marriage now and in the years to come?

We will.

John replaces the wedding ring that had to be removed in hospital

John says ...

I gave you this ring
as a sign of our marriage.
With my body I honour you,
all that I am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The couple kneel together.

The minister says ...

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit,
bless, preserve and keep you;
the Lord mercifully grant you the riches of his grace
that you may please him both in body and soul,
and, living together in faith and love, may receive the blessings of eternal life.

Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we lift up our hearts to you
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Through him you have made a covenant of grace with your people
by the outpouring of your Holy Spirit.

We praise you for the gift of marriage
in which the love of husband and wife is brought together
and reflects your plan of love for the world.

We thank you today for Patricia and John,
and for leading them to each other
in friendship and love, commitment and trust,
and for bringing them here for the blessing of their marriage.

Living God,
by the presence of your Holy Spirit,
may they know the risen Christ to be with them now,
as they celebrate this covenant together.
May their lives be a witness to your saving love
in this troubled world.

As you pour out your love,
may they grow together in your sight,
and each be to the other
a companion in joy, a comfort in sorrow and a strength in need.

As you blessed the earthly home at Nazareth
with the presence of your Son,
may their home be a place of security and peace.

And bring us all at the last
to that great marriage banquet of your Son in our home in heaven,
where, with all your saints and angels, in the glory of your presence,
we will for ever praise you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Here comes a short service of Holy Communion, followed by ...

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done; in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The minister gives the Christmas Blessing

Wedding cake, originally intended as Christmas cake, is shared by us all