

# ORDER FOR PRAYER AFTER A CIVIL MARRIAGE

Participation of various kinds may be introduced into the ceremony. Wedding guests may participate in the liturgy, and additions to the ceremony may be made in the form of music or readings, if desirable combined with lighting of candles. Among the cultural elements there may be openings for elements underlining the ethnic background of the bride and groom. If one party has another ecclesiastical background than the Church of Norway, there may be openings for participation from this denomination, after approval from the Bishop. Participation from other denominations as well as cultural elements, shall be adopted according to the liturgical nature of the wedding ceremony and not be contrary the theological basis of the Church of Norway.

Elements adding to the liturgy may be placed after part 9 **Intercession**.

Where the names are mentioned, one can use full name or first name, depending on what is natural in the individual case. In the questions during part 7 **The Marriage Vows**, full name shall be used.

The readings are taken from the Bible New International Version

## *1. Prelude/Entrance*

Organ music or other suitable music as prelude/entrance.

The married couple may process up the nave together to the chancel and may sit together.

If desired, the couple, Maid of Honour and/or the Best Man, representative(s) of the families, Officiant and others process into the church.

Vocal or instrumental music may then be performed.

## *2. Introduction*

Either *A*

**O:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Or *B*

**O:** Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Then the couple and the assembly are welcomed with these or similar words:

**O:** Dear (full name) and (full name), the (date) you were married in (location). You have come here to (name of church) because you want the church to pray for your marriage. We are gathered here to rejoice with you and pray for God's blessing for you and your home.

Then the Officiant may briefly say a few words on the occasion and the following service, and may finish in this way:

Either *A*

**O:** O Lord, how priceless is your unfailing love!  
Both high and low among men find refuge in the shadow of your wings.  
They feast in the abundance of your house;  
you give them to drink from your river of delights.  
For with you is the fountain of life;  
in your light we see light. Psalm 36:7-9

Or *B*

**O:** Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures for ever.  
This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:1, 24

Or *C*

**O:** God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. 1 John 4:16b

### ***3. Hymn***

### ***4. Lesson***

**O:** God has created us to live in harmony with him and with each other.  
He has ordained that man and woman shall be one, and he has confirmed this fellowship by his blessing.

Marriage is God's generous gift.

To live together as man and woman is to live in trust and love, to share joy and sorrow and to faithfully stand by each other until life ends.

God's word testifies that marriage is holy and inviolable.

It is written in the Book of Genesis:

So God created man in his own image,

in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.  
God blessed them and said to them,  
“Be fruitful and increase in number;  
fill the earth and subdue it.” Genesis 1:27-28a

And our Lord Jesus Christ says:  
“Haven’t you read [...] that at the beginning the Creator  
‘made them male and female’, and said,  
‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother  
and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?  
So they are no longer two, but one.  
Therefore what God has joined together,  
let man not separate.” Matthew 19:4-6

**O:** Let us hear more from God’s word.

2-4 of the following lessons or other suitable readings, at least one from each of the two Testaments.  
The lessons may be read by wedding guests.  
Those who shall read, go up to the lectern together.

The married couple and the assembly remain seated during the lessons.

The final lesson ends like this:  
“This is the Word of the Lord.”

Here may follow

## ***5. Hymn***

The Hymn may be replaced with appropriate vocal or instrumental music.

## ***6. Address***

The Officiant gives an address based on one of the lessons read under part 4 or on another appropriate text from the Bible.

## ***7. Presentation of the Married Couple***

The couple stand before the altar rail.

Then follows:

Either **A**

**O:** Before a civil authority you have committed yourselves to live together in matrimony.  
This vow means that you shall be one and remain faithful to each other for better, for worse  
until death do you part.

Today, upon your request, we will pray for you and place your marriage and home under God's blessing.

Or **B**

**O:** (Husband's and wife's full names without title), before a civil authority you have vowed to live together in matrimony. Will you still love and honour each other and remain faithful to each other for better, for worse until death do you part?

The married couple answer, one first or in unison:

We will.

**O:** Today, upon your request, we will pray for you and place your marriage and home under God's blessing.

## ***8. Intercession***

The married couple kneel at the altar rail. With the laying on of hands, the priest prays for the couple one of the following prayers, ending with The Lord's Prayer.

If desired, guests may also participate, during the intercession, in the laying on of hands.

I

Either **A**

**O:** Merciful God, you who have established marriage, and blessed man and woman, we pray: Let your blessing rest upon (name) and (name) who kneel in your presence. Fill them with your love and build their home in peace. Grant them your grace and strengthen them with your Spirit, so that in times of joy and sadness, they may place their trust in you, be faithful to each other and help each other towards life eternal.

Or **B**

**O:** Merciful God, we give you thanks for (name) and (name) and for their love for each other. Bless their life as husband and wife.

Help them keep the vows they have made to each other, so that their marriage may be filled with trust, care and joy.

Grant them the ability and will to build their home in peace, so that it will be a place where [children may grow up in safety and] family and friends may find fellowship.

You are the way, the truth and the life; let them walk in your truth. You forgive and heal; help them forgive each other. You are the source of love; help them and all husbands and wives to grow and mature in love.

## II

Here can be added a free prayer, if desired combined with lighting of candles.  
The assembly may also sing a hymn of prayer (while the couple are kneeling).

## III

The Intercession always ends with The Lord's Prayer.

**O:** Let us together pray The Lord's Prayer.

**A:** Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
your 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,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.

The couple sit.

Here may follow:

## ***9. Music/Acts of Symbolism***

Wedding guests and others may participate with music, readings or other cultural elements.

## ***10. Hymn***

## ***11. The Blessing***

Either A

**O:** facing the assembly  
Let us praise the Lord.

All stand.

**A:** God be praised. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

**O:** The Lord bless you and keep you,  
The Lord make his face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you,  
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you  
and give you peace. +

**A:** Amen. Amen. Amen.

Or *B*

**O:** facing the assembly:  
Receive the blessing.

All stand.

**O:** The Lord bless you and keep you,  
The Lord make his face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you,  
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you  
and give you peace. +

**A:** Amen.

During the following silent prayer, one of the church bells is tolled 3x3.

Here appropriate vocal or instrumental music may be performed.

## ***12. Recessional***

Organ music or other appropriate music. The married couple leave the church together.