

Wedding Format for First & Central Presbyterian Church
The Reverend Dr. Douglas D. Gerdtz

Seating of Mothers and Bridal Processional

Opening Sentences:

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

Statement on the Gift of Marriage:

On behalf of the families of the *Name* and *Name*, and the people of this congregation we welcome you to this joyous celebration in which *Name* and *Name* will affirm the choice they have made of each other as they enter into the covenant of marriage.

We gather in the presence of God to witness the joining together of *Name* and *Name*, to surround them with our prayers, and to ask God's blessing upon them, so that they may be strengthened for their life together, and nurtured in their love of God and one another.

Let us always remember that it is God who created us so that we might help and comfort one another, living faithfully together in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, throughout all our days.

God gave us covenants such as marriage for the full expression of love. In such a covenant, we belong to one another, and with affection and tenderness we freely give ourselves to one another.

God bound us together for the well being of society, for the ordering of our lives, and for the birth and nurture of children.

Name and *Name* are now called to a new way of life created, ordered, and blessed by God. This way of life must not be entered into carelessly or from selfish motives, but must always be entered into responsibly and prayerfully.

We rejoice that their life together, which is based in love, fidelity, and commitment, is given by God, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, may it be held in honor by all.

Prayer

Let us pray: Gracious God, you are always faithful in your love for us. Look with joy upon *Name* and *Name*, who have come seeking your blessing. Let your Holy Spirit rest upon them so that with steadfast love they may honor the promises they make this day, through Jesus Christ our Savior, Amen.

Seat congregation

Declaration of Intent:

Name, understanding that God has created, ordered and blessed the covenant of marriage; do you affirm your desire and intention to enter this covenant? Please answer, I do.

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Affirmations of the Families:

Do you, the families of *Name* and *Name*, give them your blessing and do you promise to do everything in your power to uphold them in their marriage? Please answer, We do.

Walk up to raised area with wedding party (good placement for music or congregational singing)

Readings**Homily****Exchange of Vows:**

Name and *Name*, since it is your intention to marry, join your right hands, and with your promises bind yourselves to each other as husband and wife.

I, *Name*, take you, *Name*, to be my wife;
and I promise before God and these witnesses,
to be your loving and faithful husband;
in plenty and in want;
in joy and in sorrow;
in sickness and in health;
so long as we both shall live.

I, *Name*, take you, *Name*, to be my husband;
and I promise before God and these witnesses,
to be your loving and faithful wife;
in plenty and in want;
in joy and in sorrow;
in sickness and in health;
so long as we both shall live.

Rings:

By you blessing, O God, may these rings be to *Name* and *Name* symbols of the unending love and faithfulness, reminding them of the covenant they have made this day, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Name, this ring I give you,
as a sign of our constant faith,
and abiding love,
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

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Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer:

Eternal God, spirit of love and grace, give your wisdom to *Name* and *Name* that they might be to each other a strength in need, a counsellor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy. Grant that their wills may be so knit together that they may grow in love and peace all the days of their lives. Give them grace, when they hurt each other, to recognize and confess their fault and to seek each other's forgiveness and yours. Make their life together a sign of Christ's love to this broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair. Give them such fulfilment of their mutual love that they may reach out in concern for others. Grant that all who have witnessed these vows today may find their lives strengthened and that all who are in committed relationships may depart with their own promises renewed. Enrich with your grace all partners and spouses, parents and children, that loving and supporting one another, they may serve those in need and be a sign of your reconciling love, peace and justice. Amen.

Lord's Prayer either spoken or solo**Pronouncement of Marriage:**

Before God, and in the presence those gathered here, *Name* and *Name* have made their solemn vows to each other. They have confirmed their promises by the joining of hands and by the giving and receiving of rings. Therefore, I proclaim that they are now, husband and wife. Blessed by the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit now and forevermore. Amen!

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

Charge and Blessing:

And now, *Name* and *Name*, as God's own, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness and patience, forgiving each other as the Lord has forgiven you, and crown all these things with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Benediction:

The grace of Christ attend you, the love of God surround you, the Holy Spirit keep you, that you may live in faith, abound in hope, and grow in love, now and forevermore. Amen.

Kiss**Recessional**