

Holy Unions at King of Peace

Version A

INTRODUCTION

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God to witness and celebrate the joining of (name) and (name) in a Holy Union. This is a special moment in the development of their love and life together. Through their love for one another, their lives have become richer and fuller and they are both made stronger. Having found one another and established their relationship, they have come here to sanctify it and give it special significance by celebrating it here in this holy place. This service is not meant to be magic nor a tool to establish a relationship between these two that stand before you today. It will not create the relationship, rather reinforce the relationship that already exists. It is a time for tying the knot in the rope of days and saying "we will not slip backward from here, but will go forward together". It is a time for declaring vows and intentions and for facing life's uncertainties with the one thing of which they are certain: their love for one another and their desire for that love to last for eternity.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Apostle Paul wrote: "If I speak with the tongues of humans and angels but have not love, I am but a sounding gong or a tinkling cymbal. Love is patient and is kind. It does not envy. It is not proud. Love is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered. Love keeps no record of wrongs. It does not rejoice in evil, but delights only in the truth. Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves. Love never fails. Now abide faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love." (Name) and (name), you have heard the Bible's definition of love. It is a high and lofty one, but the only one worthy of efforts. I invite you now to state publicly your resolution to live together with this kind of pure love for one another.

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

(Name) will say: (Name), today I choose you to be my life partner, and I do it proudly and openly in the presence of these witnesses. I promise to love you always, to listen to you, to nourish you with my praise, to never take you for granted, to hold you close when you need to be held, to laugh with you when you laugh, and to always be your safe haven in this life. I will be faithful to you, even as we grow old together. I will love you truly from this moment on, and promise this from my heart, with my soul and until death parts us.

EXCHANGE AND BLESSING OF THE RINGS

The perfect circle of a ring symbolizes eternity, while gold is a symbol of all that is pure and holy. As you give these rings to each other, our prayer is that your love for each other will be as eternal and everlasting as these rings.

LET US PRAY:

Bless, O Lord, these rings that as they are given and as they are worn, may they serve to remind us that though we may fail, love never does. As the circle of these rings knows no end, so may the love this day declared never end. Amen.

RING VOW

(Name), repeat after me - (Name), I give you this ring as a symbol of my love. As you wear it, may it be a reminder of how much I love you, not only on this precious day, but every single day of your life. (Name), repeat

after me - (Name), I give you this ring as a symbol of my love. As you wear it, may it be a reminder of how much I love you, not only on this precious day, but every single day of your life.

SCRIPTURE READING

Listen to the words of the scriptures in which Ruth spoke to Naomi. May these words go with you and be yours forever: "And Ruth said to her, 'Entreat me not to leave you, or return from following you: For where you go I will go and where you lodge I will lodge; and your people will be my people and your God my God. And where you die I will die and there I will be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts you from me.'" Ruth 1:16-17.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Faithful God, pour down Your grace upon (name) and (name) that they may fulfill the vows that they have pledged this day. May they reflect Your steadfast love in their lifelong faithfulness to each other. From Your great store of strength, give them power and patience, affection and understanding, courage and love. We ask, O God, that in every time of difficulty they may find a path to growth and maturity. May all the events of their life together bring them closer to one another and closer to You. May the world be better for the life of their love. Amen.

WORDS FROM THE APACHE CEREMONY OF LOVE

Finally, listen to these words from the Apache Ceremony of Love: Now you will feel no rain, For each of you will be shelter for the other. Now you will feel no cold, For each of you will be warmth for the other. Now there is no more loneliness, For each of you will be companion to the other. Now you are two persons, but there is one life before you. Go now to your dwelling to enter into the days of your life together. And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

THE PRONOUNCEMENT

In as much as (name) and (name) have presented themselves here and exchanged vows and rings as symbols of their love and relationship together: By the power vested in me by this church and by the power of their love, I do proclaim that they are partners for life, in the name of God, the Parent, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen. Jesus said, "What God has joined together, let no one put asunder."

Version B

INTRODUCTION

We are present here this morning to celebrate the binding in Holy Union of (name) and (name). This couple has shared the best and the worst of all that life has to offer. During the time that they have known one another, they have proven the strength of the love that binds them together. Now before you and Almighty God, they wish to formalize their vows of Holy Union. There are four basic elements in a Service of Holy Union. During this service, God is acknowledged as the author and initiator of the love that (name) and (name) share. Secondly, although credit is given to God, more importantly, thanksgiving is offered for truly there are many reasons to celebrate and be grateful to God. Next, there is the element of commitment expressed through the exchange of vows. Finally, through the means of prayer, God is petitioned to continue to strengthen and bless the love relationship of the Holy Union couple. Join with us now as we witness the binding in Holy Union of our sisters/brothers in Christ.

"But Ruth replied, 'Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.'" Ruth 1:16-18.

(Name) and (name), realize that a service of Holy Union centers around and is based upon the love of God - Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit. Know that the question you are about to answer and the vows you are about to exchange come from your heart, and that God hears them and remembers. Stand firm in your vows, for they are not only of this moment, but forever.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

I now charge each of you to answer the following question: (Name), will you accept (name), as your loving spouse and soulmate, and will you pledge your loyalty and friendship to her/him, in all faith and tenderness, to live with her/him and love her/him according to the will of God in the state of Holy Union? I WILL

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

Now that you have declared your intentions to God, I invite you to share your vows with one another. I promise to spend the rest of my life with you, (name). I promise to hold you, caress you, love you, cherish you and take care of you. You are the Moon and I am the Sun and we will dance among the stars in the heaven. I promise to warm you with my love and devotion and forever provide you with all the light and energy that I have the power to give. My loyalty knows no bounds. I promise to defend this love and may no other attempt to destroy what we have built, for they shall regret what they have attempted to do. My wonderful lady/man, (name), I promise to love you, care for you, and be with you, for the rest of my life. Your spirit warms me and in return I will always reflect your love. I promise to be at your side as an equal partner and to always provide you with all my spirit can give. I promise to support your dreams and help to make them come true. To do my best to always be worthy of your love, light and spirit. I pray this always to be true and bind my love to you forever and ever. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails." I Corinthians 13: 4-7.

EXCHANGE AND BLESSING OF THE RINGS

Do you wish to exchange a physical token of your love for one another? WE DO The circle is the symbol of the sun, earth, and universe. It is the symbol of wholeness, perfection and peace. The ring is a symbol of unity into which your two lives are now joined in an unbroken circle, in which, wherever you go, you will return to one another. I give you this ring, as a token and pledge, of our constant faith and abiding love.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Now let us come to the table of our Lord and Saviour. Here is to be found the finest and purest love ever offered. I invite you to feed and grow upon it.

THE LIGHTING OF THE HOLY UNION CANDLE

As a symbolic act of their Holy Union I invite (name) and (name) to light their Holy Union Candle. Each will take a lit candle representing their individual lives and at the same time they will ignite the center candle which represents their relationship and Holy Union. They will not extinguish their single candles for they are still separate individuals existing on their own. They simply have now come together to form a third entity - a Union created by love and blessed of the Lord.

THE PRONOUNCEMENT

By the authority and power vested in me as clergy in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, I now declare that (name) and (name) are united as one. Let it be known that God has joined them together and that there is, therefore, no power which can separate them.

BENEDICTION

May Almighty God bless you and keep you; may God's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; may God's divine countenance look upon you and grant you peace - both now and forevermore. Amen.

Version C

INTRODUCTION

We are present here this afternoon to celebrate the binding in Holy Union of (name) and (name). This couple has shared the best and the worst of all that life has to offer. During the time that they have known one another they have proven the strength of the love that binds them together. Now before you and Almighty God, they wish to formalize their vows of Holy Union. There are four basic elements in a Service of Holy Union. During this service. God is acknowledged as the author and initiator of the love that (name) and (name) share. Secondly, although credit is given to God, more importantly, thanksgiving is offered for truly there are many reasons to celebrate and be grateful to God. Next, there is the element of commitment expressed through the exchange of vows. Finally, through the means of prayer, God is petitioned to continue to strengthen and bless the love relationship of the Holy Union couple. Join with me now as we witness the binding in Holy Union of our brothers/sisters in Christ.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.” I Corinthians 13:4-7.

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

I now ask each of you to answer the following question: (Name), will you accept (name) as your lifetime partner, and will you pledge your loyalty and friendship to him/her in all faith and tenderness, to live with him/her and love him/her according to the will of God in the state of Holy Union? I WILL

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

Now that you have declared your intentions to God, I invite you to share your vows with one another. I, (name), take you, (name), as my lifetime partner, and in so doing, commit my life to you, including all sorrows and joys, all hardships and triumphs, all the experiences of life, a commitment of faithfulness, made in love, lived in hope, and eternally made new. Exchange of personal vows.

EXCHANGE AND BLESSING OF THE RINGS

Do you wish to exchange a physical token of your love for one another? WE DO The circle is the symbol of the sun, earth, and universe. It is the symbol of wholeness, perfection and peace. The ring is a symbol of unity into which your two lives are now joined in an unbroken circle in which, wherever you go, you will return to one another. I give you this ring as a token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love.

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By the authority and power vested in me as clergy in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, I now declare that (name) and (name) are united as one. Let it be known that God has joined them together and that there is, therefore, no power which can separate them.

BENEDICTION

May Almighty God bless you and keep you; may God's face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; may God's divine countenance look upon you and grant you peace - both now and forevermore. Amen. It is my pleasure and honor to present to you (full name) and (full name) whose lives have been joined together by Almighty God.