

AN ORDER FOR THE BLESSING OF A COVENANT

between

and

THE GREETING:

(Presiding Minister) Blessed be the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has called us together to celebrate with great joy the Covenant of and

This is a holy commitment which God has blessed out of love for all people. Let us hear what is written in God's Holy Word.

THE READING: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8,13

(P.M.) Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sin but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.

Love does not come to an end. But if there are gifts of prophecy, the time will come when they must fail; or the gift of languages, it will not continue for ever; and knowledge--for this, too, the time will come when it must fail.

In short, there are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.

THE READING: Kahlil Gilbran

Love one another, but make not a bond of love:
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you
be alone,
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with
the same music.
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping,
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together, yet not too near together:
For the pillars of the temple stand apart;
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not into each other's
shadow.

COPY: Material located in the
Archives of the Episcopal Church

DECLARATION OF INTENTION:

(P.M.) Dear friends: you have come here so that our Lord may confirm and strengthen your love in the presence of this company. Christ abundantly blesses this love. Therefore, I ask you, do you

and

declare the firm intention of your covenant to love and honor each other for the rest of your lives?

(BOTH) We do.

EXCHANGE OF PROMISES:

(P.M.) Since you intend to enter this covenant, each of you take the other by the hand, and declare your consent before God and the Church.

() Together, and I have found A Beginning with No End. There's a time in one's life when you just know and feel "A Lifetime of Love."

Together, today, I want to share, to express this most special moment of my life right here in my home with a/ sister Bonnie and among my friends.

In the eyes of God, the righteous of this covenant, I want to share with you, , until death do us part, my love for you, my caring, my everything for you. The fulfillment of my happiness is having you near in whole heart and soul. In my everyday life shall I hold you closely. From the beginning to the end, for better or for worst, I, say, "Yes, yours, you; my darling , do unto me, forever with me free, is what we'll be!"

() Where I walk, I will not lead, nor will I walk behind. Always and forever I will walk with you, , side by side. For you are my equal. If sometimes along our journey through life, it becomes hard and winding, I know with the Lord's guidance we will see those times through.

I make this promise to you, . I will continue to build upon the foundation of trust we have fought so long to keep. I will take the time to listen and understand you, as you have for me. I love you, , for eternity.

EXCHANGE OF RINGS:

(P.M.) Lord, pour down your blessing on these rings. They are a token of faith to and . May they remind them of their love for each other.

(Each takes a ring and places it on the other's finger and says:)

 , receive this ring as a sign of my love and loyalty.

 , receive this ring as a sign of my love and loyalty.

THE AFFIRMATION:

(P.M.) and , you have declared your covenant before God and the Church. May the Lord strengthen it and fill you both with every blessing.

I affirm that your covenant is blessed of God, in the name of our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier.

THE BLESSING: (Couple kneels)

(P.M.) May God so bind you in love, and , that the peace of Christ will live with you and remain always in your home. May you receive help from your friends, and acceptance from all. May you always bear such true witness to the love of God in the world that the afflicted, the needy, and the oppressed will find you their friends, and receive you gladly into the everlasting dwelling place of God.

(Couple rises)

THE BENEDICTION:

(P.M.) May God send us his light and truth to keep us all the days of our lives. May the hand of God protect us; the holy angels accompany us. May the love of God which knows no bounds and passes all our understanding be and abide with us all.

(All) Amen.

(P.M.) Go in peace. Serve the Lord.