

# St. Philip's Episcopal Church

## A Rite of Blessing

Date

Time

N.N.

and

N.N.

*The music before the service includes*

HYMN

*The Priest welcomes the people with these words*

Welcome to the celebration of N. and N.'s commitment to each other as life partners. The Christian community recognizes that the love between two people manifests God's love. Today we celebrate N. and N.'s love as a gift from God to them and to all of us.

Let us pray.

O God who has made heaven and earth, you have taught us to love each other as Christ loved us, to bear each other's burdens, and to share each other's strengths. May you look with favor on N. and N.. May you grant them sincere love and unfailing strength. Protect them in their life and work and lead them with all creation into your Kingdom of love and peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The Priest addresses each partner*

N., do you have the firm intention to enter into this commitment with N., who stands here before you? *Response: **I do.***

N., do you have the firm intention to enter into this commitment with N., who stands here before you? *Response: **I do.***

Will all of you witnessing these promises do all in your power to uphold these persons in their life together?

*People* **We will.**

# THE LESSONS

*One or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture is read. If there is to be a Communion, a passage from the Gospel always concludes the readings.*

From the Old Testament

1 Samuel 18: 1b, 3, 20: 16-17, 42a (Jonathan made a covenant with David...)

Ruth 1: 16-17 (Where you go I will go...)

Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12 (Two are better than one)

From the Psalms

67, 85, 111, 127, 133: 1-3, 149

From the New Testament

Romans 12: 9-21 (Let love be genuine)

Colossians 3: 12b-16a (Be clothed in sincere compassion)

1 John 4: 7-12 (Beloved let us love one another)

From the Gospels

Matthew 7: 24-27 (The house built on the rock)

Luke 6: 20-23 (The Beatitudes)

John 15: 9-17 (This is my commandment: that you love one another)

# HOMILY

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*The Priest then says*

Seeing how greatly God has loved us, let us lift up before God this couple, this gathering, and the whole world, saying: "Hear our prayer."

*The Deacon or an appointed lay person leads the people in prayer*

I ask your prayers for the earth and all of God's creation: for the rivers and oceans, for the forests and fields, for the mountains and meadows, and for all creatures who live in them. Pray for our planet. O God, source of all life, **Hear our prayer.**

I ask your prayers for the welfare of the world, for peace and respect among nations, for all the leaders of the world, and for all men and women and children everywhere. Pray for the world. O God, source of all life, **Hear our prayer.**

I ask your prayers for our country, for those who govern, and for all in authority. Pray for justice in our land. O God, source of all life, **Hear our prayer.**

I ask your prayers for our community, for the people of this city, and for the yearnings of our hearts which we now present before God. Pray for our community. O God, source of all life, **Hear our prayer.**

I ask your prayers for those who suffer; pray for the sick and the poor, the destitute, the unemployed, the lonely, the bereaved, the victims of addiction, and the victims of hatred and

violence. Pray for those who bear the pain of the world. O God, source of all life, ***Hear our prayer.***

I ask your prayers for the Christian community everywhere: for our life and ministry, for our bishops, Michael and Gary, and for all leaders, that we will be the Body of Christ in the world. Pray for the Church. O God, source of all life, ***Hear our prayer.***

I ask your prayers for *N. and N.*: for their life together, that they may be filled with God's blessing and grow in love for each other with faithfulness throughout their life together. Pray for *N. and N.* O God, source of all life, ***Hear our prayer.***

I ask your prayers for *N. and N.*: for the courage to recognize and forgive each other's faults as they bear each other's burdens. Pray for *N. and N.* O God, source of all life, ***Hear our prayer.***

I ask your prayers of gratitude for all those who are bound to us in love: for our families, friends, neighbors, and for all who have gone before us in the faith. Pray for those we love. O God, source of all life, ***Hear our prayer.***

*The Priest adds this concluding collect*

God of all, you have made us in your image and you have filled us with your grace. You taught your disciples to be united by love. Hear the prayers of your people and may you grant to *N. and N.* the grace to love each other in joy all the days of their lives. We ask this through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, to whom, with you, one God, be praise for ever and ever. Amen.

## HYMN

## THE BLESSING

*The Priest invites the couple to stand before those gathered. The couple faces each other. Taking the other's hand, each says to the other*

*N.*, I give myself to you and I take you to be my companion in body, mind, and spirit.

*The Priest then says*

Praise and thanks to you, God the Father. You spoke and the heavens came into being, the earth and everything that lives. You looked and found it good. The world was charged with you glory and mercy. Praise and thanks to you, God the Son. You have broken down walls of division, calling us together in love. For this, you died, giving birth to a new creation. Praise and thanks to you, God the Holy Spirit. You renew the face of the earth and call us to be your stewards.

Now may you pour your Holy Spirit upon *N. and N.* May they love each other as a joyful sign of your new creation of love and peace. *N. and N.*, may you flourish together and rejoice in your friends. May God grant you the goods that endure and bring you everlasting joy. And may the blessing of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you now and forever. ***Amen.***

## THE PEACE

*Celebrant:* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People:*      **And also with you.**

## **THE HOLY COMMUNION**

*You may sit for*

*Please stand as the Offering is brought to the Altar*

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING,** Eucharistic Prayer , page

Holy, Holy, Holy

**THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

*Everyone is welcome at our altar. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive communion. Those who wish to receive a blessing may cross their arms over their chest to indicate this. Those who receive the bread but who do not wish to receive the wine may also cross their arms.*

HYMN

HYMN

**POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER**

**BLESSING**

**DISMISSAL**

**RECESSIONAL**

## **PARTICIPANTS**

Celebrant

Organist

Crucifer

Readers

Oblation Bearers

Musicians

Ushers

Eucharistic Assistance

*Special thanks.*

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## **St. Philip's Mission Statement**

*St. Philip's is a holy place where we worship God.*

*Our worship forms us into a community of Christians. By prayer, sacrament, and fellowship, we nourish and sustain one another in our individual lives and ministries. We obey the Gospel call to bring the light of hope in Jesus Christ to all people. We offer welcome, support, food and shelter to all in need without pride, prejudice, or judgment. We have responsibility to the entire Durham community, especially our downtown neighborhood.*



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