

Marriage of

April 20, 2007

Gathering/Welcome

Presider: Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God. Whoever does not love does not know God; For God is love. Since God loved us so much; we ought also to love one another.

Presider: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

Holy and loving God, in our baptism you call us into relationship with you and the whole creation: We thank you for giving us signs of your steadfast love in the covenant of fidelity two people make with one another, and we pray that, in your mercy, you will give your blessing to _____ and _____ who come before you, and strengthen them day by day with the love of your Holy Spirit that they may be a blessing to one another and to the world; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Ruth 1:16-17

Psalm 98

Ithaka

The Making of the Covenant

Presider: Today we gather to witness and to bless the public commitment of Rob and Mike to a lifelong covenant of fidelity and mutuality.

A covenant is a public declaration of commitment that binds people in an enduring relationship. The Bible is the story of God's covenant with humankind which God has declared shall not be broken. In Baptism, God calls us into a covenant which is sealed eternally by the power of the Holy Spirit. By it we are bound not only to God but to one another in a new community we call the Church, a community in which God shows no partiality.

Each one of us is called to live out the Covenant of Baptism in our daily life and work. For some this includes a special relationship of fidelity and mutuality with another person that becomes a sign of God's steadfast love. These relationships, a source of comfort and joy, are gifts given by God that the whole world might be blessed through them.

The Presider then addresses the witnesses:

Do you here present believe that _____ and _____ are called to live in such a covenant?

Witnesses: We do. We believe their life together to be a blessing from God for themselves and for the world.

Presider: Will you to the best of your ability support them as companions on their journey?

Witnesses: We will, with God's help.

The Presider then addresses the couple

_____, and _____, do you enter freely into this covenant, and do you believe it to be the relationship to which God has called you?

& _____: We do.

Taking each other by the hand(s), each says to the other in turn

N., I make this covenant with you before God and our friends that I will love you in all the circumstances of our lives. With God's help, I will be faithful to you as long as we both shall live, as a companion in faith, hope, and love for the glory of God and the life of the world.

The Presider then says to the witnesses

Will you who witness these vows support _____ and _____ in their covenant, standing by them in encouragement and prayer in times of joy and in times of sorrow?

Witnesses: We will.

The Blessing of the Rings or Other Symbols

The Presider may ask God's blessing on rings or other symbols of the covenant the couple have made as follows. If the rings have been previously given, the couple may extend their hands toward the Presider.

Bless, O God, these rings as enduring signs of the covenant _____ and _____ have made, and keep them in the bond of love, through Christ our Savior. Amen.

The giver presents the ring or other symbols with these words. This action maybe omitted if rings or other symbols have been previously given.

N., I give you this ring as a symbol of the covenant we have made with God and with one another. Amen.

Blessing/sharing wine.

Blessing

Creator of all, we thank you for the gift of love and companionship; forgiveness and reconciliation; mercy and joy. Grant that _____ and _____, having professed their love and commitment one to the other, may grow together, secure in your love, and sustained by their friends. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen.

Exchange of Peace, Greetings, Smooches, etc.