

PLEASE SIT

THE PREFACE

We have come together in the presence of God, to witness the marriage of Natasha and Christopher, to ask his blessing on them, and to share in their joy. Our Lord Jesus Christ was himself a guest at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and through his Spirit he is with us now. The Bible teaches us that marriage is a gift of God in creation and a means of his grace, a holy mystery in which man and woman become one flesh. It is God's purpose that, as husband and wife give themselves to each other in love throughout their lives, they shall be united in that love as Christ is united with his Church. Marriage is given, that husband and wife may comfort and help each other, living faithfully together in need and in plenty, in sorrow and in joy. It is given, that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love, and, through the joy of their bodily union, may strengthen the union of their hearts and lives. It is given as the foundation of family life in which children may be born and nurtured in accordance with God's will, to his praise and glory. In marriage husband and wife belong to one another, and they begin a new life together in the community. It is a way of life that all should honour; and it must not be undertaken carelessly, lightly, or selfishly, but reverently, responsibly, and after serious thought. This is the way of life, created and hallowed by God, that Natasha and Christopher are now to begin. They will each give their consent to the other; they will join hands and exchange solemn vows, and in token of this they will each give and receive a ring. Therefore, on this their wedding day we pray with them, that, strengthened and guided by God, they may fulfil his purpose for the whole of their earthly life together.

THE DECLARATIONS

Will you, the families and friends of Natasha and Christopher, support and uphold them in their marriage now and in the years to come?

All: **We will.**

THE COLLECT

God our Father, from the beginning you have blessed creation with abundant life. Pour out your blessings upon Natasha and Christopher, that they may be joined in mutual love and companionship, in holiness and commitment to each other. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All: **Amen.**

FIRST READING

A reading from Song of Solomon 2.10-13; 8.6,7. Read by Jonathan Moon

My beloved speaks and says to me: 'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.'

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for love all the wealth of one's house, it would be utterly scorned.

SECOND READING

Love is Not All (Sonnet XXX) by Edna St. Vincent Millay. Read by Adele Worsley

Love is not all: it is not meat nor drink
Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain;
Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink
And rise and sink and rise and sink again;
Love can not fill the thickened lung with breath,
Nor clean the blood, nor set the fractured bone;
Yet many a man is making friends with death
Even as I speak, for lack of love alone.
It well may be that in a difficult hour,
Pinned down by pain and moaning for release,
Or nagged by want past resolution's power,
I might be driven to sell your love for peace,
Or trade the memory of this night for food.
It well may be. I do not think I would.

THE SERMON

Canon Peter Babington

PLEASE STAND

HYMN

Coe Fen

How shall I sing that majesty
which angels do admire?
Let dust in dust and silence lie;
sing, sing, ye heavenly choir.
Thousands of thousands stand around
thy throne, O God most high;
ten thousand times ten thousand sound
thy praise; but who am I?

Thy brightness unto them appears,
while I thy footsteps trace;
a sound of God comes to my ears,
but they behold thy face.
They sing, because thou art their Sun;
Lord, send a beam on me;
for where heav'n is but once begun,
there alleluias be.

Enlighten with faith's light my heart,
in flame it with love's fire;
then shall I sing and bear a part
with that celestial choir.
I shall, I fear, be dark and cold,
with all my fire and light;
yet when thou dost accept their gold,
Lord, treasure up my mite.

V.4 DESCANT ON SEPARATE MUSIC CARD:

How great a being, Lord, is thine,
which doth all beings keep!
Thy knowledge is the only line
to sound so vast a deep.
Thou art a sea without a shore,
a sun without a sphere;
thy time is now and evermore,
thy place is everywhere.

Kenneth Nicholson Naylor (1931-1991) / v.4 descant arr. David Hill (b.1957)
Text by John Mason (1646-1694)

PLEASE SIT

THE VOWS & THE GIVING OF THE RINGS

THE BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, for you have created joy and gladness, pleasure and delight, love, peace and fellowship. Pour out the abundance of your blessing upon Natasha and Christopher in their new life together. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts and a crown upon their heads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; awake and asleep, in joy and in sorrow, in life and in death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that banquet where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home. We ask this through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve and keep you; the Lord mercifully grant you the riches of his grace, that you may please him both in body and soul, and, living together in faith and love, may receive the blessings of eternal life.

All: **Amen.**

THE REGISTRATION OF THE MARRIAGE

Witnesses: Rosie Parker & Aifric Dennison

THE CLOTHS OF HEAVEN

Performed by Avery Amereau and Oliver Wass

Thomas Dunhill (1877 - 1946) / Arr. Oliver Wass / Text by William Butler Yeats (1865 - 1939)

Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths
Enwrought with golden and silver light
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,

I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly because you tread on my dreams.

THE PRAYERS

Each time the priest says the bidding “*Lord of Life and Love*”, the congregation is invited to respond with the words

“Hear our prayer”.

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.**

PLEASE STAND

THE DISMISSAL & FINAL BLESSING

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love, defend you on every side, and guide you in truth and peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

HYMN

All my hope on God is founded

Herbert Howells (1892 – 1983) / Arr. Christopher Palmer (1946 – 1995)

Text by Joachim Neander (1650-1680) / Translated by Robert Bridges (1844-1930)

All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew,
me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

Pride of man and earthly glory,
sword and crown betray his trust;
what with care and toil he buildeth,
tower and temple fall to dust.
But God's power, hour by hour,
is my temple and my tower.

God's great goodness aye endureth,
deep his wisdom, passing thought:
splendour, light and life attend him,
beauty springeth out of naught.
Evermore from his store
new-born worlds rise and adore.

V.4 DESCANT ON SEPARATE MUSIC CARD:

Still from man to God eternal
sacrifice of praise be done,
high above all praises praising
for the gift of Christ, his Son.
Christ doth call one and all:
ye who follow shall not fall.