

Marriage, Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child and Holy Baptism

MARRIAGE AND THANKSGIVING FOR THE GIFT OF A CHILD

There are occasions when couples seeking marriage in church already have children, and might therefore wish to recognize and give thanks for God's gift of children within the context of the celebration of their marriage.

In such cases, it might be appropriate for elements of the service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child to be incorporated within the Marriage Service. The guidelines below show how this might be done.

An asterisk (*) denotes that an authorized text must be used.

Page references are to *Common Worship: Pastoral Services* (CW: PS)

¶ The Gathering

The Welcome	CW: PS 104
Preface*	CW: PS 105
The Declarations*	CW: PS 106
The Collect (for Marriage)*	CW: PS 107

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

Reading from the Bible
Sermon

¶ The Marriage

The Vows*	CW: PS 108
The Giving of Rings*	CW: PS 109
The Proclamation*	CW: PS 110
The Blessing of the Marriage*	CW: PS 111
Registration of the Marriage	(may be deferred until after the Lord's Prayer)

¶ Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child

Introduction	CW: PS 202
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If it is decided to use the form of words provided on page 202 of CW: PS, it may be adapted as follows:

As we celebrate the marriage of *N* and *M*, we give thanks with them for *their children* [names], and we support *N* and *M* in their responsibilities with prayer and love. God became one of us in Jesus, and understands all that surrounds the [arrival and] upbringing of children. It is God's purpose that children should know love within the stability of their home, grow in faith, and come at last to the eternal city where his love reigns supreme.

Thanksgiving and Blessing
Giving of the Gospel

CW: PS 203
CW: PS 204

¶ The Prayers

Prayers of Intercession

CW: PS 112

This should include prayer for family life and may include the parents' prayer on page 205 of CW: PS

The Lord's Prayer*

CW: PS 113

¶ The Dismissal

The Blessing

CW: PS 114

MARRIAGE AND HOLY BAPTISM

In some of those instances where couples seeking a church wedding already have children, the couple might also be looking to have their children baptized. In most cases, the couple's wedding and the children's baptism will take place on separate occasions. This is to be preferred, as it allow for a series of sustained pastoral encounters with the family.

In the Church of England, Baptism is normally administered on Sundays at the best-attended act of public worship, so that the congregation may witness the newly-baptized being received into the Church (see Canon B 21).

If, however, a minister decides, for pastoral reasons, to combine marriage and baptism in a single act of worship, the order below suggests how this might be done. It draws on material from the Church of England's authorized Marriage and Baptism services from *Common Worship*.

In order to ensure that the baptism witnesses clearly to the reception of the newly-baptized into the Church, ministers should encourage a limited but substantial number of people from the local congregation to attend the celebration.

The suggested order assumes a situation in which the couple is already baptized. If this is not the case and the couple is seeking baptism, then the Liturgy of Baptism should precede the Marriage.

[If it is proposed to celebrate both Marriage and Baptism within a celebration of Holy Communion, the service should be planned with considerable care, with serious consideration being given to the overall length of the service, and the potential confusion arising from an overload in terms of imagery.]

It is crucial that all sections of the service (except those marked 'optional') are included and that, for items marked with an asterisk(*), an authorized text is used.

Page references are to *Common Worship: Pastoral Services* (CW: PS) and *Common Worship: Christian Initiation* (CW: CI)

¶ The Gathering

The Welcome	CW: PS 104
Preface*	CW: PS 105
The Declarations*	CW: PS 106
The Collect (for Marriage)*	CW: PS 107

¶ The Liturgy of the Word

[Old / New Testament Reading(s) - optional]

Gospel Reading [obligatory for Baptism]

Sermon

¶ The Marriage

The Vows*

CW: PS 108

The Giving of Rings*

CW: PS 109

The Proclamation*

CW: PS 110

The Blessing of the Marriage*

CW: PS 111

Registration of the Marriage

(may be deferred until after the Lord's Prayer)

¶ The Liturgy of Baptism

Introduction

CW: CI 63 (or alternative)

The Collect for Baptism*

CW: CI 82

Presentation of the Candidates*

CW: CI 84

The Decision*

CW: CI 85 (alternative 168)

Signing with the Cross*

CW: CI 86

Prayer over the Water*

CW: CI 87 (or alternative)

Profession of Faith*

CW: CI 88 (alternative 178)*

Baptism*

CW: CI 89

The Welcome and Peace

CW: CI 92

¶ The Prayers

Prayers of Intercession

The Lord's Prayer*

CW: PS 113 / CI 94

[¶ The Liturgy of the Eucharist]

[CW: PS 129]

¶ The Dismissal

The Blessing

CW: PS 114

Giving of a Lighted Candle

CW: CI 95

The Dismissal

CW: CI 95