

Marriage Rites of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia

The following marriage rites is the authorised form of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia. This form is to be used by ministers of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia in any marriage ceremony conducted by them. However, certain variations are provided and/or allowed, to encourage celebrants to be responsive to the desires and needs of the man and woman to be married, and to accommodate the content of their choosing where appropriate.

In adapting these rites, we draw attention to certain non-negotiable aspects of the content of the ceremony:

- a) At some point in the ceremony, it is legally required that vows be made, such as, “I, A.B, take you, B.C, as my lawful wife/husband” or similar.*
- b) The ceremony is to be carried out in a Christian context, including such content as is agreeable to the beliefs of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia.*
- c) The Full Gospel Churches of Australia holds to a traditional view of marriage in that it is the covenant by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership for the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring.*

The Marriage Ceremony

Welcome

The Celebrant warmly welcomes the congregation and invites them to share in the service as fully as possible.

Example:

“Relatives and friends of Man’s Christian Name and Woman’s Christian Name, we have come together today to witness the marriage of Man’s Christian Name and Woman’s Christian Name. We begin this ceremony by worshipping God in song...

Praise and Worship

A time of praise and worship may be led by the celebrant or worship leader. An item may be sung, or music played

Opening Blessing

Thanking the Lord for this man and woman, and their decision for marriage.

Example

Almighty God, we thank you that Man’s Christian Name and Woman’s Christian Name have experienced your grace and goodness and have been led by your Spirit to this point in their lives where they desire to enter the covenant of marriage.

We ask you to bless this man and woman who are standing here in your presence and in the presence of these witnesses as they enter the Covenant of Marriage. Amen.

Celebrant’s Remarks

At this point (or later in the Ceremony), a Bible reading and appropriate comments from the Celebrant relating to Christian marriage may take place.

Celebrant's Introduction

The Celebrant introduces the ceremony stating the purpose for the gathering and a Christian understanding of what marriage is.

Example

"We are gathered together here in the sight of God and of this congregation, to join together this man, *Man's Full Name*, and this woman, *Woman's Full Name*, in holy matrimony. Marriage is an honourable estate instituted by God and is a life-long commitment between husband and wife. Almighty God Himself is the author. Therefore, it is not to be entered into lightly but reverently and soberly in the fear of God. *Man's Christian Name* and *Woman's Christian Name* come now to be joined in this holy relationship."

Declaration of Intention

The Man and Woman are asked to publicly state their intentions

(To the Groom) "Will you, *Man's Full Name*, take this woman to be your lawful wife and forsaking all others will you be faithful to her for as long as you both live?"

Groom "I will."

(To the Bride) "Will you, *Woman's Full Name*, take this man to be your lawful husband and forsaking all others will you be faithful to him for as long as you both live?"

Bride "I will."

(To the Father of the Bride)

"Who gives this woman to be married to this man?"

Father of Bride "I do." **Vows - Celebrant to Groom**

The vows may be taken in the following ways

- (a) *The couple may simply answer the Celebrant's questions as in the example below.*
- (b) *The couple may repeat appropriate vows after the Celebrant.*
- (c) *The couple may read or say appropriate vows to each other.*
- (d) *The couple may author their own vows in keeping with a FG beliefs.*

"Therefore, knowing this, will you join your right hands please.

Example

Do you, *Man's Full Name*, in the presence of Almighty God and these witnesses, take *Woman's Full Name*, to be your wife? Do you promise to love, cherish and protect her and provide for her in health and in sickness? Do you promise to be true to her, forsaking all others, and cleaving to her for as long as you both live?"

Groom "I do."

Celebrant to Bride.

Do you, *Woman's Full Name*, in the presence of Almighty God and these witnesses, take *Man's Full Name*, to be your husband? Do you promise to love, cherish and honour him in health and in sickness? Do you promise to be true and faithful to him, forsaking all others and cleaving to him for as long as you both live?"

Bride "I do."

Ring Ceremony

At this point in the ceremony rings may be given or exchanged.

The Celebrant receives the rings

Example

"These rings are a sign and seal of your marriage bond. Having neither beginning nor end, they are to be a constant reminder to you of God's never-ending love for you and of your vows of lifelong devotion to each other."

Groom

"*Woman's Christian Name*, I give you this ring as a sign of my love and as a seal of our marriage bond."

Bride

"*Man's Christian Name*, I give you this ring as a sign of my love and as a seal of our marriage bond."

The Declaration of Marriage

The Bride and Groom again join their right hands while the Celebrant says:

Celebrant

"Since , *Man's Full Name* and *Woman's Full Name* have consented to live together in holy marriage making vows to each other before God and this congregation and giving ring/s as a sign of those vows, I pronounce them to be husband and wife, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

(To the congregation)

Those whom God has joined together, let no one separate."

(The couple may wish to seal their marriage with a kiss at this point.)

Dedicatory Prayer

This is the opportune time for the celebrant or elders or parents to pray for the newly married couple.

(Option - Communion with couple only)**Celebrant**

"Man's Christian Name and Woman's Christian Name have chosen to begin their marriage with the Lord's supper. They do this to express their desire to commence their walk together acknowledging Jesus as the centre of their life and marriage."

Song

(Option – other ceremonies)

Other ceremonies which may be performed at this point could include:

- *Salt Ceremony. This is where two different types of salt are poured into a glass container by each of the couple.*
- *Sand Ceremony. Similar to the salt ceremony above using coloured sands.*
- *Hand Fasting Ceremony. The couple's hands are bound together with a three part cord.*
- *Candle Lighting Ceremony. A large central candle is lit by the couple using two smaller candles.*
- *Other Ceremonies which might be desired by the couple.*

Celebrant's Remarks

If this has not been done earlier in the service then at this point, a Bible reading and appropriate remarks from the Celebrant relating to Christian marriage may take place.

Signing of Register

While the register is being signed, a song leader may lead congregational singing, or a soloist may sing or play.

Celebrant

Introduction to congregation of new couple.

Exit Song or Music.