

The HOLY UNION service of

Partner (A)\_\_\_\_\_ and

Partner (B)\_\_\_\_\_

# ORDER OF SERVICE



**Date: On this Day**\_\_\_\_\_

**Month**\_\_\_\_\_ **Year**\_\_\_\_\_

**OUTREACH MINISTRISTIES AUSTRALIA**

**Branch:**\_\_\_\_\_ .

**Officiating Minister:**

**Revd.**\_\_\_\_\_

# OUTREACH MINISTRIES AUSTRALIA - Pastors Dialogue

## HOLY UNION / WEDDING

### GATHERING MUSIC/HYMN

### WELCOME and INTRODUCTION

On behalf of **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_

and **Partner (B)**\_\_\_\_\_

I welcome you to this celebration of their commitment to each other.

We are here to affirm cherished relationship in its many and varied forms: the love of family, the support of friends.

We are here to witness the making of a covenant expressed in solemn vows and promises.

We pray that these moments will offer each of you the opportunity to review and reflect upon your life commitments and important relationships. May this time make possible the renewal of your commitments and covenants to family, friends, and community.

By our presence here today, we give thanks to God almighty, we offer best wishes and affirm our support of the promises **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **Partner (B)**\_\_\_\_\_ are about to make to each other. Please let us stand to welcome the couple.

### MUSIC Selected by Celebrants

This is a timeless moment, a moment of hope and expectation, when standing before God and among you, their friends, **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ pledge themselves to each other in the promise of Holy Union.

What **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ mean to each other is obvious in

their lives, but it is not easily expressed in the language of a ceremony. The union it symbolizes can be the most intriguing of human experiences, for in any accounting, love in its infinite manifestations is what life is all about. To share their lives, to encourage creativity, to inspire each other to reach beyond the limits of the ordinary . . . not at the expense of each partner's individuality, but rather by the strength of the common bond, this is the hope in which **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ come to be united.

Through this rite of passage, two persons declare publicly in the presence of the almighty God, their intent to enter into a cherished relationship of enduring love. This occasion is not a spectacle or a mere formality, but a holy moment. We are witness to the making of a promise. This is a celebration of the highest we know in love, the pledging of the deepest fidelity and trust, the expression of the highest aspiration.

It is our hope and prayer in the precious name of Jesus Christ that those of you who live in an intimate and loving relationship will take this occasion to renew your own vows and that all of you will share in this celebration by offering your prayerful thoughts for **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ as they begin a united life together.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Eternal God, Creator of all things, Source of every good and perfect gift, you made us and you sustain us; we depend on you. We praise you for the gift of life; we thank you for making us able to think about life's meaning and purposes; and most especially do we glorify you for the love you have created in us. We also give you thanks, dear God, for calling **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ to be joined to one another in love.

May your holy spirit empower them to perform and keep the solemn covenant they are about to make, and keep them ever growing in love for one another and for you.

This we ask in the name of Jesus, the Christ who taught us the true meaning of love, **Amen.**

## **First READING (Name of Reader)**

### ***1 Corinthians 13:4-13***

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not

proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails . . . And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

## **Second READING (Name of Reader)**

### ***1 John 4:18***

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

## **Song/Hymn (By a friend)**

## **Third READING (Name of Reader)**

### ***Ruth Chapter 1:16-17***

And Ruth said, don't urge me to leave you, or to turn back from you. Where you go I go will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people your God my God Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.

## **CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE PRESENT**

Beloved in Christ, you have gathered here in the sight of God to witness the pledge of **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **Partner (B)**\_\_\_\_\_ to join together in Holy Union. They have been called to be symbols to one another of God's love for all people in Jesus Christ; and they now publicly proclaim their acceptance of that call. By your presence here, you accept responsibility for helping **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ and for encouraging them in their relationship with each other and in Jesus Christ. You are called to rejoice with them in their happiness, to help them when they have trouble, to remember them regularly in your prayers, and in all things to offer them your love and support as the Body of Christ.

"Do you understand this commitment to Couple?"  
**[If so say "We do."]**

## CHARGE TO THE COUPLE

**(Symbolically, tie a ribbon around one of each others wrist)**

**Partner A** and **Partner B**, the covenant you are about to make with one another is intended to join you together in a relationship so intimate and personal that it profoundly affects your whole being. It offers you the hope and the promise of a love that is true and mature. But to attain such a love, you will have to commit yourselves to each other freely, without reserve, and gladly for the sake of a richer and deeper love together.

To attain such a love you must each respect the freedom, individually and dignity of the other, not seeking to change or reshape the other into your own image and likeness, but rather each of you seeking to change and reshape your own self in order to give that self more completely to the other in authentic love. And to attain to such a love, you must each give yourself in faith and obedience to God who is the source and nurturer of all love.

"Do you understand this commitment to each other?"  
**[If so say "We do."]**

Then trusting in the Holy Spirit to sustain you, make the commitment to which God has called you.

## THE INTENTIONS

**Partner A** and **Partner B** you are here before us, your family and friends, to affirm your choice that you have made of each other as a life's mate. By standing here before us, you affirm that it is your intention to establish a home and create a new family on the foundation of your love. Out of a tangled world, you have been drawn together.

**First Partner.**

**Partner (A)** \_\_\_\_\_, are you willing to love **Partner (B)** \_\_\_\_\_ in his/her unique fullness and to take the risk and to accept the vulnerability of that love again and again and again? If so say "I will."  
**[Response: "I will."]**

**Second Partner**

**Partner (B)**\_\_\_\_\_ are you willing to love **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ in his/her unique fullness and to take the risk and to accept the vulnerability of that love again and again and again? If so say "I will."

**[Response: "I will."]**

## **THE VOWS**

**Minister:** To symbolize your joining of journeys, I ask you now to face one another and, joining your hands, to make your vows:"

**(Repeat after the minister).**

### **First Partner**

As God has made a covenant with us in Christ, so do I make this covenant with you. I, **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_, now take you **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_, to be my Life Partner, to laugh with you in joy, to grieve with you in sorrow, to grow with you in love, to be faithful to you alone, as long as we both shall live. And now, to you and to God, I make this solemn vow and promise.

### **Second Partner**

As God has made a covenant with us in Christ, so do I make this covenant with you. I, **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_, now take you **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_, to be my Life Partner, to laugh with you in joy, to grieve with you in sorrow, to grow with you in love, to be faithful to you alone, as long as we both shall live. And now, to you and to God, I make this solemn vow and promise.

**(Loosen and/or UNTIE THE RIBBON)**

## **EXCHANGE OF RINGS By Revd...**

What symbols do you bring as evidence of the vows you have just made?

**[Response: We bring these rings.]**

**[Ring bearer comes forward with rings]**

(The Minister takes the rings from the couple/witnesses and holding them for those gathered to see, says;)

These rings mark the beginning of a life journey together, a journey filled with wonder, surprise, laughter, tears, celebration, sorrow and joy.

These rings are circles, symbolic of that which is without beginning or end. May these rings be to each of you a sign and a seal of the promises you have made to each other today. Whenever you see this sign of your partner's love, know that love is precious and fragile, yet strong. Whenever you see these rings, remember all that you have pledged to each other today.

### **First Partner**

**Partner (A)**\_\_\_\_\_, you will now place this ring on **Partner (B)**\_\_\_\_\_ 's left hand and holding the ring there, please say after me:

With this ring, I offer you my love, I offer my strength, I offer my support, I offer my loyalty, I offer my faith, I offer my hope . . . that in all the changing circumstances of life, we shall always live together in love.

Receive and wear this ring as a sign of the covenant we have made here today in the sight of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

### **Second Partner**

**Partner (B)**\_\_\_\_\_ you will now place this ring on **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ 's left hand and holding the ring there, please say after me:

With this ring, I offer you my love, I offer my strength, I offer my support, I offer my loyalty, I offer my faith, I offer my hope . . . that in all the changing circumstances of life, we shall always live together in love.

Receive and wear this ring as a sign of the covenant we have made here today in the sight of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

### **COMMUNION**

It is appropriate that the first meal that **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ share as a couple united in holy union be the Eucharistic meal. May they and we be constantly fed by communion with Christ. **[Communion just for couple only.]**

## **Song/Hymn (Congregational Celebration Hymn)**

### **REFLECTION**

#### **PRAYER OF GRACE**

Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the gift of mutual love. We thank you for **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ and for the love and joy they find in each other. And we pray: strengthen them so that they may cherish more deeply the love they share and may be devoted to each other more completely. Grant them grace to support one another with patience, honesty, and understanding. And let your Holy Spirit direct us, that we may grow in grace and love through Christ. Amen.

#### **COMMISSIONING**

**(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_, you have made a covenant in that you have committed yourselves to love each other. Explore this love well with deep reverence. Explore it with joy and hope and perseverance. And as you journey together, may the companionship of love and peace be yours in the name of the Creator, the Christ and the Comforter. Amen.

Since you **(A)**\_\_\_\_\_ and **(B)**\_\_\_\_\_ have promised your love to each other before God and these witnesses, and have exchanged these solemn vows and these symbols of your love and commitment, In the name of God the father, the son and Holy Spirit and the powers vested in me, I now pronounce you LIFE PARTNERS.

"You may now express your love with the kiss of union."

#### **SIGNING THE CERTIFICATE**

**Songs/Hymn – The End**