

Wedding Resources

***A collection of poems, readings, prayers and blessings
compiled by Silvia Purdie
for conversations.net.nz***

May your life together
be full of love
and your love
be full of life

Wedding poems

Written by Silvia Purdie

What deeper question

What deeper question can there be
than this -
will you love me?
What deeper hunger can there be
than this -
to be welcomed and adored
not just now, but tomorrow.
Easy to love me now when I am gorgeous
but will you love me when I am grumpy
and a mess?
Might you maybe still love me
when I have forgotten your name?

What greater treasure can there be
than this -
a friend to stand beside me
to walk the valleys and the heights
to share the load and make me laugh.
What greater honour can there be
than this -
to give myself to another,
just an ordinary person,
only human, warts and all,
knowing you will let me down,
trusting you to pick me up.
So I choose you over everyone else,
for all the years ahead.

Here in this moment

Here in this moment
you are welcome, take a breath.
Here are flowers, here are rings,
all is planned, all is ready, everyone's here.
Come now to this holy place
for this sacred time.

Here in this moment
bring your beauty, bring your joy
for today is celebration,
gratitude, happiness.
But also in this moment
bring your fears and your failings;
every part of you is needed,
every corner of your heart.
Love has found you,
love has claimed you,
all you have and all you are.

Enter in this moment
into life done together.
Life as partnership, not perfection,
worked out between you every day.
So every moment, learn to listen,
choose to honour and adore.
Grow in patience, keep forgiving,
appreciate every good thing.

Now in this moment,
be here in this moment
held in love, shaped by love,
choosing to love.

There's a sparkle in the air

There's a sparkle in the air,
there's a whisper that we hear,
that no matter what is coming,
that whatever comes against us,
there's a power in this holding
of each other, you and me,
to sustain through many seasons.
This will always be the reason
that I place my hope in you
and I trust your faith in me,
for we know that together
we are more, we are better.
So as feelings come and go,
we will stand, we will know,
that we share a common story
you and I, me and you,
so in pain and in glory
you're for me and I'm for you.

Candle lighting *with family lighting side candles & the couple light central candle*

In the ancient story of creation in Genesis chapter 2, after God formed the first woman from part of the man's own body, the man responds with recognition and joy:

*"At last, here is one of my own kind—
Bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh.*

Then the writer comments:

*"That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united with his wife,
and they become one."*

Marriage is a coming together of two families, and the beginning of a new family. As a symbol of this I invite a representative from ..'s family, and from A.'s family, to light the side candles, and .. and .. will together light the central candle.

Prayers

Prayer of blessing

In the name of Christ Jesus, we claim the blessings of God for you, .. and .., as you begin your married life together.

Lord, build up this wonderful couple and establish them in all goodness.

Draw them close in deep affection.

Bless their work and their play.

Bless their home and their friendships.

We pray for children, for the great joy and love they will bring ...

for healthy bodies, for protection from harm, and for a caring community around them.

We pray for your sustaining power through all challenges they will face,

that this will be a family of grace and truth,

where forgiveness comes quickly after hurt,

where joy flows freely,

and where all is held by a gentle peace.

Amen.

Prayer of blessing

God of all the universe, thank you for this day.

Thank you for these two beautiful people, and for their love and marriage.

In all that they do may they know that they are special in your sight.

May love and wisdom flow through every word they say and every choice they make.

Lord, bless them with all they dream of. Keep them strong and well in body, mind and spirit. Bring them children. Bring them good friends.

Deepen their love through the years. May they grow tall in their community and win the respect of many. When storms crash against their door, Lord, be the strength that holds firm to what is most important. May they be a shelter and an inspiration to others when times get hard.

Bless this marriage and bring them deep contentment, and peace as they relax together at the end of every day.

In the mighty name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Blessings

You know who you are

You know who you are and to whom you belong.
You know where you come from,
solid ground beneath your feet.
You know who walks beside you,
and who watches from above.
So walk through the days,
even when you cannot see far ahead,
with a lightness in your step
and a confidence in your path,
for joy dances with you
and peace wraps you round.

Benediction

Blessings on you all as you celebrate tonight, and keep each other
company through the years
May the strength of God's love keep you and protect you
May the grace of God's power lighten your days
and may the peace of God be on you and around you always. Amen.

As you go:

Thank you for sharing in this beautiful occasion
and witnessing this important moment in the lives of these two families
and these two delightful people
Have an excellent time for the rest of the day
- a true celebration.
As you go, go enriched in your own relating with others
May you find greater patience and kindness in your loving
and know the deep joy that comes only
from giving ourselves for the good of others.
May you go surrounded with the grace and goodness of God
and blessed by peace.
Amen.

Go now and through all the years

Go now and through all the years,
in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
the almighty love of God our Father
and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Aaronic blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you
The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace.



A Kiwi Wedding Blessing

May your hearts grow together
like the branches of a kauri tree.
May your love be deep and wide as the ocean,
and your joy be as high as the mighty mountains.
May you be at home with each other wherever you are,
and forgive each other every day.
May success unfold in your work
like the tree fern opens to the sun,
and kindness blossom in your home.
May peace sing clear and sweet in your marriage, like a bellbird by a lake.
God bless you and keep you always.
Ma te Atua korua e manaaki.

May the blessing of the rain be on
you—
the soft sweet rain.
May it fall upon your spirit
so that all the little flowers may
spring up,
and shed their sweetness on the air.
May the blessing of the great rains be
on you,
may they beat upon your spirit
and wash it fair and clean,
and leave there many a shining pool
where the blue of heaven shines,
and sometimes a star.

May the good earth be soft under you
when you rest upon it,
and may it rest easy over you when,
at the last, you lay out under it,
And may it rest so lightly over you
that your soul may be out
from under it quickly,
and up, and off,
And be on its way to God.

Dear Lord,
Give me a few friends
who will love me for what I am,
and keep ever burning
before my vagrant steps
the kindly light of hope...
And though I come not within sight
of the castle of my dreams,
teach me to be thankful for life,
and for time's olden memories
that are good and sweet.
And may the evening's twilight
find me gentle still.

May your day be touched
by a bit of Irish luck,
brightened by a song in your heart,
and warmed by the smiles
of the people you love.

Irish blessings:

The guarding of the Father of life be on you,
The guarding of loving Christ be on you,
The guarding of Holy Spirit be on you
To aid you and enfold you
Each day and every night of your lives.

Irish Marriage Blessing

May God be with you and bless you.
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortunes
and rich in blessings.
May you know nothing but happiness
from this day forward.

An Old Irish Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind always be at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
and rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Bible readings

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (New International Version)

⁹ Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor:

¹⁰ If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.

But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Colossians 3:12-17

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a complaint against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and encourage one another with all wisdom. Through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, sing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The Way of Love (1 Corinthians 13:1-7, The Message version)

If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I'm nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate.

² If I speak God's Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, "Jump," and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing.

³⁻⁷ If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.

Love never gives up.

Love cares more for others than for self.

Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.

Love doesn't strut,

Doesn't have a swelled head,

Doesn't force itself on others,

Isn't always "me first,"

Doesn't fly off the handle,

Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,

Doesn't revel when others grovel,

Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,

Puts up with anything,

Trusts God always,

Always looks for the best,

Never looks back,

But keeps going to the end.

I Corinthians 13 (RSV)

Love is patient and kind;
love is not jealous or boastful;
it is not arrogant or rude.

Love does not insist on its own way;
it is not irritable or resentful;
it does not rejoice at wrong,
but rejoices in the right.

Love bears all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things.

Love never ends
So faith, hope, love abide, these three;
but the greatest of these is love.

Suggested Bible Readings

Ecclesiastes	3:1 - 8
OR Ruth	2:16 - 17
OR John	15:7 - 17
OR I John	4:7 - 11, 16

Song of Songs

The Bridegroom speaks first:

You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride,
you have ravished my heart with a glance
of your eyes,
with one jewel of your necklace.
How sweet is your love, my sister, my bride,
how much better is your love than wine,
and the fragrance of your oils than any spice.
Your lips distil nectar, my bride;
honey and milk are under your tongue;
the scent of your garments is like the scent
of Lebanon
Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;
for love is as strong as death.
Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.

And the Bride replies:

As an apple tree among the trees of the wood,
so is my beloved among young men.
With great delight I sat in his shadow
and his fruit was sweet to my taste.
He brought me to the banqueting house,
and his banner over me was love.
O that his left hand were under my head,
and that his right hand embraced me
I hear the voice of my beloved.
Behold he comes . . .
My beloved is mine and I am his.

Other Poems for weddings

As long as you love me

As long as you love me
I'll stay by your side
I'll be your companion
Your friend and your guide

As love as you love me
as long as you care
I'll do anything for you
I'll go anywhere

I'll bring you the sunshine
I'll comfort your fears
I'll gather up rainbows
to chase all your tears

As long as forever
My love will be true
For as long as you love me
I'll love only you.

With This Ring – Grace E. Easley

With this ring I offer you
The golden years that are to be,
And when it is no longer new,
You will still mean the world to me.
You'll be a part of every dream,
Each loving thought I ever own.....
Time cannot dull it's steady gleam,
And you will never walk alone.

With this ring I offer you
The hopes of which you are apart,
And pray that I will never do
A hurting thing to break your heart.
I offer you this life of mine,
Its sunshine and its sudden rain,
And may my lips be ever kind
Nor ever be the cause of pain.

With this ring I offer you
The world of beauty that I know,
For 'till you came I never knew
Such tender things could matter so.
No parting can there ever be,
For as the waves seek out the shore,
You share my very heart with me...
And we are one for evermore.

'I'm going to ask you some questions, just to make sure we are doing what we think we are doing today! The correct answer to each question is 'yes'!

Vows: (please reply 'yes')

Ruth and Stuart, are you here before God and in the presence of your family and friends, to give yourselves in marriage to each other, knowing that this is the right thing to be doing at this time in your lives?

Answer: YES!

Are you convinced that this person standing next to you is the right person for you, the one God has given you, to be your soul mate, to grow old with, to love through thick and thin, through whatever life has in store for you?

Answer: YES!

Do you commit yourselves to each other, wholeheartedly, holding nothing back, to be best friends and lovers, to guide and comfort each other through life's storms?

Answer: YES!

Will you put in the hard work marriage will require of you? Will you have the tough conversations as well as the fun times? Will you be honest and faithful, seeking the best for each other, your whole lives long?

Answer: YES!

Do you trust and rely on God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to be your Lord and guide through each step ahead?

Answer: YES!

"The Art Of Marriage"

by Wilferd A. Peterson

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens.

A good marriage must be created.

In the art of marriage the *little things* are the *big things*...

It is never being too old to hold hands.

It is remembering to say "I love you" at least once a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is at no time taking the other for granted;

the courtship should not end with the honeymoon,
it should continue through all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together facing the world.

It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.

It is doing things for each other, not in the attitude
of duty or sacrifice, but in the spirit of joy.

It is speaking words of appreciation

and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is not looking for perfection in each other.

It is cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding
and a sense of humour.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

It is finding room for the things of the spirit.

It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.

It is establishing a relationship in which independence is equal,
dependence is mutual and obligation is reciprocal.

It is not only marrying the right partner, it is *being* the right partner.

It is discovering together what marriage can be, at its best.

From "The Prophet" by Kahlil Gibran

Then Almitra spoke again and said
And what of marriage, master?
And he answered saying:

You were born to be together
and together you shall be for evermore.
You shall be together
when the white wings of death scatter your days.
Aye, you shall be together
even in the silent memory of God.

But let there be spaces in your togetherness
And let the winds of the heavens
dance between you.

Love one another
but make not a bond of love;
let it rather be a moving sea
between the shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup, but drink not from the one cup.
Give one another of your bread
but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous
but let each one of you be alone
even as the strings of a lute are alone
though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping;
for only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together, yet not too near together.
For the pillars of the temple stand apart
and the oak tree and the cypress
grow not in each other's shadow.

From George Eliot

What greater thing is there for two
human souls,
than to feel that they are joined together
to strengthen each other in all labour,
to minister to each other in all sorrow,
to share with each other in all gladness,
to be with each other in the silent
unspeakable memories?

Another, from George Eliot

Oh the comfort,
the inexpressible comfort,
of feeling safe with a person.

Having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure
words,
but pour them all out just as they are,
chaff and grain together,
and a faithful hand will take and sift them,
Keep what is worth keeping,
and with a breath of kindness blow the rest away.

C6. O Lord our God

(Tune: *How Great Thou Art* WOV 628)

O Lord our God, your love for us is greater
than human mind, or head, or heart can tell,
It's in that love, that we have found each other,
that we can share the joy we know so well.

Chorus:

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art,
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to thee,
How great thou art, how great thou art.

Throughout our lives your love
and care have nurtured,
preparing us for all of life to come,
And now, O God, in trust we stand before you,
and offer prayer that you will make us one.

With all our friends we now rejoice together,
We take our vows and pledge our lasting love,
To share our joys and bear each other's burdens,
To reassure by look, and touch, and word.

And so our God, with joyful expectation,
We sign our names and face our world to be,
Out in the world we'll live and work together,
Our delight to fill each other's need.

C3. Pray For Our Love
(Tune: *Morning has Broken* WOY 241)



Standing together facing the future,
Sure of each other, glad in our love.
Say hope is golden, say it is dream time,
Pray for our future, pray for our love.

Standing together, promising truly
We will be loyal, we understand.
Say love is joyous, say it's enchantment;
Pray for our promise, pray for our love.

Life is for sharing, love is for giving,
Now and forever, near and away.
Standing together, each will be strengthened,
Pray for our marriage, pray for our love.

United Church of Canada
Working Unit on Worship and Liturgy

C5. **Gracious Lord We Ask Your Blessing**
(Tune: *Beethoven's "Ode to Joy"* WOV 92)

Gracious Lord we ask your blessing,
On these two who stand today
As they make a new beginning,
In a fresh and loving way.

We, who love them bless and thank you
For the memories we hold dear,
For your love which planned their union.
For your Grace which brought them here.

May they have the benediction
Of your presence as they go,
Comforting, sustaining, giving
Quickened hearts that burn and glow;
And may gracious, deep devotion-
Fill their lives with fragrance rare
Telling needy hearts around them
Of a love which all can share.

May their hopes and dreams and longings
Be transformed their whole life through
Into memories they will treasure
Bound with love undimmed and true.
We would wish them all the gladness
That this life can hold in store
Faith and hope, and joyful service.
We would ask for them and more.

C2 **Amazing Grace**
[tune : Amazing Grace, WOV 56)



Amazing grace that seeks to bring
Two minds and hearts in one;
With thanks to God now let us sing
And pray that blessings come.

With faith and trust does each one give
A pledge that never dies;
Through times both good and bad to live
And build yet stronger ties.

There's greatness always to be found
in every marriage bond;
Where people to their vows stay bound
And to God's grace respond.

May happiness and peace and calm
Be theirs as time goes on;
Protect them Lord from every harm
And may their love grow strong.

United Church of Canada
Working Unit on Worship and Liturgy

Gracious Lord, we ask your blessing

Tune: "Ode to Joy"



1. Gracious Lord we ask your blessing
on these two who stand today
at the longed for, glad beginning
of a new, untrodden way.
We, who love them, bless and thank you
for the memories we hold dear,
for your love which planned their union,
for your grace which brought them here.
2. May their tender dreams and longings
be transformed through passing years,
into memories they will treasure
sharing happiness and tears.
Give them faith and hope and courage,
and a love kept strong and true,
through a life of glad fulfilment
walking hand in hand with you.

- Joan Suisted

Come to a Wedding

Can be sung to the hymn tune: 'Bunessan' (*Morning is broken*)

1. Come to a wedding, come to a blessing,
come on a day when happiness sings!
come rain or sun, come winter or summer,
celebrate love and all that it brings.

2. Thanks for the love that holds us together —
parent and child, and lover and friend:
thanks to the God whose love is our center,
source of compassion, knowing no end.

3. Love is the gift, and love is the giver,
love is the gold that makes the day shine,
love forgets self to care for the other,
love changes life from water to wine.

4. Come to this wedding, asking a blessing
for all the years that living will prove:
health of the body, health of the spirit —
*(name) and (name), we offer our love.

*or, "now to you both"

Shirley Erena Murray