



CHURCH OF NORWAY

The order for a
Wedding

General rules

1. Marriage takes place when a woman and a man, in the presence of witnesses and under legal authority (civil or ecclesiastical), declare vows to one another that they will live together in matrimony, and that this is declared to be lawful.
2. Marriage, according to church order, consists both civil and ecclesiastical elements. The marriage or wedding ceremony, which is legally binding, takes place before God. It is a liturgical ceremony. The individual elements of their service, such as music, readings and others, must be formulated accordingly.
3. The ceremony takes place in a church or in a chapel which, with approval from the Bishop, may be used for weddings.
4. Before the ceremony, the priest – or, in exceptional circumstances, someone else on his/her behalf – has a preparatory talk with the couple.
5. Hymns and song texts must be approved by the priest in advance, and all music by the cantor/organist.
6. The forthcoming wedding should be announced beforehand during a service, and the couple should be mentioned in the intercessions.
7. If the celebration of a Eucharistic Wedding service (Wedding Mass) is desired, the liturgy for a Wedding up to and including the last hymn should be followed. This will be the hymn before the Eucharist, followed by the Eucharistic liturgy in the Order of the Principal service, or one of the alternative Eucharistic liturgies in the Service book. Alternatively, the Order of the Principal service may be used. The Introductory rites of the Order of the Principal Service is then replaced by that of the Order for a Wedding. The Marriage Vows and the Giving of the Rings are placed where the Announcements normally are, and the Intercessions in the Order for a Wedding replace the intercessions in the Order of Worship.

One of the lessons must be from a Gospel.

During the Introduction, the celebration of the Wedding Mass is announced, for example thus:

L: Dear (NN) and (NN). You have come here to this church in order to be married. We are gathered here to rejoice with you. We will hear your vows to one another and pray for God's blessing for you and your home. You have also asked to take part in the Eucharist as you start your life together as husband and wife. We will therefore celebrate a Wedding Mass, so that those who wish may join you at the Lord's table on this day.

8. Couples who have been married by civil authority may apply for a service of prayer. See **Order of Prayer after a Civil Marriage**.
9. Bells may be rung for about 5 minutes before and after the ceremony.
10. The Liturgist wears a white stole.

The order for a **Wedding**

Participation of various kinds may be introduced into the ceremony. Wedding guests may participate in the liturgy, and additions to the ceremony may be made in the form of music or readings, if desired combined with the lighting of candles. Among the cultural elements there may be openings for elements underlining the ethnic background of the bride and groom. If one party has another denominational background than the Church of Norway, there may be openings for participation from this denomination, after approval from the Bishop. Participation from other denominations as well as cultural elements, these will be adopted according to the liturgical nature of the wedding ceremony and should not be contrary to the theological basis of the Church of Norway.

Elements added to the liturgy may be placed after part 9 **Intercessions**.

Where the names are mentioned, one can use the full name or the first name, depending on what is natural in the individual case. In the questions during part 7 **The Marriage Vows**, full names should be used.

The readings are taken from the *New Revised Standard Version* of the Bible (1989, 1998).

1. Prelude/Entrance

Organ music or other suitable music is performed as a prelude/entrance.

The bridal couple may process up the nave together to the chancel and may sit together.

If desired, the bridal couple, Maid of Honour and/or the Best Man, representative(s) of the families, liturgist and others process into the church.

Vocal or instrumental music may then be performed.

2. Introduction

Either *A*

L: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Or *B*

L: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Then the bridal couple and the assembly are welcomed with these or similar words:

L: Dear (NN) and (NN). You have come here to (name of church) in order to be married. We are gathered here to rejoice with you. We will hear your vows to one another and pray for God's blessing for you and your home.

Then the liturgist may say

Either *A*

L: How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.

For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light. *Psalm 36:7-9*

Or B

L: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever!

This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it. *Psalm 118:1, 24*

Or C

L: God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. *1 John 4:16b*

3. Hymn

4. Lesson

L: God has created us to live in harmony with him and with one another.
He has ordained that man and woman will be one, and he has confirmed this fellowship by his blessing.

Marriage is the generous gift of God.

To live together as man and woman is to live in trust and love, to share joy and sorrow and to faithfully stand by each other until life ends.

The word of God testifies that marriage is holy and inviolable.

It is written in the Book of Genesis:
So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' *Genesis 1:27-28a*

And our Lord Jesus Christ says:

Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female', and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate. *Matthew 19:4-6*

L: Let us hear more from the word of God.

2-4 of the following lessons or other suitable readings, at least one from each of the two Testaments.

The lessons may be read by wedding guests.

Those who will read, go up to the lectern together.

The bridal couple and assembly remain seated during the lessons.

The final lesson ends thus:

"This is the Word of the Lord."

Here may follow

5. Hymn

The Hymn may be replaced with appropriate vocal or instrumental music.

6. Homily

The Officiant gives a homily based on one of the lessons read under part 4 or on another appropriate text from the Bible.

7. The marriage vows

L: Come before the altar of the Lord, so that we may hear your vows to each other and pray for God's blessing on you and your home.

The bridal couple stand before the altar rail.

Then follows:

Either **A**

L: In the presence of God our Creator and before these witnesses, I ask you (the groom's full name without title): Will you take (the bride's full name without title) who stands beside you, as your wife?

Groom: I will.

L: Will you love and honour her and be faithful to her for better, for worse, until death do you part?

Groom: I will.

L: Likewise I ask you, (the bride's full name without title): Will you take (the groom's full name without title) who stands beside you as your husband?

Bride: I will.

Will you love and honour him and be faithful to him for better, for worse, until death do you part?

Bride: I will.

L: Then join your hands as a sign of this.

The bride and groom face each other and give each other the right hand.

The Officiant shall lay his/her hand on the joined hands of the bride and groom.

L: In the presence of God and before these witnesses you have promised each other that you will live together in matrimony, and have joined your hands as a sign of this. I therefore declare that you are lawfully husband and wife.

Or B

L: In the presence of God our Creator and before these witnesses, I ask you (the groom's full name without title): Will you take (the bride's full name without title) who stands beside you, as your wife?

Groom: I will.

L: Likewise I ask you, (bride's full name without title): Will you take (the groom's full name without title) who stands beside you as your husband?

Bride: I will.

L: Now repeat after me.

The groom and bride face each other. They join hands and remain so while they say their vows. The Officiant reads the vows part by part, then the groom and bride repeat in turn.

L: I take you (name) as my wife/husband.

G/B: I take you (name) as my wife/husband.

L: I will love and honour you

G/B: I will love and honour you

L: and faithfully stay with you for better, for worse

G/B: and faithfully stay with you for better, for worse

L: until death do us part.

G/B: until death do us part.

Then the vows are repeated by the other.

The Liturgist will lay his/her hand on the joined hands of the bride and groom.

L: In the presence of God and before these witnesses you have promised each other that you will live together in matrimony, and have joined your hands as a sign of this. I therefore declare that you are lawfully husband and wife.

Here may follow:

8. Giving of Rings

Either A

L: Now give each other the rings, which you will wear as a sign of your vows of faithfulness.

Each puts the ring on the other's finger.

Or B

L: Give each other the rings, which you will wear as a signs of your vows to each other. Repeat after me.

The Officiant reads the words, then the groom and bride repeat them in turn.

L: (NN), I give you this ring

G/B: (NN), I give you this ring

L: as a sign of my vows of love and faithfulness.

G/B: as a sign of my vows of love and faithfulness.

The ring is then put on the other's finger.

Then the giving is repeated in the same way by the other.

9. Intercessions

L: Let us pray.

The bride and groom kneel at the altar rail. With the laying on of hands, the Liturgist prays for the bridal couple one of the following prayers, ending with The Lord's Prayer.

If desired, guests may also participate, during the intercession, in the laying on of hands.

I.

Either **A**

L: Merciful God, you who have established marriage, and blessed man and woman, we pray: Let your blessing rest upon (NN) and (NN) who kneel in your presence. Fill them with your love and build their home in peace. Grant them your grace and strengthen them with your Spirit, so that in times of joy and sadness, they may place their trust in you, be faithful to each other and help each other towards eternal life.

Or **B**

L: Merciful God, we give you thanks for (NN) and (NN) and for their love for each other. Bless their life as husband and wife.

Help them keep the vows that they have made to one another, so that their marriage may be filled with trust, care and joy.

Grant them the ability and will to build their home in peace, so that it will be a place where [children may grow up in safety and] family and friends may find fellowship.

You are the way, the truth and the life; let them walk in your truth. You forgive and heal; help them forgive each other. You are the source of love; help them and all husbands and wives grow and mature in love.

II.

Free prayers may be added here and, if desired, combined with lighting of candles.

The assembly may also sing a hymn of prayer (while the bride and groom are kneeling).

III.

The Intercession always ends with the Lord's Prayer.

O: Let us together pray the Lord's Prayer.

Either

**A: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,**

your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen .

Or

A: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.

Or

A: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
your 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.

The bride and groom sit.

Here may follow

10. Music/Acts of Symbolism

Wedding guests and others may participate with music, readings or other cultural elements.

11. Hymn

12. The Blessing

Either **A**

L: facing the assembly:

Let us praise the Lord.

All stand.

A: God be praised. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

L: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. +

A: Amen. Amen. Amen.

Or **B**

L: facing the assembly:

Receive the Blessing.

All stand.

L: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. +

A: Amen.

13. Recessional

Organ music or other appropriate instrumental music may be performed. The bride and groom leave the church together.