

DAY OF PRAYER FOR MARRIAGE



Introduction On the initiative of Marriage Resource's Norfolk Branch, the observation of the Sunday in National Marriage Week (NMW) as a Day of Prayer for marriage began in 2000. It always falls on the second Sunday in February. This page of suggestions for the Day of Prayer is Marriage Resource's contribution to NMW. Single, widowed and divorced people in a church are usually glad that there should be an annual focus on marriage, especially if their needs are met at other times.

Opportunities for Prayer We suggest that marriage should be at least a focus for prayer in Church Services. For those who use written prayers we give a small selection below. They can of course be amended, shortened or lengthened as desired. For those who would like a wider range of ideas for prayer we encourage you to look in any weeks in the Prayer Diary on this website.

It would be even better if a special time for prayer for marriage could be arranged at some other time on the Day. Our Prayer Diary would also be useful as a source of topics for that. Such a time could be before, after or between services, or the focus of an after-church meeting for any age group.

Sermon It would be good if one or more sermons could expound aspects of the Bible's teaching about marriage. It could be an exposition of a passage (e.g. one or more parts of Genesis 1-3, Proverbs 31, Song of Solomon, Matthew 19, Ephesians 5) or a theme drawn from various passages, (e.g. Love, Sex and Marriage, Service Together, Faithfulness, Companionship, Parenthood, Money). Those who need an All-Age Talk outline will find it on this website.

A sermon might be even more helpful if accompanied by a short testimony from a couple who are willing to be honest about something they have learned or done which has enhanced their marriage.

Prayer for Couples Those churches which offer a prayer ministry for people in need either during or after their services, could invite couples to come together for confidential prayer. It would need to be made clear that this would not be for prayer about difficulties in the married relationship, otherwise couples would be reluctant to be seen to ask for prayer. But it could be prayer about some future event or challenge facing a couple, for example, or about their family, or for thanksgiving.

Suggested Prayers for Services for those who wish to use them:

For the Government: Almighty God, Who gives authority and guidance to the leaders of the nations, direct the Government of our land, we pray, that they will frame legislation to support marriage. Enable them also, from the riches You have given, to provide more finance for charities' programmes for marriage education, preparation, enhancement and support; that couples may be helped to find happiness and fulfilment in their marriage; through Jesus Christ Our Saviour. Amen.

For those in the Marriage Organisations: Lord God, Who prepares good works beforehand for Your servants, we praise You for calling some to minister to others who are married or preparing for marriage. Increase their vision, guide their endeavours, and make them channels of Your grace to believers and unbelievers alike. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

For Churches: We thank You, Heavenly Father, for churches which are responding to Your call to do more for marriages, both in their fellowship and in the wider community. Direct them to good resources, inspire them with Your will. Give them grace to abide in Your Son, and so encourage them with fruitfulness. We ask this for the sake of the married and for the glory of Your Holy Name. Amen.

For the Married: God our Creator, Whose plan for many is that they leave father and mother, be united as husband and wife, and become one flesh, pour out Your blessing on those whom You have called to marriage. Enable them to seek good preparation, guide them to those who can give ongoing help, and give them courage to seek support when difficulties come. Most of all give them grace to help each other enjoy their marriage day by day. We ask this through Him Who at a wedding changed water into wine, Jesus Our Lord. Amen.

For National Marriage Week: O God, Who has given marriage to the world, bless National Marriage Week, we pray. May all the events of the Week, national and local, both uphold marriage as You have revealed it to us, and be helpful to those who take part, enriching marriages now and in the future. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.