

A Blessing for Couples of the Same Gender



Hymn of Gathering:

(Celebrate with a hymn of love or your special song)

Welcome and Prayer

Celebrant: The grace and peace of our loving God be with us all

All: And with your spirit

Celebrant: Let us gather in prayer -

Gracious God, who has granted unto us all things necessary for salvation and who has commanded us to love one another and to forgive one another our failings, protect in your holiness, as Creator and lover of good, these your children, _____ and _____, who love each other with a love of the spirit, and who have gathered in your name to be blessed and consecrated by you.

Grant them unashamed faithfulness, true love, and the peace which passes all understanding. Keep them in your name; sanctify them in your truth so that living according to your commandments they may become your heirs, for you are the giver of all good things and yours is unending glory, Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

(you may choose appropriate readings)

Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-14, 17, 23-24

Abba God, you have searched me, and you know me
You know when I sit or stand, you know my thoughts from afar.
Whether I walk or rest, you are watching;
You are intimate with all of my ways.

A word is not even on my tongue, Abba God, before you know what it is.
You encircle me, before and behind, shielding me with your hand.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; a height my mind cannot reach!

You formed my inmost being, and knit me in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works -
my very self you know.
How precious to me are your designs, O God;
how impossible to number them!

Examine me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts -
see if there is misdeed within me, and guide me in the way that is eternal.

Gospel: Matthew 22: 36-40

"Teacher," they asked, "which commandment of the Law is the greatest?"
Jesus answered: "You must love the Most High God with all your heart,
with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

"That is the first and greatest commandment. The second is like it: 'You
must love your neighbor as yourself.' All the law and the Prophets hang on
these two commandments."

Blessing

Celebrant: Splendid to us and much sought after is the sweet smell of love
established in the time of our ancestors, guided by the voices of the
prophets, sanctified by the preaching of the apostles, and made alive by
the witness of the women and those unconfined by gender: because of all
the beautiful things of the earth, love is the most excellent.

Celebrant 2: Grant also to your children, _____ and _____, this
love and peace, as it was this love that gathered Mary and the holy
apostles in the upper room; this love that taught the early martyrs the
patience to bear their sufferings so that they might inherit the unfading
crown of eternal glory; this love that allowed the prophets to fulfill their
angelic service, and this love that was the forerunner of your firstborn,
Jesus, who lifted up all of creation to you.

Let us, as we witness this love between _____ and _____, glorify you God, who has called us together from different places to come and see the priceless treasury of love, which all the saints have desired and embraced as an unfading crown, and brought to you, God, as a worthy gift.

Celebrant 3: Yearning for this love, Abel brought to you, God, the firstborn of his lambs; yearning for this love, Enoch the scribe pleased you with his justice; yearning for this love, Abraham offered his only son to you, as a sacrifice.

Yearning for this same love, the wise Jacob inherited the blessing of Esau; love rescued Daniel from the lion's den; love caused Elijah to be taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire; and love saved Elishah on the mountain.

Yearning for this love, the three holy children were preserved from the fire in the furnace and offered a hymn of praise to you, God; yearning for this love Queen Esther, chose to defy death and walk into the court of King Ahasuerus to plead for the lives of the Jewish people; yearning for this love, the daring widow Judith used her beauty and charm to destroy the Assyrian general and save Israel from oppression.

Celebrant 4: Yearning for this love, we also remember the gender nonconformists of the Bible; those who served at the court of Esther; Hegai who helped Queen Esther get the attention of King Ahasuerus. The unnamed one who rescued Jeremiah from the well, and the Ethiopian who was the first Gentile to follow Christ.

It is through this love that we come to know you as the God of all. You have said, "ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened..." We know that anyone who asks, receives; they that seek, find; and those who knock, are welcomed into your house.

We, therefore, kind God, mindful of the holy commands of your awesome and glorious covenant, knock on earth: welcome us into your mansion, heaven. Grant unto us a share of faith and love with all your holy angels. Send to us, for us, the angel who guided Abraham; who was Isaac's captain; Jacob's companion; the waker of Lazarus, who came to the house of Zacchaeus the tax collector and said, "This day salvation has come to this house." For where there is love, hatred does not rule; demons have no

power, and there is no sin. For there are these three things - faith, hope, and the greatest of all, love.

Celebrant 5: Wonderful and much longed for, is the sweet smell of love. On earth it sows the seeds of piety and in heaven it gathers the sheaves of justice. Turn your holy ear to the prayer we now raise to thee and the love we now lift up between _____ and _____. Send your blessing and healing graces upon them, for you are the provider of all good things and to you is endless glory, Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Amen

Sign of Peace

Celebrant: The peace of our God be with us always, now and forever.
All: Amen

Celebrant: Let us offer each other some sign of peace

Prepared by Dwayne Fernandes, New Ways Ministry

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