**The Blessing of a Civil Marriage**

The blessing of a civil marriage may be included within a regular Service of Word and Sacrament on Sunday morning or may be conducted at another time, adapting only The Rite of Marriage.

Beside the necessary changes in the prayers, the following specific amendments are suggested.

In the PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE, the first words of introduction will exchange the word "renew" for the word "make" as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

have come to renew their covenant of marriage

with each other,

before God,

and in our presence.

At the conclusion of the PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE, the minister will say:

As \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have given themselves to each other,

we seek God's blessing on their marriage.

The LEGAL QUESTIONS will not be asked.

The AFFIRMATION OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS may be included.

In the EXCHANGE OF VOWS the words will be:

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_have taken you, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

to be my *husband/wife/spouse;*

to have and to hold,

for better for worse,

for richer, for poorer,

in sickness and in health,

to love and to cherish

as long as we live.

This is my solemn vow.

The EXCHANGE OF RINGS may be replaced by the following:

*Each in turn will hold the ring hand of the other and will say:*

I have given you this ring

as a sign of the covenant we have made

and of God's steadfast love.

The BLESSING continues to be the high point of the service.

The DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE will be omitted