

## Marriage Solemnization in Christian Community Churches of Australia (CCCAust)

All CCCAust marriage celebrants are representatives of our churches. As local church representatives CCCAust marriage celebrants must solemnize all marriages under the guidance of the church leadership as well as in accordance with the Australian Marriage Act and the CCCAust Marriage Rites detailed below. The CCCAust Marriage Rites represent the minimum requirements for solemnizing a marriage under the rites of the Christian Community Churches of Australia. Individual church elderships/leaderships may require celebrants to include additional elements.

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### CCCAust MARRIAGE RITES

Where deemed necessary by the celebrant and the elders/leaders of the church the following is to be conducted prior to the wedding ceremony:

- **PRE-MARRIAGE EDUCATION:** The couple is to receive teaching on Christian Marriage and should receive appropriate counsel in subjects such as: interpersonal relationships, communication and conflict resolution, sexuality, family, and financial management.

The following are essential components for the wedding ceremony:

- **MARRIAGE EXPLANATION:** An opening statement which explains the nature and purpose of Christian marriage. The Marriage explanation is to include the words:  
“**Marriage is the God ordained *covenantal* union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life.**” (Inclusion of the word ‘covenantal’ is strongly encouraged but optional.)
- **BIBLE READING:** Suitably selected for each couple.
- **VOWS:** Includes the following:
  1. **Witnesses:** Commence with or include the words “In the presence of God and these witnesses...” or similar.
  2. **Questions or Statements of Intent:** Include the words “Do you GROOM take BRIDE to be your lawful wedded wife” and “Do you BRIDE take GROOM to be your lawful wedded husband?” or “I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, GROOM, take you, BRIDE, to be my lawful wedded wife” and “I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, BRIDE, take you, GROOM, to be my lawful wedded husband.” or similar. From the above lawful or wedded may be omitted, but not both.
  3. **Covenantal Promises:** The couple makes personal covenantal promises to each other. These promises may be tailored to include personal components. These should be vetted and guided by the Celebrant and must include aspects of commitment, love, and faithfulness to each other. Commence with or include “In the presence of God, family and friends, I promise...” or similar.
- **SYMBOLS/TOKENS:** Usually rings are exchanged.
- **PRAYER** for or **BLESSING** upon the couple.
- **DECLARATION:** A declaration that the man and woman are married firstly according to God’s authority and secondly according to the laws of the Australian Commonwealth.
- **SIGNING:** The official wedding documents are signed by the couple, two legal witnesses, and the authorised celebrant.
- **PRESENTATION:** The couple is presented to the audience by name.

The inclusion of the following components in the wedding ceremony is strongly encouraged:

- **ENDORSEMENT:** A public opportunity for the families to endorse, support and give their blessing to the marriage OR a call for possible objections as a way of confirming the legitimacy of the marriage.
- **TALK:** A message based on the Bible to encourage the couple and the audience.