

A Celebration of Holy Union

Lee Alison Crawford
and
Anne Clarke Brown

Church of Our Saviour
Killington, Vermont
25 August 2000

The Holy Eucharist A Celebration of Commitment to a Life Together

Prelude

Processional Hymn 603 “When Christ was lifted from the earth”

St. Botolph

Opening Acclamation

Presider Blessed be the one, holy and living God.

People Glory to God for ever and ever.

Presider

God calls all human beings to intimacy, to fruitfulness, and to mutual love. We respond to God’s calling in many kinds of life-giving relationships, and the Holy Spirit sustains and strengthens us in our responses. In Anne and Lee, the community of faith discerns a relationship that is both Spirit-gifted, and life-giving.

We see two people living and sustained by the grace of God. Their life together is marked by forgiveness, strength and hope. Anne and Lee therefore offer us a sign of the community that the whole church is called to be, a community born of faith in God and nourished by the Holy Spirit.

Declaration of Intention

The Presider addresses each partner

Anne/Lee, have you made a free decision, and do you have the firm intention to enter into this commitment with Lee/Anne, who stands here before you, having promised yourself to no other?

Anne/Lee I have, and I do.

Lee/Anne, will you share your love and your life, your wholeness and your brokenness, your joys and your sorrows, your health and your sickness, your riches and your poverty, your success and your failure?

Lee/Anne I will.

The Presider addresses the congregation

Will you, the families, friends and faith communities of Lee and Anne, do all in your power to support and strengthen them in the days ahead?

People We will.

Presider The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Presider Let us pray.

O God our Maker and Lover of the heavens and the earth, you have taught us to love each other as Christ loved us, to bear each other's burdens, and to share each other's strengths. Look with favor on Lee and Anne, whom you have brought together in love. Grant them sincere love and unfailing strength. Protect them in their life and work, and lead them, with us and all creation, into your reign of justice and peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Liturgy of the Word

Hebrew Scripture: Isaiah 55:12–56:1

The Psalm: 139:1-14

The Second Lesson: I John 4:7-8, 11-12

Gradual Hymn 554 "Tis the gift to be simple" (sing twice)

Simple Gifts

Gospel: John 15:9-17

Sermon: The Rev'd Canon V. Gene Robinson

The Union

The Couple stand facing one another before the Presider

Presider Lee and Anne, you are about to make a solemn promise. Do you believe God has called you to live together in love?

Lee and Anne We do believe.

Presider Will you continue to be loyal to each other?

Lee and Anne We will, with God's help.

Presider Will you, under God, recognize each other's freedom to grow as individuals and allow each other time and space to do so?

Lee and Anne We will, with God's help.

Presider Will you do in all your power to make your life together a witness to the love of God in the world?

Lee and Anne We will, with God's help.

Presider Will you in your life together promise to proclaim the good news of God in Christ; to join in the breaking of bread and the prayers; to seek and serve Christ, loving your neighbor as yourself; and to respect the dignity of every human being?

Lee and Anne We will, with God's help.

The Vows

The Presider invites each of the Couple to say:

Anne/Lee in the midst of our people and with the help of God, I commit myself to you again today. I love you. I trust you. I delight in you. I will bear your burdens. I will share your joys and I will go with you wherever God calls us.

Blessing of the Rings

The Couple join hands on which their rings are worn.

Presider, May God bless these rings already worn down by ten years of shared work, projects, play, quiet, companionship and joy. May they be the outward sign of God's indwelling grace in your love.

People Blessed be God who appears to us in their love.

The Presider, the Couple and two Witnesses sign the Parish Register.

Presider Through their exchange of vows to love and support one another, Anne and Lee are now, in the eyes of the State of Vermont, formally joined as partners in civil union.

Prayers of the People

Presider Seeing how greatly God has loved us, let us lift up before God this couple, this community of faith, and the whole world, saying, *Hear our prayer.*

The People stand, and an appointed person bids the people to pray:

Leader I ask your prayers for the earth and all of God's creation: for the rivers and oceans, for the forests and fields, for the mountains and meadows, and for all creatures who live in them. Pray for our planet.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers for the Christian community everywhere: for our life and ministry, for our bishop Mary Adelia, and for all leaders, that we may be the risen Body of Christ in the world. Pray for the Church.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers for all human communities. Pray for justice, peace, and reconciliation throughout the world.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers for our country, for those who govern, and for all in authority. Pray for justice and peace in our own land.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers for the concerns of our communities, for the people of this state, and for the yearnings of our hearts which we now present before God. Pray for our communities.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers for those we love easily and for those with whom we struggle, for those different from us and for those familiar to us, that we might be instruments of God's peace in all our relationships.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers for those who suffer: pray for the sick, those with HIV/AIDS, the poor, the destitute, the unemployed, the homeless, the lonely, the bereaved, those who struggle with addiction, those with mental illness, the victims of violence, hatred and intolerance. Pray for those who bear the pain of the world.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers for Anne and Lee: for their life together, that they may be filled with God's blessing and grow in love for each other with faithfulness throughout their life together. Pray for Anne and Lee.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers for Lee and Anne: for the courage to recognize and forgive each other's faults as they bear each other's burdens. Pray for Lee and Anne.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,

People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers of gratitude for the courage of all those, known and unknown, who have made this celebration possible.

The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,
People Hear our prayer.

Leader I ask your prayers of gratitude for all those who are bound to us in love: for our families, friends, neighbors, for all who have gone before us in the faith and those whose faith is known to God alone. Pray for those we love, the living and the dead.
The people pray silently or aloud.

Leader O God, Source of all life,
People Hear our prayer.

The Presider says the concluding collect:

Creator of all, you make us in your image and likeness and fill us with everlasting life. You teach your people to be united by the law of love. Hear the prayers of your people and grant to Anne and Lee grace to love each other in joy all the days of their lives. We ask this through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit, to whom, with you, one God, be praised for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Blessing on the couple

The Couple face the Presider, who wraps her stole around their joined hands and says

May God, the holy and undivided Trinity, the three in one and one in three, the beginning and the end, bless and keep you as you celebrate ten years of shared life; may God shed every blessing and joy on you as you recommit to a life partnership joined together by the vows you have just made; in the name of God, who creates, redeems and sanctifies us. Amen.

The Peace

Presider God's peace be always with you.
People And also with you.

The Holy Communion

The Celebrant says

Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labor to God.

Offertory Anthem

“Ubi Caritas”
The Choir

Maurice Duruflé

The People stand for the Offertory Hymn as the gifts are brought forward

Offertory Hymn 304

“I come with Joy”

St. Columba

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People We lift them to the Lord.
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Celebrant

All thanks and praise
are yours at all times and in all places,
our true and loving God;
through Jesus Christ, your eternal Word,
the Wisdom from on high by whom you created all things.
You laid the foundations of the world
and enclosed the sea when it burst out from the womb;
You brought forth all creatures of the earth
and gave breath to humankind.

Wondrous are you, Holy One of Blessing,
all you create is a sign of hope for our journey;
and so as the morning stars sing your praises
we join the heavenly beings and all creation
as we shout with joy:

Celebrant and People
(Sanctus S-125)

The Celebrant continues

Glory and honor are yours, Creator of all,
your Word has never been silent;
you called a people to yourself, as a light to the nations,
you delivered them from bondage
and led them to a land of promise.
Of your grace, you gave Jesus
to be human, to share our life,
to proclaim the coming of your holy reign
and give himself for us, a fragrant offering.

Through Jesus Christ our Redeemer,
you have freed us from sin,
brought us into your life,
reconciled us to you,
and restored us to the glory you intend for us.

We thank you that on the night before he died for us
Jesus took bread,
and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it,
gave it to his friends and said:
“Take, eat, this is my Body, broken for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper, Jesus took the cup of wine,
said the blessing, gave it to his friends and said:
“Drink this, all of you:

this cup is the new Covenant in my Blood,
poured out for you and for all
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.”

And so, remembering all that was done for us:
the cross, the tomb, the resurrection and ascension,
longing for Christ’s coming in glory,
and presenting to you these gifts
your earth has formed and human hands have made,
we acclaim you, O Christ:

Celebrant and People

Dying, you destroyed our death.

Rising, you restored our life.

Christ Jesus, come in glory!

The Celebrant continues

Send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these gifts of bread and wine
that they may be to us
the Body and Blood of your Christ.

Grant that we, burning with your Spirit's power,
may be a people of hope, justice and love.

Giver of Life, draw us together in the Body of Christ,
and in the fullness of time gather us
with the blessed Virgin Mary and all your people
into the joy of our true eternal home.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
we worship you our God and Creator
in voices of unending praise.

Celebrant and People

Blessed are you now and for ever. AMEN.

Celebrant

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

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.
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.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

Then may be said the following

Fraction Anthem

Celebrant We break this bread
to share in the Body of Christ.
People We who are many are one body,
for we all share in the one bread.
Celebrant The gifts of God for the people of God.

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation
The Gifts of God for the People of God.

All baptized persons are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper.

During Communion, the congregation is invited to sing the following hymns:

Hymn 487	“Come my Way”	<i>The Call</i>
Hymn 382	“King of Glory”	<i>General Seminary</i>

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and people

God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation: you have united Anne and Lee together in a Holy Union as you have united us with Christ and one another; and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth.
Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

Blessing

The Celebrant says

The Wisdom of God,
the Love of God,
and the Grace of God
strengthen you
to be Christ's hands and heart in this world,
in the name of the Holy Trinity.

Recessional Hymn 347	“Go forth for God”	<i>Litton</i>
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The Dismissal

Deacon Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Before leaving today, we hope everyone will sign our certificate.

It may be found on a table in the Parish Hall.

Participants in the Service

Celebrant	Mary Adelia McLeod, Bishop of Vermont
Presider	Jane N. Garrett, Leeds, Massachusetts
Preacher	V. Gene Robinson, Canon to the Ordinary Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire
Gospeller	Diane Root, Canon Missioner Three Rivers Regional Ministry Killington and Bethel, Vermont
Lector	Eric Hawke Church of Our Saviour, Killington
Intercessor	Genie Rayner Church of Our Saviour, Killington
Crucifer	Brett Murphy Saint Mary's Parish, Northfield
Organist	Timothy Owings Church of Our Saviour, Killington
Choir Director	Scott Neal Saint Mary's Parish, Northfield
Choir	The Choir of Saint Mary's Parish Northfield
Oblation Bearers	Leigh and Michael Sneed Reston, Virginia
Chalice Bearers	Anne Clarke Brown Lee Alison Crawford

Anne and Lee thank our families, friends and faith communities for walking with us and celebrating this day with us. Your support and love matter very much.

Many thanks to everyone who helped prepare for today: the angels who mowed, cleaned, donated food and drink, cooked and helped set up.

Notes on the Service: The Eucharistic Prayer is Prayer 3 from *Enriching Our Worship*. Portions of the celebration of commitment and the Prayers of the People are from the "Report of the Second Consultation of Episcopalians on Same-Sex Unions." The Consultation took place in July 1996, and the report was made available to the General Convention meeting in Philadelphia in 1997.