



*Wedding Liturgy for Eric and Liv Rae Williams Leeds
Dunluce Castle, Portrush, Northern Ireland
Sept. 3, 2025*

Welcome

Welcome to the marriage ceremony of Liv and Eric. My name is Chris Agnew, I'm the Pastor of Coastal Church, based here in beautiful Portrush, Northern Ireland and it's a joy to welcome you to our wonderful part of the world.

Today is an exciting day. We want to honour God and one another by blessing your marriage in his sight. Today is a day of celebration, and the beginning of a lifelong journey for Liv and Eric. We have the pleasure of being here to witness Eric and Liv stepping into marriage together, in the presence of God who we believe is here now by his Holy Spirit, binding them and blessing them as they walk into married life.

Prayer

Father, thank you that you are the origin and centre of love. We recognise that marriage was your idea, so we thank you for your gift, and especially today, we thank you for the gift that Liv and Eric are to each other, to their families, and all their friends who celebrate with them around the world.

We know that you are love and in your grace you invite us to receive and share in that love. We recognise the love that Eric and Liv have for each other and together we want to celebrate the goodness that it. So we welcome your spirit of joy and love among us. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Short Reflection

Before Eric and Liv take their vows, I just want to briefly share a couple of thoughts on marriage.

In a few moments, you will make vows, commitments, declarations over the shape of your life to come. You will have the joy of seeing these promises you make to each other come alive every single day. The wonder of marriage is that you get to take all of your lives up to this point, learn to be fully yourself and find your story interwoven with the story of the one you love, or as the Irish poet John O'Donohue puts it, "the one who is the horizon of your love and longing."

Jesus speaks of the mystery of marriage in Matthew 19 by saying "so they are no longer two but one flesh." Two lives, two stories, coming together as equal partners in unity, woven together as one.

Liv, there's going to be moments when you're going to take the lead - your giftings will shine forth and be radiant in your marriage. Eric, in these moments you will have the honour of following your wife as she leads the team.

Eric, there's going to be moments when you're going to take the lead - your giftings will need you to step in and walk forward. Liv, in these moments you'll have the honour of following your husband as he in that moment leads the team.

Paul spells this out in Ephesians as you have the opportunity to submit to one another, you call out the best in one another,

celebrate one another, you forgive one another. Work hard at establishing yourselves as a team, a one-fleshed team. Listen intently, communicate humbly, be present.

There's a myth that flies around saying that marriage is like settling down, or letting yourself be tied down, restricted, losing your freedom. But freedom is not found in the absence of commitments but is found in choosing the best commitments. These vows and promises free you to commit to one another and in doing so, exist in complete freedom within that framework. You can attend to the dreams God has birthed in your hearts and pursue them with the one you love. There is nothing better than that.

A 50 Year Conversation

Marriage is difficult to describe easily, but the best way I've heard it described is that marriage is like a 50-year-long conversation; it's a chat that goes on for decades.

And this is going to be a good conversation.

Where you'll talk about anything and everything. A conversation full of laughter, of prayer and banter. A conversation peppered with the voices of family and friends who you cherish. A conversation of sitting side by side in silence, a conversation where hopes are spoken out and memories are celebrated.

There will be a moment towards the end of the conversation when you will look back after the ups and downs and you will see that it's accurate to say that you've really had five or six different marriages, that you were married to five or six different people who happened to inhabit, over the years, the same body.

Yet through it all, may the defining feature of this conversation be an awareness of the presence of Jesus and His invitation to practice sacrificial love.

There is an invitation for you to leap into the absurd for the other, to make sacrifices that make no earthly sense.

To love like Jesus loves us.

We applaud people for having a fiftieth wedding anniversary because we know that it's an achievement, even though to them it simply feels like a delight.

I for one, am excited to hear how your conversation goes. I hope it is a delight. As each year turns into another, may this conversation only grow richer and deeper. May your conversation be long, full of love. May it be full of moments of simply celebrating Jesus' goodness and mercy as it follows you every single day.

And well down the line as the conversation grows quieter and softer may you both on a winter's evening, side by side, lean your heads together, stare into the fire and keep the same old chat going.

Eric and Liv, we're delighted for you.

May Christ as a light, illuminate your lives and guide you. May Christ as a shield, overshadow and protect you.

Christ under you, Christ over you, Christ beside you on your left and on your right.

May Christ dwell richly within and around you, gentle and meek, yet all powerful.

And may the peace of Christ fill every word of this conversation.

Liv and Eric, May the the Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.

Amen.

Chris Agnew is a pastor and physician serving at Coastal Church in Portrush, Northern Ireland. Commissioned by the Methodist Church in Ireland in 2022, he and his wife, Hannah, established Coastal as a community centered on faith, family, and local mission. Before planting the church, Agnew worked in youth ministry, overseas mission, and medical practice. He and Hannah have two children.