

Welcome

Option #1

We are gathered here today to take part in the most time honored celebration of the human family, uniting a man and a woman in marriage. _____ and _____ have come to witness before us, telling of their love for each other. We remember theirs is a love whose source is the affection of those who loved them into being.

Option #2

We are gathered here today to celebrate one of life's greatest moments, and to cherish the words which shall unite _____ and _____ in marriage.

Option #3

We are gathered here today to celebrate one of life's greatest moments, the joining of two hearts. In this ceremony today we will witness the joining of _____ and _____ in marriage.

Option #4

We are gathered here today to celebrate one of life's greatest moments, to give recognition to the worth and beauty of love, and to cherish the words which shall unite _____ and _____ in marriage.

Openings

Option #1

You have known each other from the first glance of acquaintance to this point of commitment. At some point, you decided to marry. From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way.

All those conversations were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks – all those sentences that began with “When we’re married” and continued with “I will and you will and we will” – those late night talks that included “someday” and “somehow” and “maybe” - and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart.

All those common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding. The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, “you know all those things we’ve promised and hoped and dreamed – well, I meant it all, every word.”

Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another – acquaintance, friend, companion, and even teacher. Now you shall say a few words that take you across the threshold of life, and things will never be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this is my husband, this is my wife. (this is my life partner)

Option #2

Marriage is the promise between two people who love each other, and who trust in that love, who honor one another as individuals, and who wish to spend the rest of their lives together.

This ceremony will not create a relationship that does not already exist between you. It is a symbol of how far you have come in the past ____ years. It is a symbol of the promises you will make to each other to continue growing stronger as individuals and as partners, no matter what challenges or success you encounter together in the years before you.

Today, your lives, which began on separate paths, will be joined as one.

Option #3

Today we have come together to witness the joining of these two lives. For them, out of the routine of ordinary life, the extraordinary has happened. They met each other, fell in love and are finalizing it with their wedding today.

Option #4

_____ and _____, in the days ahead of you, there will be times of difficulty and conflict. When you find yourselves in these situations, I ask you to reflect on this marriage advice.

Let your love be stronger than your anger.

Learn the wisdom of compromise, for it is better to bend than to break.

Look for the best in your beloved rather than the worst.

Confide in your partner and ask for help when you need it.

Remember that true friendship is the basis for any lasting relationship.

Give your spouse the same courtesies and kindnesses you bestow on your friends.

Say "I love you" every day.

Readings

Option #1

The little things are the big things. It is never being too old to hold hands, It is remembering to say “I love you” at least once a day. It is never going to bed angry. It is never taking the other for granted; the courtship should not end with the honeymoon, it should continue through all years. It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together facing the world. It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family. It is doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice, but in the spirit of joy. It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways. It is not expecting the husband to wear a halo or the wife to have wings of an angel.

It is not looking for perfection in each other. It is cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding and a sense of humor. It is having the capacity to forgive and forget. It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow. It is finding room for the things of spirit. It is a common search for the good and the beautiful. It is establishing a relationship in which the independence is equal, dependence is mutual and the obligation is reciprocal. It is not marrying the right partner, it is being the right partner.

Option #2

Today is the day you will always remember – the greatest in anyone’s life. You’ll start off the day just two people in love and end it as husband and wife. It’s a brand new beginning, the start of a journey with moments to cherish and treasure. And although there’ll be times you both disagree, these will surely be outweighed by pleasure.

You’ll have heard many words of advice in the past, when the secrets of marriage were spoken, but now you know that the answers lie hidden inside, where the bond of true love lies unbroken. So live happy forever as lovers and friends, it’s the dawn of a new life for you, as you stand there together with love in your eyes from the moment you whisper, “I do”. And with luck, all your hopes, and your dreams can be real, may success find its way to your hearts. Tomorrow can bring you the greatest joys, but today is the day it all starts.

Declaration of Intent and Vows

Option #1

“ _____, will you take _____ to be your wife/husband/partner/spouse? Do you commit yourself to her/his happiness and self-fulfillment as a person? Do you promise to love, honor, and trust her/him in sickness and in health, in adversity and prosperity, and to be true and loyal to her/him so long as you both shall live?”

Wife/Husband/Partner/Spouse – “I do”

I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/partner/spouse).

(Repeated by both parties)

Option #2

I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/partner/spouse). _____, I promise to be faithful, supportive, and loyal and to give you my companionship and love throughout all the changes of our life. I vow to bring you happiness, and I will treasure you as my companion. I will celebrate the joys of life with you. I promise to support your dreams, and walk beside you offering courage and strength through all endeavors. From this day forward, I will be proud to be your wife/husband/partner/spouse and your best friend.

(Repeated by both parties)

Option #3

I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/partner/spouse). I choose you, _____, to be my (wife/husband/partner/spouse), as my friend and love. On this day I affirm the relationship we have enjoyed, looking to the future and to keep and strengthen it. I will be yours in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, in failure and in triumph. Together, we will dream, and live as one while respecting one another, we will stumble but restore each other, we will share all things. I will cherish, comfort, and encourage you, be open with you, and stay with you as long as I shall live.

(Repeated by both parties)

Option #4

I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/partner/spouse) from this day forward, to have and to hold as equal partner in my life, to whom I give my deepest love and devotion. I humbly open my heart to you as a sanctuary of warmth and peace, where you may come and find a refuge of love and strength. I will love you enough to risk being hurt, trust you when I don't understand, weep with you in heartache, and celebrate life with you in joy. I will receive you as my equal throughout all of our days.

(Repeated by both parties)

Option #5

I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/partner/spouse), my partner in life and my one true love. I will cherish our friendship and love you today, tomorrow and forever. I will trust and honor you. I will laugh with you and cry with you. Through the best and the worst, through the difficult and the easy. Whatever may come I will always be there. As I have given you my hand to hold, so I give you my life to keep.

(Repeated by both parties)

Option #6

_____, do you take _____ to be your husband/wife/partner/spouse? (I do)

Do you promise to love, honor, cherish and protect him/her, forsaking all others and holding only unto him/her forevermore? (I do)

I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/partner/spouse)

(Repeated by both parties)

Option #7

_____ and _____, I remind you that marriage is a precious gift; a lifelong dedication to love and a daily challenge to love one another more fully and more freely.

With this understanding do you _____, take _____ to be your beloved husband/wife/partner/spouse?

Do you promise to be a tender, faithful husband/wife/partner/spouse?

Do you promise to love and cherish her/him, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer, for better for worse, and keep yourself only unto her/him? (I do)

Would you please face each other, join hands and repeat after me.

I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/partner/spouse).

(Repeated by both parties)

Rings

Option #1

_____ and _____ have chosen rings as outward symbols of the commitment they make today.

The wedding ring is a symbol of unity, a circle unbroken, without beginning or end. And today _____ and _____ give and receive these rings as demonstrations of their vows to make their lives one, to work at all times to create a life that is whole and unbroken, and to love each other without end.

_____, take the ring which you have selected, place it on the third finger of _____'s left hand, and say to her/him these words.

“This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my desire that you be my wife/husband/partner/spouse from this day forward.” (slips ring on)

(Repeat opposite her/him)

Let these rings serve not as locks binding you together, but as keys, unlocking the secrets of your hearts for each other to know, and thus bringing you closer together forever.

Option #2

_____, take the ring and as you place it on the third finger of _____'s left hand, please state your pledge to her/him repeating these words:

“I begin my life with you today knowing that we have developed a trust and commitment that is strong enough to last through good times and bad. With this ring, I offer you my hand, my heart, and my soul as I know they will be safe with you.” (slips ring on)

(Repeat opposite bride/groom)

Option #3

Officiant: May I have the rings please? _____, Please place this ring on her/his third finger of the left hand and repeat after me:

“ _____, I give you this ring, as a daily reminder of my love for you.” (slips ring on)

(Repeat opposite bride/groom)

Option #4

The ring is a symbol of the unbroken circle of love. Love, freely given has no beginning and no end, no giver and no receiver for each is the giver and each is the receiver. May these rings always remind you of the vows you have taken.

Please place this ring on her/his third finger of the left hand and repeat after me:

I _____, take thee _____, to be my husband/wife/partner/spouse. To have and to hold, in sickness and in health, for richer or for poorer, in joy and sorrow, and I promise my love to you. And with this ring, I take you as my husband/wife/partner/spouse, for as long as we both shall live. (slips ring on)

(Repeat with opposite husband/wife)

Option #5

Wedding rings are an unbroken circle of love, signifying to all the union of this couple in marriage.

_____, This ring is my sacred gift, with my promise that I will always love you, cherish you and honor you all the days of my life. And with this ring, I thee wed. (slips ring on)

(Repeat opposite Groom/Bride)

Alternative Ceremonies

1. Love/Wine Box

At this time I'd like to draw your attention to the box beside _____ and _____. They have written letters to each other expressing their feelings as they begin their marriage. They have detailed why they fell in love and what they truly admire about the other person.

These letters were sealed before they could be read. We will include these letters in the box along with a bottle of wine and two wine glasses. Together we will seal the box, and on the happy occasion of their anniversary, they will open the box, and read the letters.

By reading these love letters, you will be given an opportunity to reflect upon the reasons that you fell in love with each other.

(love letter carriers) _____ & _____ will you please bring up the letters?

_____ and _____, I now ask you to place the letters in the box and seal it shut.

2. Sand Ceremony #1

We now celebrate _____ and _____'s union with a symbolic sand ceremony. First, we will pour sand from this beautiful beach where _____ and _____ stand today as they commit their lives to each other, representing the strong foundation of their relationship. That foundation includes their families, their upbringing, and all the important steps on their journeys that led them to be who they are today. This foundation will support them in their love as they grow and change together. *(If you are not having a beach wedding, the foundation sand can be from your hometown, or just a neutral white sand.)*

_____ and _____, today you are making a lasting commitment to share the rest of your lives with each other. That commitment is symbolized through the pouring of these two individual containers of sand; one that represents _____ *(who now pours in some of his/her sand)* and the other that represents _____, *(who pours some of his/her sand on top)*.

Each of you comes to this relationship with unique strengths, vulnerabilities, and histories. As individuals, you are beautiful people all on your own. Yet when the two of you are blended together, you form something even more beautiful. Those strengths can blossom, those vulnerabilities can be cared for, and those people can soar.

As the two containers of sand are poured into the vase, (both _____ & _____ simultaneously pour their remaining sand in the central vase) the separate colours of sand now blend into a new colour.

You have now blended your families into a new family, as you start your journey in marriage, loving and strong as husband and wife, as inseparable as these grains of sand.

Sand Ceremony Wording #2

Love is a force more formidable than any other. It cannot be seen or measured, yet it is powerful enough to transform you in a moment, and offer you more joy than any material possession ever could. But although this love joins you together as one, remember the gift of your individuality. Cherish and affirm your differences as you love each other. Be supportive of your strengths, and tender towards your weaknesses. Laugh together, cry together, be comforted by each other's presence, and secure in each other's absence.

To symbolize the importance of each of you within the marriage and the joining of your two lives into one marriage, 3 colours of sand will now be combined in a sand ceremony.

We begin with a layer of white sand, which symbolizes the foundation of the relationship. (Officiant pours some of the white sand into vase)

Then _____ and _____ will each separately pour their sand into the vase, symbolizing who they are as individuals. (Groom pours some of his sand into the vase and then the bride does the same)

Then, they will pour together, blending their two colors as a symbol of their joining together forever in love. (Bride and groom pour remaining sand at the same time)

Lastly, I will add another layer of white sand, representing you, their community, supporting them in their marriage and holding them in love. (Officiant pours remaining white sand)

Though the vase may be moved around, and the colors may shift and blend in new ways, the grains of sand cannot be separated. They will remain joined in a harmonious whole. (*The officiant holds up the completed vase, presenting it to the guests*)

May your love be as eternal and as inseparable as this sand.

Sand Ceremony that Includes Children

_____ and _____, today you are making a lasting commitment to share the rest of your lives with each other, joining your two families into one.

First, you will each separately pour a layer of sand into the vase, representing who you are as an individual. *(First one person pours, then the other, forming two distinct layers of sand)*

Then, you will pour simultaneously, blending your two colors as you will blend your lives in marriage. *(The couple pours simultaneously)*

As the individual grains of sand can no longer be separated, may your bond also be inseparable.

But you are also making a bond with your children, _____ and _____. As they also contribute their unique personalities and strengths to this new family, they will also individually add a layer of sand to this unity vase. *(Pause as the children pour their sand individually, forming separate layers over their parents' blended sand)*

Then everyone, _____, _____, _____ and _____ will pour together, representing their commitment to each other. *(Everyone pours simultaneously)*

Though the vase may be moved around, and the colours may shift and blend in new ways, the grains of sand cannot be separated. They will remain joined in a harmonious whole. *(The officiant holds up the completed vase, presenting it to the guests)*

May your love be as eternal and as inseparable as this sand.

Service Conclusion

Option #1

_____ and _____, as a collection of words, this ceremony would count for little, were it not for the love and commitment you have pledged to one another. Your vows may have been spoken in minutes, but your promises to each other will last a lifetime. Having witnessed your vows for marriage with all who are assembled here, I (Officiant's name) by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act, do hereby pronounce you _____ and _____ to be married.

It gives me great pleasure to present to you, for the first time as husband and wife, Mr. and Mrs. _____.

Option #2

You have made your marriage vows to one another, witnessed by your friends and family. You have sealed your vows with the giving and receiving of these rings.

I (Officiant's name) by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act, do hereby pronounce you _____ and _____ to be married.

Please put your hands together to congratulate the newlyweds! _____ & _____ (last name) !

Option #3

To make your relationship work will take love. This is the core of your marriage and why you are here today.

It will take trust, to know, that in your hearts, you truly want what is best for each other. It will take dedication, to stay open to one another – and to learn and grow together. It will take faith, to go forward together, without knowing exactly what the future brings. And it will take commitment, to hold true to the journey you both have pledged to today.

I (Officiant's name) by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act, do hereby pronounce you _____ and _____ to be married.

You may now kiss your bride/kiss.

I would like to introduce the happy couple _____.

Option #4

May the sun bring you new energy by day.

May the moon softly restore you by night.

May the rain wash away your worries.

And may you live the days of your lives in peace, love, and happiness.

I (Officiant's name) by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act, do hereby pronounce you _____ and _____ to be married.

You may seal your vows with a kiss.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to present to you, for the first time as husband/wife/partner/spouse _____ and _____ (Last Name)_____.

Option #5

_____ and _____ I would ask that you always treat yourself and each other with respect, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together today.

Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your marriage deserves. When frustration and difficulty assail your marriage – as they do to every relationship at one time or another – focus on what still seems right between you, not only the part that seems wrong.

This way, when clouds of trouble hide the sun in your lives and you lose sight of it for a moment, you can remember that the sun is still there. And if each of you will take responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and happiness.

I (Officiant's name) by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act, do hereby pronounce you _____ and _____ to be married.

You may seal your vows with a kiss.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to present to you, for the first time _____ and _____ (Last Name)_____.