

Civil Wedding Ceremony

(This ceremony takes 8-15 minutes, depending upon whether you have unity candles, rose ceremony, other readings etc.)

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 add our best wishes to the words which shall unite _____ and _____ in marriage.

Should there be anyone who has cause why this couple should not be united in marriage, they must speak now or forever hold their peace.

(If the bride is escorted forward)

Who is it that brings this woman to this man?

The father, children, relative etc. may give the bride away. He /they answer "I do", This person then steps back and the groom takes the bride's hand.

_____ and _____, I would ask that you both remember to treat yourself and each other with respect, and remind yourself 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 delight.

VOWS

(Vows used unless other vows are wished. You may change the vows as you wish or write your own.)

Groom

_____, do you take _____ to be your Wife?

("I do")

Do you promise to love, honor, cherish and *protect* her, forsaking all others *and* holding *only* unto her forevermore?

("I do")

Bride

_____, do you take _____ to be your Husband?

("I do")

Do you promise to love, honor, cherish and protect him, forsaking all others and holding *only* unto him forevermore?

("I do")

REPEATED VOWS

(If rings are exchanged each does so before repeating the following vows - unless you wish other vows or do not wish to repeat vows. It is not required that a couple exchange rings.)

(Groom)

I _____, take thee, _____ to be my Wife- 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.

If Rings are exchanged –

"With this ring, I take you as my wife, for as long as we both shall live"

(Bride)

I _____, take thee _____, to be my Husband. 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.

If Rings are exchanged –

"With this ring, I take you as my husband, for as long as we both shall live."

(If there are children of either couple, sometimes couples will give a ring or small gift such as a necklace or ring to the child and say a short statement that they also are now part of the new family. I believe it very important to mention children's names in the ceremony, If you have minor children coming into the marriage, please provide their names so I will mention them as is appropriate.)

BRIEF CEREMONIAL WORDS

_____ and _____ as the two of you come into this marriage uniting you as husband and wife, and as you this day affirm your faith and love for one another, I would ask that you always remember to cherish each other as special and unique individuals, that you respect the thoughts, ideas and suggestions of one another. Be able to forgive, do not hold grudges, and live each day that you may share it together - as from this day forward you shall be each other's home, comfort and refuge, your marriage strengthened by your love and respect for each other.

Just as two threads woven in opposite directions will form a most beautiful tapestry, so too can your two lives merged together make a beautiful marriage. 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 in your hearts that you truly want the 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 pledge today to share together.

UNITY CANDLE CEREMONY (optional)

If unity candles are used, it happens here.

ROSE CEREMONY (optional)

If the Rose Ceremony is used, it is placed after the unity candle ceremony or in place of it.

(For couples who are adding music to the ceremony, it is usually placed either here or after the vows are repeated earlier.)

CLOSING PRESENTATION

_____ and _____, in so much as the two of you have agreed to live together in Matrimony, have promised your love for each other by these vows, the joining of your hands and the giving of these rings, I now declare you to be Husband and Wife. Congratulations, you may kiss your bride.

It is my privilege to present to you Mr. & Mrs. _____

(If a large gathering, after the wedding party has exited, I will thank all for coming on your behalf and make any reception announcements that you wish.)

Rose Ceremony:

Your gift to each other for your wedding today has been your wedding rings - which shall always be an outward demonstration of your vows of love and respect; and a public showing of your commitment to each other.

You now have what remains the most honorable title which may exist between a man and a woman - the title of "husband" and "wife." For your first gift as husband and wife, that gift will be a single rose. In the past, the rose was considered a symbol of love and a single rose always meant only one thing - it meant the words "I love you." So it is appropriate that for your first gift - as husband and wife - that gift would be a single rose.

Please exchange your first gift as husband and wife.

(Sometimes a couple will play a special song at this point).

In some ways it seems like you have not done anything at all. Just a moment ago you were holding one small rose - and now you are holding one small rose. In some ways, a marriage ceremony is like this. In some ways, tomorrow is going to seem no different than yesterday. But in fact today, just now, you both have given and received one of the most valuable and precious gifts of life - one I hope you always remember - the gift of true and abiding love within the devotion of marriage.

_____ and _____, I would ask that where ever you make your home in the future - whether it be a large and elegant home - or a small and graceful one - that you both pick one very special location for roses; so that on each anniversary of this truly wonderful occasion you both may take a rose to that spot both as a recommitment to your marriage - and a recommitment that THIS will be a marriage based upon love.

In every marriage there are times where it is difficult to find the right words.

It is easiest to hurt who we most love. It is easiest to be most hurt by who we most love.

It might be difficult some time to words to say "I am sorry" or "I forgive you"; "I need you" or "I am hurting".

If this should happen, if you simply can not find these words, leave a rose at that spot which both of you have selected - for that rose than says what matters most of all and should overpower all other things and all other words.

That rose says the words: "I still love you."

The other should accept this rose for the words which can not be found, and remember the love and hope that you both share today.

_____ and _____, if there is anything you remember of this marriage ceremony, it is that it was love that brought you here today, it is only love which can make it a glorious union, and it is by love which your marriage shall endure."

UNITY CANDLE CEREMONY

_____ and _____, the two separate candles symbolize your separate lives, separate families and separate sets of friends. I ask that each of you take on of the lit candles and that together you light the center candle.

The individual candles represent your lives before today. Lighting the center candle represents that your two lives are now joined to one light, and represents the joining together of your two families and sets of friends to one.

(You can also involve children in the unity candle ceremony.)