



SAMPLE Wedding Ceremony #1

GATHERING MUSIC

PROCESSIONAL

OPENING WORDS

Welcome friends and family to this celebration of the marriage of ____ and ____.

George Eliot wrote this about marriage: "What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined together to strengthen each other in all labor, to minister to each other in all sorrow, to share with each other in all gladness, to be one with each other in the silent unspoken memories?"

Today ____ and ____ will declare their love and commitment to each other. They have waited for this moment, planned for this moment and grown toward this moment. Now I ask that we all simply be in this moment. Let us take a moment to focus our thoughts not on yesterday or tomorrow, not even on the delicious dinner and dessert we will share later today, but on this very moment. In the silence that follows, I ask each of you, in your own way to confer a silent prayer, blessing, wish or hope upon this moment and this marriage. (*moment of silence*)

INVOCATION

Please join me in a time of reflection for all that we have to be thankful for, based on the words of the Wedding Prayer By Robert Louis Stevenson

Let us be thankful for friends and family here assembled.
for this place in which we gather,
for the love that unites us,
for the peace accorded us this day,
for the hope with which we expect the morrow,
for the health, the work, the food, and the bright skies,
that make our lives delightful;
and for our friends in all parts of the earth.
Let thankfulness fill our hearts.

WINE CUP CEREMONY

A wedding is a ritual that signifies the transition from a single life into married life. Like most rituals, a wedding involves many symbolic elements, each bearing a significant meaning in the formation of the new marriage and the new family that the marriage creates. ____ and ____ have chosen several different ways to symbolize the sacred union they desire to enter. The first is a wine cup ceremony.

In Judaism, the sharing of the wine is known as the Kiddush, a ritual that is accompanied with the Hebrew blessing: Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheynu Melech Ha-olam Bo'rei

P'ri Hagefen; Blessed are you, LORD our God, King of the Universe, who has created the fruit of the vine.

____ and ____ , drinking from a wine cup together is a reminder that from this moment on, you will share everything, doubling your joys and dividing your sorrows. It also symbolizes the many days that you will sit at the same table and eat and drink together as each other's family.

As you share this glass of wine, so may you share all that the future may bring. May all of your joys be sweeter because you drink together. May whatever drops of bitterness life may contain be less bitter because you share them.

(____ and ____ drink from the cup.)

MESSAGE

UNITY CANDLE

Another symbolic ritual that ____ and ____ have chosen is the lighting of a unity candle. During the processional at the beginning of the ceremony, ____'s mother, ____, and ____'s mother, ____, each lit a taper next to the Unity Candle. These two individual flames, one representing each family, will be used to light the Unity Candle, symbolizing how out of these two families, a new family will be created.

____ and ____ , together as you light this candle of unity, you symbolize the flame of your own individual selves joining to ignite the partnership of marriage.

(couple lights the unity candle)

May the brightness of this light shine through your lives, giving you courage and reassurance in the darkness. May its warmth give you shelter from the cold, and may its energy fill your spirits with strength and joy.

VOWS

____ and ____ , in a moment you will exchange your vows with each other.

These promises are meant to be a beautiful and sacred expression of your love for each other. It is not the words that you speak today which will unite you together as one, but the inner sense of love and commitment that each of you feels within your soul.

So I call upon them now to state their promise before this group: the pledges that will bind them together, which will begin their journey together.

(____ and ____ read the vows they have written)

RING CEREMONY

The ring is an ancient symbol, so perfect and simple, an endless circle, the symbol of Infinity. It has neither a beginning nor an end - It is complete in itself. A ring is a fitting symbol for a wedding promise. These wedding rings are the symbols of the unending love and friendship that you share. As you exchange these rings with one another, know that they will always be

for you the symbol of your unbroken love. Let your lives come together today and forever, like the unbroken circles of these rings.

____ , as you place this ring on ____ 's finger, please repeat after me:
With this ring, I join my life with yours.

____ , as you place this ring on ____ 's finger, please repeat after me:
With this ring, I join my life with yours.

PRONOUNCEMENT

____ and ____ , because you have desired each other in marriage, pledged your love to one another, sealed your vows in the giving and receiving of rings, and witnessed this before our gathering, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to pronounce you wed!

You may now seal your marriage with a kiss.

(____ and ____ kiss)

BREAKING OF THE GLASS

In a moment, ____ and ____ will end their wedding ceremony with the Jewish tradition of breaking a glass. Explanations for this practice abound.

Breaking a glass indicates that marriage is a transforming and irrevocable experience, one that leaves two people changed forever.

It reminds us that love, like glass, is fragile and must be protected.

It symbolizes the breaking down of barriers between people of different cultures and faiths.

It implies the blessings: "As this glass shatters, so may your marriage never break." And "May your bond of love be as difficult to break, as it would be to put back together the pieces of broken glass."

It teaches us that in times of joy we must not forget that life can also bring sadness and sorrow.

Some even say it's to scare away evil spirits, or to start off the marriage with a bang!

Regardless of the meaning, the appropriate response to the breaking of the glass is mazal tov, which means congratulations and good luck.

____ and ____ , may you have happiness, and may you find it making one another happy. May you have love, and may you find it loving one another.

(____ and ____ break glass, we all say: Mazal tov!)

RECESSIONAL