



SAMPLE Wedding Ceremony #3

MUSICAL PRELUDE and PROCESSIONAL

WELCOME

We'd like to welcome you -- friends and family -- to this celebration of the marriage of ____ and _____. You are here because this couple feels close to you and asks that you join with them in this dedication of sacred purpose. We invite you to participate fully with your thoughts and prayers, asking for a blessing of this couple and their married life. You represent symbolically all the people in the world who will be touched in any way by the life of this couple. You represent their friends and family, now and forever. They have chosen this act of marriage and this public, holy ceremony in which to proclaim it.

____ and ____, we welcome you to this moment in your lives and to the place you have come to in each other's hearts. We join with you on this day, as you commit before those gathered here that from this point forward you will live in a union of partnership—that you remain separate individuals with separate wants and desires while forming this vital, growing partnership between two equal people for the purpose of your spiritual growth.

OPENING WORDS

George Eliot wrote: "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?"

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

(*to the congregation*) We have gathered together to celebrate with ____ and ____ the marriage in which they are now to be united. Marriage is a relationship recognized by humankind from time immemorial, and consecrated by the men and women in all ages who have brought its beauty to flower. It is not therefore to be entered upon inadvisedly or lightly, but with deliberation and reverence.

(*To the couple*) Into this closest of relationships you two come to be joined by a ceremony, which is but an outward symbol of your inward relationship, recognized by human society but made real and living only within the lives of those who share it. Into this sacred union you desire to enter.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

I would like to take a moment to mention that there are those close to ____ and ____ who could not travel to be here today, but whose thoughts and blessings are with them; and there are loved ones who are no longer here in body, but who are here in spirit. Let us remember them now in a moment of silence.

READINGS

Autumn by Garrison Keillor and A Dedication to my wife by TS Elliot

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

MUSIC

BRIDE AND GROOM'S WORDS TO EACH OTHER:

____ and ____ have prepared words they would like to share with us regarding their love for one another

PREFACE TO THE VOWS

The vows through which you accept each other as husband and wife have no hidden power in themselves. Only to the extent that they express in words your continuing intention and commitment do they have meaning. In a world where the pressures pushing people apart may often seem stronger than those drawing people together, your commitment to each other will need to be re-expressed in many different ways in the coming days and years. The expression in today's vows is simply a visible milestone in your journey together.

VOWS

I invite you now to join hands as you repeat your vows after me.

____, and then ____:

In the presence of these witnesses,
I, _____, now take you, _____
to be my wife/husband/
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness or in health,
in sorrow or in joy,
to love and to cherish
as long as we both shall live.

PREFACE TO RING CEREMONY

What symbols do you have of these vows that you take? (*The rings are handed to the minister.*)

Circles have no beginning and has no end, and so in the long and sacred tradition of marriage rings have come to symbolize eternal love and endless union of body, of mind, and of the spirit.

EXCHANGE OF RINGS

____, as you place this ring on ____'s finger, please repeat after me: ...

"I give you this ring to wear upon your hand as a symbol of our unity. With this ring, I join my life with yours."

THE PRONOUNCEMENT

Forasmuch as ____ and ____ have thus pledged themselves each to the other in the presence of this company, I do now, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Church and by the State of ____, pronounce that you are husband and wife.

You may now seal this marriage with a kiss.

BENEDICTION/ CLOSING WORDS

___ and ___, believe in what is yours, believe in who you are, believe in the richness and the power of what lies in the depths you share. And go now in great happiness assured that all our hearts go with you.

RECESSIONAL