

IMPORTANT!

- *Be sure you have the marriage license for the officiant to fill out*
- *Determine where music inserted and who will be providing the music and/or sound system*
- *Determine processional, recessional and receiving line (if you are having one)*
- *Provide a paragraph from each the bride and groom if Mike is officiating (see below)*

SAMPLE WEDDING CEREMONY

OPENING WORDS

Ladies and gentlemen, we have joined here today to share with (full name) and (full name) an important moment in their lives. In their time together, they have seen their love and understanding of each other grow and blossom and now they have decided to live out the rest of their lives as one.

THE GIVING IN MARRIAGE (optional)

Who supports this couple in their marriage? or "Who supports this woman/man in her/his marriage?"

AN OPENING READING OR PRAYER

I'd like to read a poem titled "The Art of Marriage" by Wilferd A. Peterson.

A good marriage must be created.

In the art of marriage, 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 each day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is forming a circle of love that gathers in the whole family.

It is speaking words of appreciation and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

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 the spirit.

It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.

It is not only marrying the right partner...it is BEING the right partner

DEFINITION OF WEDDING

Mike will say some words about marriage (he may use this or personalize it)

The ceremony of marriage is which you come to be united is one of the first and oldest ceremonies in all the world, celebrated in the beginning in the presence of God himself. Marriage is a gift, in that we give ourselves totally to one another. I believe that marriage is a gift given to comfort the sorrows of life and to magnify life's joys.

Marriage is the clasping of hands, the blending of two hearts, the union of two lives into one and your marriage must stand, not by the authority of the state, nor by the seal on your wedding certificate, but by the strength and power of the faith and love you have in one another.

COUPLES' STORY

Each write a paragraph or two on how you met, or why you love one another, etc. Mike will read.

WEDDING VOWS

The center of any marriage is the wedding vows. These words are spoken by the couple to each other to express both an intent and a promise. This is how they intend to navigate the path of life together and the meaning they intend to give to their marriage no matter how challenging. I ask you both to repeat your love and commitment to each other..

Couple may read their own vows or repeat one of these...

I, (Bride/Groom), take you (Bride/Groom), to be my (wife/husband), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish; from this day forward until death do us part.

I, (name), take you, (name), to be my (husband/wife), my friend, my faithful partner and my love from this day forward. In the presence our family and friends, I offer you my solemn vow to be your faithful partner in sickness and in health, in good times and in bad, and in joy as well as in sorrow. I promise to love you unconditionally, to support you in your goals, to honor and respect you, to laugh with you and cry with you, and to cherish you for as long as we both shall live.

I (name), take you (name) to be my (husband/wife), my partner in life and my one true love. I will cherish our union and love you more each day than I did the day before. I will trust you and respect you, laugh with you and cry with you, loving you faithfully through good times and bad, regardless of the obstacles we may face together. I give you my hand, my heart, and my love, from this day forward for as long as we both shall live.

EXCHANGE OF RINGS OR GIFTS

The couple will repeat...

"I (name) give you (name) this (ring / gift / handfasting) as an eternal symbol of my love and commitment to you."

LIGHTING OF UNITY CANDLE (OR OTHER CEREMONY)

CANDLE:

There are many traditions and rituals commonly included in marriage ceremonies. One of the most beautiful and expressive is the "Unity Candle." Two fires separate an individual. By uniting their flames, they burn as one. Imagine how you might describe fire to someone who had never experience it before. It is difficult to say what it is, because it is both substance and energy at the same time. The best you might do is to say that there is always plain evidence of it when it exists, and that you can feel its warmth.

Love similarly would be hard to describe to someone who had never experienced it before, except to say there is always visible evidence of it when it exists...and you can feel its warmth.

Officiant, parents or bride and groom light the separate candles (Be sure these are contained in glass to stay lit outside!) Sometimes music is played while couple lights the one candle

-OR-

SAND:

(Bride and groom), I invite you each to take your vessels of sand – which symbolize your lives from birth to this day when you vowed to join your separate and individual lives into one, in the covenant of marriage. Please pour your individual sand together into the center vase of unity, which represents the beginning of

your lives together as husband and wife. And just as these grains of sand become inseparable, may your union be the same.

-OR-

HANDBASTING:

The bride and groom have declared their intent to enter into this union, so we clasp their hands together with a cord. The wrapping of the cord forms an infinity symbol. The handfasting knot is tied is a symbolic representation of oneness between the couple. In unity, they become bound to each other.

CLOSING

It is often said that it is love that makes the world go around. However without doubt, it is friendship which keeps our spinning existence on an even keel. True friendship provides so many of the essentials for a happy life – it is the foundation on which to build an enduring relationship, it is the mortar which bonds us together in harmony, and it is the calm, warm protection we sometimes need when the world outside seems cold and chaotic. True friendship holds a mirror to our mistakes and failings, without destroying our sense of worthiness. True friendship nurtures our hopes, supports us in our disappointments, and encourages us to grow to our best potential. (Bride and groom) have come together as friends, have become good friends and today they pledge not only their love, but also the strength, warmth and most importantly the joy of being best friends who will love each other forever

DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE

By the power vested in me as minister of the Universal Life Church and in Allegany County by the State of Maryland, I now pronounce you husband/wife (or other) .

You may now kiss the bride/groom. You may now kiss!

Any 'housekeeping' regarding direction for your guests: recessional/chair moving/receiving line/what to do while waiting on photo session/etc. would be inserted here.

INTRODUCTION OF NEWLYWEDS

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you Mr. and Mrs. _____ (or other)

-Or-

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the newly married couple, (both first name with last names).

The guests stands/applauds, as the couple and recessional lead out as rehearsed.