

*Sample Ceremonies
And
Sample Additions/Readings*

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Sample Ceremonies:

Processional

Opening Words

Friends, we have been invited here today to share with _____ and _____ a very important moment in their lives. In the years they have been together, their love and understanding of each other has grown and matured, and now they have decided to live their lives together as husband and wife.

Opening Reading

It is often said that it is love that makes the world go round. 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 foibles 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. _____ and _____ came together as friends. Today, they pledge to each other not only their love, but also the strength, warmth and, most importantly, the fun of true friendship.

Definition of Marriage

Marriage is a commitment to life, to the best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other human relationship can equal; a joining that is promised for a lifetime. Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships. A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, teacher, listener, and critic. Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller; memories are fresher; commitment is stronger; even anger is felt more strongly, and passes away more quickly. Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, and new ways of expressing love through the seasons of life. When two people pledge to love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique to themselves, which binds them closer than any spoken or written words. Marriage is a promise, a potential, made in the hearts of two people who love, which takes a lifetime to fulfill.

Wedding Vows

Please join hands and face each other.

Do you, _____, take _____ to be your lawfully wedded husband, your constant friend, and your faithful partner from this day forward; do you vow to love and support him unconditionally, in sickness and in health, in good times and in bad, in joy as well as in sorrow; to honor and respect him, to laugh and cry with him, and to cherish him for as long as you both shall live?

Do you, _____, take _____ to be your lawfully wedded wife, your constant friend, and your faithful partner from this day forward; do you vow to love and support her unconditionally, in sickness and in health, in good times and in bad, in joy as well as in sorrow; to honor and respect her, to laugh and cry with her, and to cherish her for as long as you both shall live?

Exchange of Rings

The ring, a circle, is one of nature's simplest forms. The arc of the rainbow, the halo of the moon and the smallest of raindrops simulate the circle. When a stone is cast upon a pond, it generates waves in ever expanding circles. Consider this marriage as being two stones striking the water simultaneously. The ensuing waves interlock, and the growth of the enlarging circles show the combined energies of the lives of _____ and _____. The interlocking of these two lives will be symbolized in the exchange of rings.

_____, please place the ring on _____'s left hand and repeat after me: _____, I give you this ring as a sign of my devotion and love and with my all my heart I promise to you all that I am. With this ring I marry you and join my life to yours.

_____, please place the ring on _____'s left hand and repeat after me: _____, I give you this ring as a sign of my devotion and love and with all my heart I promise to you all that I am. With this ring I marry you and join my life to yours.

Closing

May your marriage bring you all the exquisite excitements a marriage should bring, and may life grant you also patience, tolerance, and understanding. May you always need one another - not so much to fill your emptiness as to help you to know your fullness. A mountain needs a valley to be complete. The valley does not make the mountain less, but more. And the valley is more a valley because it has a mountain towering over it. So let it be with you and you. May you need one another, but not out of weakness. May you want one another, but not out of lack. May you entice one another, but not compel one another. May you embrace one another, but not out encircle one another. May you succeed in all-important ways with one another, and not fail in the little graces. May you look for things to praise, often say, "I love you" and take no notice of small faults. If you have quarrels that push you apart, may both of you hope to have good sense enough to take the first step back. May you enter into the mystery that is the awareness of one another's presence - no more physical than spiritual, warm and near when you are side by side, and warm and near when you are in separate rooms or even distant cities. 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 now, by the power vested in me by the state of Ohio, I pronounce you husband and wife. You may now kiss.

Welcome to family and friends:

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.

Opening:

_____ 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.

Vows:

_____ 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 wife?

Do you promise to be a tender, faithful husband?

Do you promise to love and cherish her, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer, for better for worse, and keep yourself only unto her?

With this understanding, do you _____, take _____ to be your beloved husband?

Do you promise to be a tender, faithful wife?

Do you promise to love and cherish him, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer, for better for worse, and keep yourself only unto him?

You may wish to add a reading or song here.

Rings:

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

From earliest times, the ring has been a symbol of wedded love. An unbroken and never-ending circle symbolizes a commitment to love that is also never ending.

_____, take the ring which you have selected, place it on _____'s finger, and say to her these words.

This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my desire that you be my wife from this day forward.

_____, take the ring which you have selected, place it on _____'s finger, and say to him these words.

This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my desire that you be my wife from this day forward.

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.

Closing:

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.

Pronouncement:

_____ and _____, having witnessed your vows for marriage with all who are assembled here, and by the authority vested in me by the state of Ohio, I announce with great joy that you are husband and wife.

You may seal your vows with a kiss.

Presentation:

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to present to you, for the first time as husband and wife: _____ and _____

Welcome to family and friends:

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.

Opening:

You have know 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 quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this is my husband, this is my wife.

Reading (Optional):

The Art of a Good Marriage by Wilferd Arlan Peterson

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 rooms 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.

Vows:

We remind _____ and _____ that they are performing an act of complete faith,

each in the other; that the heart of their marriage will be the relationship they create. In a world where faith often falls short of expectation, it is a tribute to these two who now join hands and hearts in perfect faith.

_____, will you receive _____ as your wife? Will you pledge to her your love, faith and tenderness, cherishing her with a husband's loyalty and devotion?

Groom: "I will."

_____, will you receive _____ as your husband? Will you pledge to him your love, faith and tenderness, cherishing him with a wife's loyalty and devotion?

Bride: "I will."

Rings:

_____ and _____, receive each other from your fathers and mothers, who give you into each other's keeping, by saying now, each to the other, words which will tell of your love.

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 _____'s finger, and say to her these words.

This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my desire that you be my wife from this day forward.

_____, take the ring and as you place it on _____'s finger, please state your pledge to her repeating these word:

"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."

_____, take the ring and as you place it on _____'s finger, please state your pledge to him repeating these word:

"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."

Reading (Optional)

Today is a 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 of joys, but today is the day it all starts.

Pronouncement:

_____ 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, and by the authority vested in me by the state of Ohio, I announce with great joy that you are husband and wife.

You may kiss your bride.

Presentation:

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

Welcome to all gathered here today for _____ and _____'s wedding.

It was the great medieval philosopher, Thomas Aquinas, who, when asked to define true love, said that it was "To will the good of the other person". If you truly love someone you want their success, their happiness, everything that is best for them. In the history of mankind, great lovers have died for the one or the ones they love.

Nothing like that is called for here, but _____ and _____ do want you to know why they are getting married today. They could have chosen simply to live together. This unquestionably is a "safer" course, would seemingly give them more options, seemingly sustain their freedom, and have less risks attached. They have thought about this and have decided that for them it is not enough.

They see this ceremony today as a stronger commitment to their relationship. They call you together, their friends and family, to make this commitment clear to you and to call on your acknowledgement and support. They publicly call on each other to take the relationship more seriously.

_____ and _____ recognize that they are very happy with one another. They recognize that they would not be happier with anyone else and that no distant fields are greener. There is another element in all this. They love each other. With the philosopher, they will each other's good. They will each other's success, fulfillment and happiness.

They know the main danger in a marriage relationship is the danger of taking each other for granted, of not appreciating each other enough.

So they want to stay aware of each other. They know they must communicate with each other and be open to communication. This, they know, is a lot harder than it sounds. Words must be said softly, listened to carefully.

Their relationship must be sustained by the will to express it, the loving word, the loving smile, the loving embrace, the loving favor, the giving with graciousness and generosity. They know not to take without giving, give without taking. A true lover knows what the demands of love sometimes cost the partner so they will to be sensitive, to be appreciative. And they remind themselves today that they must do these things without dominating, without smothering, without suffocating the other.

They have assessed happily that their relationship is for life. They have found each other, they like each other, they love each other, they want it to last, they intend it to last, they will it to last.

More than that, they will it to get better, they will it to get deeper. They want to be husband and wife. They want people to look at them and quote, as it were, the poet, Homer, who said 800 years before Christ:

"There is nothing nobler or more admirable than when two people who see eye to eye keep house as man and wife confounding their enemies and delighting their friends."

_____, will you have this woman to be your wedded wife, to love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, and forsaking all others, keep you only unto her, for so long as you both shall live?

_____, will you have this man to be your wedded husband, to love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, and forsaking all others, keep you only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

Take hands and repeat after me: I, _____, take you, _____ to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, to love and to cherish, from this day forward.

I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, to love and to cherish, from this day forward.

Please place the ring on the bride's finger and say: With this ring, I thee wed.

Please place the ring on the groom's finger and say: With this ring I thee wed.

Let these rings be given and received as a token of your affection, sincerity and fidelity to one another.

In as much as _____ and _____ have consented together in wedlock and have witnessed the same before this company, and pledged their vows to each other, by the authority vested in me by the State of Ohio, I now pronounce you husband and wife.

Congratulations!

Opening Words

Welcome friends, families, and honored guests. We are here to celebrate love. Love organizes our large and sometimes unpredictable world. It is that which enshrines and ennobles our human experience. It is the basis for the peace of family, and the peace of the peoples of the earth. The greatest gift bestowed upon humans is the gift of love freely given between two persons.

Officiant's Address

In marriage, two people turn to each other in search of a greater fulfillment than either can achieve alone. Marriage is a bold step, taken together, into an unknown future. It is risking who we are for the sake of who we can be. Only in giving of ourselves fully, and sharing our lives with another, can the mysterious process of growth take place. Only in loyalty and devotion bestowed upon another can that which is eternal in life emerge and be known. Two among us, who have stood apart, come together now, to declare their love and to be united in marriage.

The words we say today have no magic or prophetic powers. The power of the wedding vows is merely a reflection of a reality that already exists in the hearts and minds of these two people. _____ and _____, nothing I can say, or nothing you can say to each other, will ensure a long and happy, satisfying and committed marriage. Only your love for one another, and your integrity to make your commitment real can do that. I humbly offer the words of Author William A. Peterson in "The Art of Marriage", who I believe has captured in words, the essence of that commitment. I hope you will keep his words upon your heart, and refer to them again.

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 sleep angry.
It is at no time taking the other for granted;
the courtship should not end with the honeymoon,
it should continue through all the 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 the 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 the 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 only marrying the right partner,
it is BEING the right partner.
This is "The Art of Marriage".

Vows

Please join hands, and in so doing, join your hearts. (Couple can repeat after Officiant or read this from a card.)

I, _____, take you, _____,
to be my lawfully wedded _____,
to be the Mother/Father of my children, and
to be the companion of my days.
We shall bear together whatever sorrow and adversity life may lay upon us.
We shall share together whatever joy and fulfillment life may hold in store.
Together in love,
to work and to share,
to grow and to understand,
and to discover a deeper, fuller life.
I pledge to support you in your hopes and dreams, as if they were my own.
I pledge to care for you, respect you, honor you, cherish you, and to love you.
(Repeat vows for second person.)

Exchange of Rings

Love freely given has no giver and no receiver. You are each the giver and each the receiver. The wedding ring is a symbol, in visible form, of the unbroken circle of your love, so that wherever you go, you may always return to your shared life together. May these rings always call to mind the power of your love.

As you place this ring on the finger of your beloved, please repeat after me, "I give you this ring, to wear upon your hand, as a symbol of my endless commitment and love for you."
(Repeat for the second person.)

Pronouncement

_____ and _____, in the presence of your family and friends who have joined you to share this moment of joy in your lives, you have declared your deep love and affection for each other. You have stated your wish to live together, always open to a deeper, richer friendship and partnership. You have formed your own union, based on respect and honor. Therefore, it is my joyful responsibility to officially acknowledge your union as "Husband and Wife". You may now seal your marriage with a kiss.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my privilege to present to you for the very first time, Mr. and Mrs. _____ and _____ !

Welcome! We are here on this glorious day to celebrate the love that ____ and ____ have for each other, and to recognize and witness their decision to journey forward together in their lives as marriage partners.

We gather to support them as they embark upon the voyage of discovery as husband and wife. Let us also be there for them throughout their marriage.

The covenant of marriage can only be entered into by those persons who are legally and spiritually free to offer their hand to another. _____ and _____, is it your intention to marry your Beloved on this day?

Please join your hands, and in so doing, join your hearts. Repeat after me:

Groom:

_____, I promise to love you, to cherish you, and to respect you always. I promise to participate fully in our marriage relationship. I will give completely of my mind, body, heart and soul. I promise to make your plans and dreams as important to me as my own. I promise to do my share so that our lives together can be healthy, happy, and abundantly satisfying. I promise to lovingly fulfill these vows each and every day for all of my days.

Bride:

_____, I promise to love you, to cherish you, and to respect you always. I promise to participate fully in our marriage relationship. I will give completely of my mind, body, heart and soul. I promise to make your plans and dreams as important to me as my own. I promise to do my share so that our lives together can be healthy, happy, and abundantly satisfying. I promise to lovingly fulfill these vows each and every day for all of my days.

Do you have the rings?

_____, please place the ring on _____'s finger and repeat after me

_____, this ring is a symbol of the strength and beauty of our love. May it belong to your hand as my heart belongs to you, separate but close, simple yet miraculous.

_____, please place the ring on _____'s hand and repeat after me:

_____, this ring is a symbol of the strength and beauty of our love. May it belong to your hand as my heart belongs to you, separate but close, simple yet miraculous.

Now, because you have chosen one another and pledged to love each other for all the days of your lives, before this loving community of family and friends, it is my honor to pronounce you husband and wife! _____, you may kiss you bride!

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my privilege to present to you for the very first time, Mr. and Mrs.

_____ !

Gathering Words

Good evening, and welcome to the ceremony that will unite Bride and Groom in marriage.

We gather here today to celebrate their union, and to honor their commitment to not just gazing at one another, but to looking outward together in the same direction. Today _____ and _____ proclaim their love to the world, and we rejoice with and for them.

In marriage, we give ourselves freely and generously into the hands of the one we love, and in doing so, each of us receives the love and trust of the other as our most precious gift. But even as that gift is shared by two people who are in love, it also touches the friends and family members who support and contribute to the relationship.

All of you are _____ and _____'s community, and one of the reasons gathering as a community is such an important part of a wedding ceremony is because you are witnessing _____ and _____ taking a new form as a married couple, and in this form, they become part of their community in a new way.

_____ and _____, we are here to celebrate your love and acknowledge your lifelong commitment to one another, and also to be reminded that it is love that guides us on our path. It is in this spirit that you have come here to today to exchange these vows.

Vows

I _____ take you _____ to be my wife/
I promise above all else to live to live in truth with you/
and to communicate fully and fearlessly/
I give you my hand and my heart/
as a sanctuary of warmth and peace/
and pledge my love, devotion, faith and honor
as I join my life to yours.

I _____ take you _____ to be my wife/
I promise above all else to live to live in truth with you/
and to communicate fully and fearlessly/
I give you my hand and my heart/
as a sanctuary of warmth and peace/
and pledge my love, devotion, faith and honor
as I join my life to yours.

Rings

For thousands of years lovers have exchanged rings as a token of their vows. These simple gold bands are not of great value in themselves, but are made precious by our wearing of them. Your rings say that even in your uniqueness you have chosen to be bound together. Let these rings also be a sign that love has substance as well as soul, a present as well as a past, and that, despite its occasional sorrows, love is a circle of happiness, wonder, and delight

_____, take _____'s ring and put it on her finger, and repeat after me:

Just as this circle is without end, my love for you is eternal/
Just as it is made of indestructible substance/
my commitment to you will never fail/
With this ring I take you to be my trusted confidante and partner for life.

_____, take _____'s ring and put it on her finger, and repeat after me:

Just as this circle is without end, my love for you is eternal/
Just as it is made of indestructible substance/
my commitment to you will never fail/

With this ring I take you to be my trusted confidante and partner for life.

Pronouncement

_____ and _____, although I'm officiating here today, it is not truly in my power to sanctify, legitimize or bless your relationship in any way, because the two of you have already done that in your hearts. So, by joining hands right now and looking into each other's eyes, let it be known that you are joined, body and soul in this lifetime, and that this bond is sacred and eternal. And now that you have stood before me and exchanged these rings and these vows, and have agreed to be married according to the laws of the state of Ohio, it gives me gives me great pleasure to pronounce that you are Husband and Wife.

Welcome

Welcome everyone. _____ and _____ thank you for being with them today. We gather here in joy to witness and celebrate an act of deep love. _____ and _____, in their devotion, respect, and love for each other, wish to unite in the sacred bond of marriage and to dedicate themselves to each other's happiness and well being as life mates and partners.

Officiant's Address: On Love and Marriage

Marriage is a sacred agreement to love and support each other to the best of our ability and to use the relationship as a means for changing and healing our individual barriers to love. Marriage requires that both people in the relationship work to help each other learn, grow and prosper. Marriage teaches us to be more responsible for what we think and feel, say and do, and the level of awareness and willingness each person brings goes a long way toward making the relationship work. It is about learning to become less self-centered in ways that we could never have seen before. And mostly, it's about looking at the big picture—realizing that arguments and conflicts pale in comparison to the deep and true love we discover as we move through life and confront its challenges together as husband and wife.

Not only does marriage take patience and understanding, it takes time and work. Each person must be completely honest and willing to open up their private worlds to each other. It requires continuous communication, lest a disconnect or distancing begin, which can be very difficult to undo. Marriage takes the willingness to be wrong a lot of the time even though your ego would insist that you are right, but reason tells you differently. And it takes a willingness to risk the bruising of your own ego in favor of surrender to the greater Self that both partners in the relationship have agreed to discover together.

We need to recognize, as often as we can, how precious and unique our chosen partner is. Within each of us, there is an inherent quality that can be discovered by seeing it in the other person, despite what the other is saying or doing. The sheer pain and frustration from conflicts that arise in a marriage relationship can serve as the perfect motivation for turning inward to accessing the help of our inner connection with each other and find the invisible strength and sanity within the middle of our minds. This inner strength, universal to us all understands our need for healing and can take our misperceptions, our anger, our guilt and frustrations and transform them into sane and healed perceptions of our partner. This way each partner learns to release the past and join in mutual love and respect.

Vows of Support

To the parents of _____ and _____, congratulations on the part you have played in raising a daughter and a son of such serious purpose. They accept a very mature and meaningful task in taking on this marriage. On their behalf, and on behalf of all those gathered here, I thank you. I remind you that it is more than their blood that is joined here; it is yours as well. Although _____ and _____ have embarked on this marriage through personal choice, their marriage will be enriched by the families from which they come.

With this in mind, I ask you, _____'s parents, to take this man, _____, into your hearts, that he might live from this day as your son, for he is dear and beloved to _____ and shall be so to you and your family. Do you?

_____ 's parents: "We do."

And of you, _____'s parents, I ask the same. I ask that you take this woman, _____, into your hearts, that she might live from this day as your daughter, for she is dear and beloved to _____, and shall be so to you and your family. Do you?

_____ 's parents: "We do."

_____, hold this man as a gift. It is in your love that this man might find a greater understanding of himself. You are asked to see the good in this man, to accept him for who he is and to strengthen him so that he might realize his full potential.

_____, hold this woman close to you, one to be honored, a treasure of the spirit. You are asked to grow with her in love, and in so loving this woman, she might discover the vast strength and fullness of purpose that blesses you and everyone she touches.

To the families and friends of _____ and _____, we ask you to nurture this union with your love and understanding. Help them to keep their hearts open and ever tender, full of forgiveness and compassion, of happiness and light. Help _____ and _____ see that through the love they've discovered in one another, they will no doubt find their way in the world together.

Presentation of the Rings

The wedding ring is a traditional symbol of lasting commitment and enduring love, a universal expression of that which is without beginning and without end. This ring expresses two other ideals – the ring itself, apprehensible to hand and eye, and the center, less tangible, and yet its essence. At the center lies love, on which this marriage must put its faith, and from which it draws its sustenance and inspiration. The center will hold as long as there is love.

Vows and Ring Exchange

_____, please say these words as you place this ring on your bride's finger:

"_____, I accept you just as you are today. I give to you my promise that from this day forward, you will not walk alone. We will walk forever side by side, rich in laughter, close in friendship. Feel deeply loved, for you are. With this ring, I give you my heart. I have no greater gift to give. I promise to dream with you, and to work to make our dreams come true. I promise to be faithful to you, and never to allow anything to build a wall between us. I feel so honored to call you mine. With this ring, a symbol of my love for you, I ask you, will you be my wife?"

_____ 's response: "I will."

_____, please say these words as you place this ring on your bridegroom's finger:

"_____, I accept you just as you are today. I give to you my promise that from this day forward, you will not walk alone. We will walk forever side by side, rich in laughter, close in friendship. Feel deeply loved, for you are. With this ring, I give you my heart. I have no greater gift to give. I promise to dream with you, and to work to make our dreams come true. I promise to be faithful to you, and never to allow anything to build a wall between us. I feel so honored to call you mine. With this ring, a symbol of my love for you, I ask you, will you be my husband?"

_____: "I will."

_____ and _____, because you have made these vows professing your love and devotion to one another, it is my privilege and my great pleasure to pronounce you husband and wife.

_____, you may kiss your bride.

Benediction and Presentation

May every desire you have for your love be fulfilled, and may you be given the vision with which to clearly behold one another, the listening with which to perceive one another most genuinely, and the endless generosity of spirit with which to nourish one another's soul and sweetly keep the promises you make here today.

"Family and Friends, it is my pleasure to introduce to you Mr. and Mrs. _____

WORDS OF WELCOME

We have been invited here on this important day to celebrate the very special love between _____ and _____ by joining them in marriage.

_____, your marriage today is the public and legal joining of your souls that have already been united as one in your hearts. Marriage will allow you a new environment to share your lives together, to face life and the world, hand-in-hand.

Marriage will expand you as individuals, define you as a couple, and deepen your love for one another. To be successful you will need strength, courage, patience and a really good sense of humor.

So let your marriage be a time of waking each morning and falling in love with one another all over again.

DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

One of the most surprising things I have learned about marriage is how much it can serve to strengthen us as individuals. Rather than subsume the partners into the sole definition of a couple, marriage can define who each of you are and who you can become. As a reflection of the grandeur of the universe, a marriage is more than the sum of its parts.

_____ by coming here today, you have taken the initial step in what will be a wonderful and lasting life together. A union between two people takes effort and neither is a relationship ever complete. It is a process and a journey requiring constant nurturing.

When you don't feel particularly loving, act loving. The tenderness exhibited by kind and loving acts translates almost seamlessly into the compassion necessary for loving feelings to grow. A good marriage is one that fosters respect, a devoted love, a willingness to make sacrifices as well as support one another by remaining true to your values and convictions.

A strong and healthy marriage is an eternal gift we cultivate within the context of our lives. But bear in mind that eternity is something other than endless time. It is outside of time. It is not the past and not the future, but now. This moment. But as soon as we contemplate the moment it is gone. That is eternity. So if one seeks a relationship of love throughout eternity, it must be a continual process of the here and the now.

Symbolically you have been brought together as one, yet are still two separate people with unique ideas, talents and ways of being. Respect and value those differences and your relationship will flourish. In the words of Kahlil Gibran, "Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping. For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts. And stand together yet not too near together. For the pillars of the temple stand apart and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow. But let there be spaces in your togetherness, and let the winds of the heavens dance between you."

_____ please face your friends and family and join hands as you exchange your marriage vows.

WEDDING VOWS

_____, please repeat after me...

_____, you are my one true love, my best friend, my soul mate....

You complete my spirit and compliment my soul...

Today, before our family, our friends and the heavens I pledge my love to you...

And promise to share the rest of my life with you....

_____, please repeat after me...

_____, you are my one true love, my best friend, my soul mate...
You complete my spirit and compliment my soul...
Today, before our family, our friends and the heavens I pledge my love to you...
And promise to share the rest of my life with you...

_____ do you promise to...

Trust, respect and celebrate each other?
Grow together by unselfishly encouraging, appreciating, nurturing and supporting each other?
Laugh, play and enjoy the simple pleasures together?
Help each other stay focused on the important things in life and not sweat the small stuff?
Be there and comfort each other always?
Be faithful to each other?
Begin and end each day with the words, "I love you?"

_____, please repeat after me

_____, I will honor these promises until the end of time....
Because when two souls believe their love is forever, the heavens make it so....

_____, please repeat after me.

_____, I will honor these promises until the end of time...
Because when two souls believe their love is forever, the heavens make it so...

Together, please repeat after me.

We swear by peace and love to stand...
heart to heart and hand in hand...
Mark, O Spirit, and hear us now...
Confirming this our sacred vow.

EXCHANGE OF RINGS

Marriage is a state in which two people come together and create a union which is greater than the sum of its parts. It is difficult to express in words the profound relationship that is love. The ring has long been a symbol of the sincerity and permanence of a couple's love for one another and regard for their marriage. As the circle can begin anew at any point, so a good marriage can pick any point to renew itself. These rings are symbols of your eternal love.

As you place the ring on her finger, please repeat after me:

I, _____ give you, _____, this ring as an eternal symbol of my love and commitment to you.

As you place the ring on his finger, please repeat after me:

I, _____, give you, _____, this ring as an eternal symbol of my love and commitment to you.

CLOSING WORDS

It is love that brings you here today. It is love that makes yours a glorious union. And it will be love that makes your marriage endure. Love has given you wings, and your journey begins today. This is a journey no two have traveled before, it is unique to you. Wherever life may take you, you will stay by each other's side. I therefore join with everyone gathered today in our wish for your relationship to flourish and grow throughout a long and happy life together.

PROCLAMATION OF MARRIAGE

_____ you have publicly declared you will live together in marriage. You have made special promises to each other, symbolized by the joining of hands, taking of vows and the giving and receiving of rings. By the authority vested in me by the state of Ohio, I pronounce you husband and wife.

With greatest pleasure, I present to you for the first time, Mr. & Mrs. _____.

WELCOME

We have gathered here for the marriage of _____ and _____. On behalf of _____ and _____, we welcome all of you, and we warmly thank each of you for your presence here today. We know some of you have journeyed long distances to be here. Your love and support for _____ and _____ are very much appreciated.

Your participation in this wedding is not passive, for you have played important roles in their lives. You have been invited here out of their special relationships with you. We ask for your continued love and support for them in the years to come.

ADDRESS

Marriage begins in the giving of words. You cannot join yourselves to one another without giving your word. This must be an unconditional giving, for in joining yourselves to one another, you join yourselves to the unknown.

Marriage is one of the most important obligations that two people can commit to in their lifetime. A successful marriage is dependent upon many factors, but the first prerequisite is a strong bond of friendship and respect for one another. Your love for each other will grow with each passing day, yet it is your willingness to accept each other's strengths and weaknesses, with understanding and respect, that is the true foundation of a healthy marriage.

Marriage is the closest relationship that exists between two people. When a man and a woman decide to join together in marriage, they should do so with a full realization of its' responsibilities. Marriage is a serious commitment. When a man and a woman come together to make a public confession of their love and devotion, pronouncing vows and pledging their lives to each other, it is a threefold union. They are joined together spiritually, legally and physically. While marriage is a big commitment, it is also cause for a joyous celebration. You are about to take a new step forward into life. It is my hope that your joy in each other and in yourselves increases with each passing day.

Are you fully prepared to meet these obligations?

COMMUNITY BLESSING

As a community, we gather together in the midst of this celebration to be with this man and woman and support them during their days together as husband and wife. Please join me in meditation as I read our wishes for Jennifer and Dean: May their marriage be filled with faith and trust. May they always live with each other in peace and harmony. May they bear one another's weaknesses and grow from each other's strengths. May they forgive one another's failings. May their marriage have patience, kindness, cheerfulness, and selflessness. May they continue to grow together, and to strengthen their love throughout their lives. May it be so.

CONSECRATION

You have always had dreams of the potential of tomorrow, believing that anything was possible. As you live in this world and make a difference in it, your beloved will accompany you. Having found each other, you have made a decision that there is no moment in your lives more profoundly significant than this one, the moment you offer yourselves to become husband and wife. May you share with each other, from this day on, the unending joy of growth and discovery.

For many years to come you will remember this day; yet, beyond the fragrant flowers, beyond the melodious music, beyond the expressions of joy and encouragement from family and friends, beyond albums filled with picturesque memories, may you celebrate through the years that which is most fundamental about your union. You are joining because your love each other, you respect one another, and you will honor each other, and because you are committed to sharing equally in both the triumphs and trials of the days to come.

As you begin this new chapter in your lives, remember, all of your yesterdays have led you to today, and your love will lead you into tomorrow.

VOWS

_____, do you promise to love, respect and care for _____ for life, remaining faithful to your relationship, as it enters into new meanings and definitions?

RING CEREMONY

May I have the rings please?

Love freely given has no giver and no receiver. You are each the giver and each the receiver. The wedding ring is a symbol, in visible form, of the unbroken circle of your love, so that wherever you go, you may always return to your shared life together. May these rings always call to mind the power of your love, as you go about your day. May their circular form remind you that love given freely comes back around again and again.

_____ take this ring and place it on _____ finger and repeat after me.

I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband, as a partner and companion, to have and to hold, to love and respect, to honor and to cherish, in joy and in sorrow, from this day forward.

A READING: "THESE ARE THE HANDS"

Please present your hands palms up, so that your beloved may see the gift you are offering to each other.

- These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love for you.
- These are the hands that are holding yours on your wedding day as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow and forever.
- These are the hands that will work along side yours as together you build your future.
- These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years and with the slightest touch will comfort you like no other.
- These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief try to overwhelm you.
- These are hands that will wipe tears from your eyes countless times, both tears of joy and tears of sorrow.
- These are the hands that will help hold your family together as one.
- These are hands that will give you strength when you need it.
- These are the hands that even when wrinkled with age, will still be reaching for the hand of your beloved, still giving the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch.

PRONOUNCEMENT

____and____, you have chosen each other, declared your love and purpose before family and friends, and have made your pledge of love to each other, symbolized by the giving and receiving of rings. By virtue of the authority vested in me by the State of Colorado, I pronounce you "Husband and Wife". You may seal your union with a kiss!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor and privilege to present to you for the very first time, Mr. and Mrs. _____ and _____!

Sample Wine Box Ceremony:

Next, ____ and ____ have created a love letter and wine box ceremony. ____ and ____ have both written love letters to each other. These letters describe the good qualities they find in one another, the reasons they fell in love, and their reasons for choosing to marry. The letters are sealed in individual envelopes and they have not seen what the other has written. Today, the letters will be placed inside this box, along with a bottle of wine and will be sealed shut. Five years from today, on their 5th wedding anniversary, ____ and ____ will open this box, read their letters to one another, and toast the success of their marriage. Until that time, they will keep this box in a place of honor, prominently displayed in their home, as a constant reminder of their love and commitment to one another. ____ and ____, even though this box is intended to be opened in celebration and as a reward for five years of marriage, should you ever find your marriage enduring insurmountable hardships before that time, you are to open this box, sit and drink the wine together, and read the letters that you wrote to one another. Doing so will remind you of this day that you were united as a couple in marriage. By reading these love letters, it is hoped that you will reflect upon the reasons that you fell in love, will be reminded of why you chose to marry each other, and find the strength to overcome whatever obstacles lead you to open the box. The hope is, however, that you will never have a reason to open this box. And if this is the case, you are to open this box to share and enjoy on your 5th wedding anniversary!

Sample Sand Ceremony:

Today, ____ and ____, have chosen to commemorate their marriage through the celebration of the Sand Ceremony. This ceremony symbolizes the inseparable union of ____ and ____ into a new and eternal marital relationship. ____ and ____ will simultaneously pour separate containers of sand into a common vessel. Each grain of sand in their separate containers represents a unique and separate moment, decision, feeling or event that helped shaped ____ and ____ into the separate and unique individuals that they are today. As they pour their separate containers of sand into a common vessel, those separate and independent individuals will cease to exist. Instead they will merge into a loving and supportive marital community. ____ and ____, just as the grains of sand can never be separated into their individual containers again, so will your marriage be.

(The bride and groom pour their containers of sand together into a 3rd container)

Sample Unity Candle Ceremony:

Now, ____ and ____ will commemorate their marriage by lighting a Unity Candle. Light is the essence of our existence. Each one of us possesses an inner glow that represents our hopes, our dreams and aspirations in life. ____ and ____, the two distinct candle flames represent your lives before this day, individual, unique and special. Please take the candle symbolizing your life before today, and together light the center candle to symbolize the union of your individual lives.

As this new flame burns undivided, so shall your lives now be one. From now on your thoughts will always be for each other rather than your individual selves. Your plans will be mutual, your joys and sorrows both will be shared alike. Extinguish the two flames symbolizing your previous lives and you are forever united together in love.

Sample Glass Breaking Ceremony:

There have been many stories explaining the breaking of the glass. For those of us here today, it serves to remind us of several very important aspects of a marriage. ____ and ____, and everyone here today should consider these marriage vows as an irrevocable act, just as permanent and final as the breaking of this glass is unchangeable. The shattered glass also reminds us how fragile life and love can be. That sometimes a single thoughtless act, breach of trust, or marital misstep can damage a marriage in ways that are very difficult to undo, just as it would be difficult to undo the breaking of the glass. It serves as a reminder of the sanctity of marriage, and that the love of ____ and ____ should

last for as long as it would take to make the glass perfectly whole again. It also symbolizes the transforming experience that marriage creates, leaving the bride and groom forever changed. In a moment, ____ will break the glass signifying the end of the ceremony and the time for celebration.

Sample readings:

Falling in love is like owning a dog - Taylor Mali

First of all, it's a big responsibility,
So think long and hard before deciding on love.
On the other hand, love gives you a sense of security:
when you're walking down the street late at night
and you have a leash on love
ain't no one going to mess with you.
Because crooks and muggers think love is unpredictable.
Who knows what love could do in its own defense?
On cold winter nights, love is warm.
It lies between you and lives and breathes
and makes funny noises.
Love wakes you up all hours of the night with its needs.
It needs to be fed so it will grow and stay healthy.
Love doesn't like being left alone for long.
But come home and love is always happy to see you.
It may break a few things accidentally in its passion for life,
but you can never be mad at love for long.
Is love good all the time? No! No!
Love can be bad. Bad, love, bad! Very bad love.
Love makes messes.
Love leaves you little surprises here and there.
Love needs lots of cleaning up after.
Sometimes you just want to get love fixed.
Sometimes you want to roll up a piece of newspaper
and swat love on the nose,
not so much to cause pain,
just to let love know Don't you ever do that again!
Sometimes love just wants to go for a nice long walk.
Because love loves exercise.
It runs you around the block and leaves you panting.
It pulls you in several different directions at once,
or winds around and around you
until you're all wound up and can't move.
But love makes you meet people wherever you go.
People who have nothing in common but love
stop and talk to each other on the street.
Throw things away and love will bring them back,
again, and again, and again.
But most of all, love needs love, lots of it.
And in return, love loves you and never stops.

Classical Chinese Poem – unknown

I want to be your friend forever and ever
When the hills are all flat
and the rivers run dry
When the trees blossom in winter
and the snow falls in summer,

when heaven and earth mix -
not till then will I part from you.

The Sound of Silence - Raymondo Baughan
Here in the space between us and the world
lies human meaning
Into the vast uncertainty we call.
The echoes make our music,
sharp equations which can hold the stars,
and marvelous mythologies we trust.
This may be all we need
to lift our love against indifference and pain.

Here in the space between us and each other
lies all the future
of the fragment of the universe
which is our own.

I love you - Carl Sandburg
I love you. I love you for what you are,
but I love you yet more for what you are going to be.
I love you not so much for your realities as for your ideals.
I pray for your desires, that they may be great,
rather than for your satisfactions,
which may be so hazardously little.
A satisfied flower is one whose petals are about to fall.
But the most beautiful rose is one,
hardly more than a bud,
wherein the pangs and ecstasies of desire are working for larger and finer growth.
Not always shall you be what you are now.
You are going forward toward something great.
I am on the way with you and I love you

Marriage - Carl Sandburg
Live long and laugh loud,
Sent on singing, singing,
Smashed to the heart
Under the ribs
With a terrible love.
Joy always,
Joy everywhere __
Let joy kill you!
Keep away from the little deaths.

On Marriage - Erasmus
What more sweet than to live with one
with whom you are united in body and mind,
who talks with you in secret affection,
to whom you have committed
all your faith and your fortune?
What in all nature is lovelier?

You are bound to friends in affection.
How much more to a husband or wife
in the highest love,

with union of the body,
the bond of mutual vows
and the sharing of your goods!

Nothing is more safe, tranquil,
pleasant and lovable than marriage.

Sonnet 116 - William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments; love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no, it is an ever-fixèd mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Two Happy Lovers Make One Bread - Pablo Neruda

Two happy lovers make one bread,
a single moon drop in the grass.
Walking, they cast two shadows that flow together;
waking, they leave one sun empty in their bed.

Of all the possible truths, they chose the day;
they held it, not with ropes but with an aroma.
They did not shred the peace; they did not shatter words;
their happiness is a transparent tower.
The air and wine accompany the lovers.
The night delights them with its joyous petals.
They have a right to all the carnations.
Two happy lovers, without an ending, with no death,
they are born, they die, many times while they live:
they have the eternal life of the Natural.

from *Captain Corelli's mandolin* - Louis de Bernieres.

Love is a temporary madness; it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides. And when it subsides you have to make a decision. You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together that it is inconceivable that you should ever part. Because this is what love is. Love is not breathlessness, it is not excitement, it is not the promulgation of eternal passion. That is just being in love, which any fool can do. Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away, and this is both an art and a fortunate accident. Those that truly love have roots that grow towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossoms have fallen from their branches, they find that they are one tree and not two.

A Gift from the Sea - Anne Morrow Lindbergh

A good relationship has a pattern like a dance, and is built on some of the same rules. The partners do not need to hold on tightly, because they move confidently in the same pattern,

intricate but gay, and swift and free, like a country dance of Mozart's. To touch heavily would be to arrest the pattern and freeze the movement, to check the endlessly changing beauty of its unfolding. There is no place here for the possessive clutch, the clinging arm, the heavy hand; only the barest touch in passing. Now arm in arm, now face to face, now back to back - it does not matter which. Because they know they are partners moving to the same rhythm, creating a pattern together, and being invisibly nourished by it. The joy of such a pattern is not only the joy of creation or the joy of participation; it is also the joy of living in the moment. Lightness of touch and living in the moment are intertwined.

somewhere I have never traveled - ee cummings
somewhere I have never traveled, gladly beyond
any experience, your eyes have their silence:
in your most frail gesture are things which enclose me,
or which I cannot touch because they are too near

your slightest look will easily uncloze me
though I have closed myself as fingers,
you open always petal by petal myself as Spring opens
(touching skillfully, mysteriously) her first rose

or if your wish be to close me, I and
my life will shut very beautifully, suddenly,
as when the heart of this flower imagines
the snow carefully everywhere descending;

nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals
the power of your intense fragility: whose texture
compels me with the color of its countries,
rendering death and forever with each breathing

(I do not know what it is about you that closes
and opens; only something in me understands
the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses)
nobody, not even the rain, has such small hands

The Passionate Shepherd to His Love - Delmore Schwartz

Come live with me and be my wife,
We'll seek the peaks and pits of life
And run the gauntlet of the heart
On mountains or the depths of art.
We'll do the most that thinking can
Against emotion's Ghenghis Khan.
And we will play on Hallowe'en
Like all souls on the silver screen,
Or at a masked ball ask for fun
Dancing dressed as monk and nun.
We'll ride a solemn music's boat
When humors cough in breast and throat.
When snow comes like a sailing fleet
We'll skate a ballet in the street,
Though poor as saints or rocks, immense
Our chatter's rich irreverence.
And sometimes speak of endless death
To quicken ever conscious breath.

If one becomes too serious,
The other can bring down the house
With jokes which seem hilarious
About the self's pretentious Ows.

I'll be your room-mate and your hoax,
The scapeghost of your gentle jokes.
Like Moliere's bourgeois gentleman,
You may discover you have been
Speaking blank verse all your life,
And hence you must become my wife.
For you will know of metaphors,
If I say aeroplanes are bores.
If these excursions seem to you
Interesting as a rendezvous,
Rich as cake and revenue,
Handsome as hope and as untrue,
And full of travel's points of view,
Vivid as red and fresh as dew,
Come live with me and try my life,
And be my night, my warmth, my wife.

1 Corinthians, 13.

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all that I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

It is the union of you and me - Rabindranath Tagore

It is for the union of you and me
That there is light in the sky.
It is for the union of you and me
That the earth is decked in dusky green.
It is for the union of you and me
That night sits motionless with the world in her arms;
Dawn appears opening the eastern door
With sweet murmurs in her voice.
The boat of hope sails along the currents of
Eternity that union,
Flowers of the ages are being gathered together
For its welcoming ritual.

It is for the union of you and me
that this heart of mine, in the garb of a bride,
has proceeded from birth to birth
upon the surface of this ever-turning world
to choose the beloved.

Irish Blessing

You are the star of each night,
You are the brightness of every morning,
You are the story of each guest,
You are the report of every land.
No evil shall befall you, on hill nor bank,
In field or valley, on mountain or in glen.
Neither above, nor below, neither in sea,
Nor on shore,
In skies above, nor in the depths.
You are the kernel of my heart,
You are the face of my sun,
You are the harp of my music,
You are the crown of my company.

Blessing - Gertrude Nelsen

May every blessing and grace be yours
May your love grow stronger and deeper with each passing year.
May joy and delight fill your home
May daily problems not vex you unduly
nor the desire for earthly possessions dominate you

May you have true friends to stay by you in joy and sorrow
And if children bless you, may they return your love many times over.
With wise and generous hearts
May you help all to come to you in need of comfort
and may you reach a ripe age together
content for having lived a life of goodness and worth

The Twelve Gifts in Marriage - Charlene Costanzo

May you look for what is good in each other.
May you respect each other's differences.
May you make time each day for moments of play.
Every day, may you be grateful.
May you show that you care when you come and go.
May you choose to love even when you feel unloving.
May you touch tenderly, speak kindly, and listen with attention.
May you be quick to say "I am sorry" as well as "I forgive."
May life's sorrows bring you closer together.
May troubles strengthen your commitment.
Again and again, may you renew your dreams.
And may you share your love with the world.
Living happily ever after is not the end of a fairy tale. It is the
common purpose that all life seeks.

APACHE WEDDING BLESSING

May the sun bring you new energies by day;
May the moon softly restore you by night.
May the rain wash away any worries you may have
And the breeze blow new strength into your being.
And all the days of your life,
May you walk gently through the world
And know its beauty.

Now you will feel not the rain, for each will shelter the other.
Now you will feel not cold, for each will warm the other.
Now you will feel not solitude, for each will company the other.
Now you are two persons, but both will lead one life.
When you go to your dwelling to enter into the days of your life,
May your days be good and long upon the earth.

IRISH BLESSING

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields
And may the hand of a friend always be near.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.
May God be with you and bless you:
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortune, Rich in blessings.
May you know nothing but happiness
From this day forward.
May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home
May green be the grass you walk on,
May blue be the skies above you,
May pure be the joys that surround you,
May true be the hearts that love you