

Examples from the Ceremony Resource Booklet

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Welcome & Address

“ Dear family and friends, we are gathered here because these two people, love each other. We are here because they love each other so much that they want to share their lives together. And we are here because they love us so much that they want to share their joy and their love with us. Let us then come together to celebrate the love that this woman has for this man, and the love this man has for this woman.”

“ To be true, this outward form must be a symbol of that which is inner and real: a deep personal union, which a minister may bless and the state make legal, but which only love, compassion, discipline, true intimacy create; and mutual loyalty fulfill.”

Readings

1. The Miracle of Love by Barbara Burrow

The miracle of love is like the miracle of a flower: It thrives upon the sunshine of a smile... It entwines itself around the heart.

Its roots are secured in the memories of yesterday
And its petals breathe the promise of joy-filled tomorrows.

Love blossoms and fills the days with beauty and delight. Delicate, soft, and tender:
Majestic, strong and tall... So grows love. To be loved is to know happiness and contentment.

To give love is to know the joy of sharing oneself. It is through the miracle of love that we discover the fullness of life.

2. I Love You Not Only For What You Are by Roy Croft

I love you not only for what you are, But for what I am when I am with you.

I love you not only for what you have made of yourself
But for what you are making of me.

I love you for the part of me that you bring out; I love you for putting your hand into my heaped-up heart
And passing over all the foolish, weak things that you can't help dimly seeing there,
And for drawing out into the light all the beautiful belongings that no one else had
Looked quite far enough to find.

I love you because you have done more than any creed could have done to make me good,
And far more than any fate could have done to make me happy.

You have done it Without a touch, Without a word, Without a sign . You have done it by being yourself . Perhaps that is what being a friend (partner) means, after all.

Sample Vows

1. Bride/Groom: Love has given us wings, commitment gives us roots. Wherever life may lead us, I will stay by your side. I promise to honor and respect you always, to have faith in our love in good times and in bad, to cherish you in sickness and in health, to bear with you all things, in happiness and in sadness. Let us make of our two lives one adventure. From this day forward I pledge to you my friendship and love.

2. I, ___ take you ____ to be no other than yourself. Loving what I know of you, trusting what I do not yet know, with respect for your integrity, and faith in your abiding love for me, through all our years, and in all that life may bring us, I embrace you as my wife/husband.

3. I want to create with you a living example of the beautiful relationship that is intended between a man and a woman. I commit my life to our partnership in marriage. I promise to express my thoughts and emotions to you, to speak openly and honestly, to listen to you, and to maintain the respect and trust that has grown between us. You are my lover, my teacher, my model, my accomplice, and my true counterpart. I will love you, hold you, and honor you, respect you, encourage you, and cherish you, in health and in sickness, through sorrow and success, for all the days of my life.

Introduction to Rings

1. From the earliest of times, the ring has been a symbol of completeness, an emblem of unbroken, eternal commitment. It is worn on the third finger because of an ancient Greek belief that a vein from that finger connected directly to the heart, thus symbolizing the depth and sincerity of love.

2. These rings you exchange today represent the never-ending circle of love that binds you together as life partners. Love freely given has no beginning and no end -- for each is the giver and each is the receiver. Whenever you look upon these rings, may it remind you of the enduring commitment you have made today to love each other and to receive love from each other.

Ring Exchange words:

1. I give you this ring to wear upon your hand as a symbol of our love. 2. With all my heart, and all my love, I join my life with yours. 3 With all my heart, I give you this ring as a symbol of the love we celebrate today. 4. With this ring, I marry you and join my life with yours.

Pronouncement:

“ In this sacred, supportive presence [of God] and of your family and friends, you ___ and _____ have exchanged your vows and your rings. By the power of your love, you have created your union, which we joyfully recognize, celebrate, and declare it to be blessed. There is no greater magic than that which happens when two people declare their love for one another. A metamorphosis takes place, and we have been invited to witness it. ___ and ___ came here separately, and now stand together. Let all present mark this day. Those whom love has joined together, let no one put asunder.

Let us rejoice as I pronounce ___ and ___ husband and wife. (you may kiss the bride (or, each other)

Blessing/Prayer:

1. Let us join our hearts together for this couple in the name of that which we each hold sacred, (**Apache Wedding Blessing**)

Now you will feel less rain, For each of you will be a shelter for the other. Now you will feel less cold, For each of you will be warmth for the other. Now you feel less loneliness, For each of you will be a companion for the other. Now you are two persons, But there is only one life before you. Enter into the days of your life together, And may your days be good and long upon this earth. With our fondest hopes, ___ and ___ go now in peace, and may peace and a vibrant, ever-expanding sacred spirit of love attend you always. Amen.

2. Let us join our hearts in prayer for this couple in the name of that which we each hold sacred, (**Universal version of the St. Francis prayer**)

Creative God of Love or [Spirit of Life; Mysterious Presence],

Please make ___ and ___ instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, may they bring love. Where there is hurt, may they bring the spirit of forgiveness. Where there is despair, may they bring hope. Where there is darkness, may they bring light. Where there is sadness, may they bring joy. Where there is pain and conflict, may they bring courage and harmony. For it is in giving that they shall receive, In losing that they shall find, And in forgiving that they shall be forgiven. Grant that they may seek rather to comfort than to be comforted, To understand than to be understood To love rather than to be loved.

Closing Words:

1. And now, as they confirm their promises to each other, may this be but the beginning of a relationship that will grow and mature with each passing year, until the latter days become even more wonderful than the first. With our fondest hopes, ___ and ___, go now in peace and may a vibrant, ever-expanding sacred spirit of love attend you all of your days. Amen.

2. With our fondest hopes, _ and _ , go now in peace. Love has given you wings; commitment gives you roots. May your marriage always divide your grief and multiply your joy, and may you ever be inspired by the depth of tenderness you feel right this moment. Let us all say, "Amen."