

Many Blessings Standard Ceremony #6 Same Sex Wedding Ceremony

[Please note, the wording can be adapted if you are interested in any of the other Standard Wedding Ceremonies]

Opening Words:

Good afternoon, and a very warm welcome to all!

Friends and family, your presence is welcome on this glorious day as we have come to celebrate the wedding of _____ and _____.

Since time immemorial, people have performed ceremonies to mark a transition, a change of status. Today we gather for that happiest of ceremonies – the change of status from single individuals to a married couple.

It is one of life's richest surprises when the fateful meeting of two individuals leads them to proceed together along a common path. It is indeed one of life's finest experiences when a chance relationship grows into a permanent bond of love.

This meeting and this love are what bring us together today. The uniting of these two friends to establish a new family is an important and memorable event. It brings together two separate families and backgrounds and creates a union that is a sign of joy for us all.

In their love for each other, which they publicly express in this ceremony, _____ and _____ demonstrate not only their joy in the present but their commitment to share the future together. This is a time of celebration for all of you who know and love them.

Ministers Thoughts on Marriage

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 not only marrying the right partner,
it is BEING the right partner.
This is "The Art of Marriage".

Declaration of Intent:

Before you, _____ and you, _____, are joined together in marriage in my presence and in the presence of these, your family, friends and community, I am bound to remind you publicly of the solemn, the serious and the permanent nature of the relationship into which you are now about to enter.

_____ and _____, do you come here freely, and without reservation, to enter a marriage as companions living together as one, enjoying equality? Do you promise to love, respect, assist and look after each other for the rest of your lives? Are you prepared to live in harmony, and jointly strive for the welfare of your family, and for a just and equal society?

Answer: We do.

Vows:

With the vows you will now speak you are about to enter into a marriage which is most sacred, may the love with which you now join hands and hearts never fail but only grow deeper and stronger each day. Remember that the hand offered by each of you is an extension of self, just as is your mutual love. Cherish the touch, for you touch not only your own, but another life. Be ever sensitive to its pulse. Seek always to understand and to respect its rhythm.

Partner 1

_____, please take _____'s hand and repeat after me:

I _____, take you _____
To be my partner in life
And my one true love
I will cherish our friendship
And love you today,
Tomorrow,
And forever
I will trust you and honor you
I will laugh with you/ and cry with you.
Through the best and the worst,
Through the difficult and the easy.
Whatever may come
I will always be there.
As I have given you my hand to hold/
So I give you my life to keep

Partner 2, do you take Partner 1, whose hand you hold to be your life partner, cherishing him/her with love and devotion?

Respond: I do

Partner 2

_____, please take _____'s hand and repeat after me:

I _____, take you _____
To be my partner in life
And my one true love
I will cherish our friendship
And love you today,
Tomorrow,
And forever

I will trust you and honor you
I will laugh with you/ and cry with you.
Through the best and the worst,
Through the difficult and the easy.
Whatever may come
I will always be there.
As I have given you my hand to hold/
So I give you my life to keep

Partner 1, do you take Partner 2, whose hand you hold to be your life partner, cherishing him/her with love and devotion?

Respond: I do

Exchange of Rings

The ring is an ancient symbol, blessed and simple. Round these rings are, like the sun, like the eye, and like the arms that embrace. Circle they are; for love that is given comes back 'round again. May, therefore, these symbols remind you that your love, like the sun, illuminates; that your love, like the eye, must see clearly; and that your love, like the arms which embrace, is a grace upon this world.

Partner 1

Please repeat after me:

I, _____, give you this wedding ring
as a symbol
to remind you of the love I have for you,
the joy I experience when I am around you,
and the eternal commitment I will give you.
Think of me whenever you look upon it.

Partner 2

Please repeat after me:

I, _____, give you this wedding ring
as a symbol
to remind you of the love I have for you,
the joy I experience when I am around you,
and the eternal commitment I will give you.
Think of me whenever you look upon it.

Proclamation:

Before I pronounce you married partners, I have just one more thing I want you to do. Your wedding day is one that seems to fly by. It is filled with emotions, friends, rings and dances. Many people remember how fleeting their own wedding day was. So I want you to take a few seconds to look into each others' eyes. Think about the happiness that you're feeling in this place, in this moment. Really let that feeling register in your heart and mind. Now, I want you to think about your life together in twenty years. Where are you? What are you doing? We all know that your visions of the future are not identical, but always complimentary. John Lennon once said " a dream you dream alone is only a dream, a dream you dream together, THAT is reality." That new reality starts now.

So , _____ and _____ have declared before all of us that they will live together in marriage. They have made special promises to each other. They have symbolized it by joining of hands, taking of vows and exchanging of rings

By the authority vested in me by the State of Pennsylvania, it is with great pleasure that I pronounce you legally married spouses for life.

You may now seal your marriage with a kiss!

Marriage Blessing

Above you are the stars, below you are the stones.
As time passes, remember...
Like a star may your love be constant,
Like the earth may your love be firm.
May each morning bring you joy,
Follow by evenings of peace
May your troubles grow few as your blessings increase
May your hands be forever clasped in friendship
And you hearts joined forever in love.
Be free in giving of affection and of warmth.
Have no fear, and let not the ways or words of the unenlightened give you unease.
May the strength of this love shared here today be with you,
Now and always!

Presentation

Therefore, on your behalf and on the behalf of the community, I would like to introduce as newly-weds for the first time in public _____ & _____!