

Town of Pelham

# Civil Marriages

Ontario, Canada



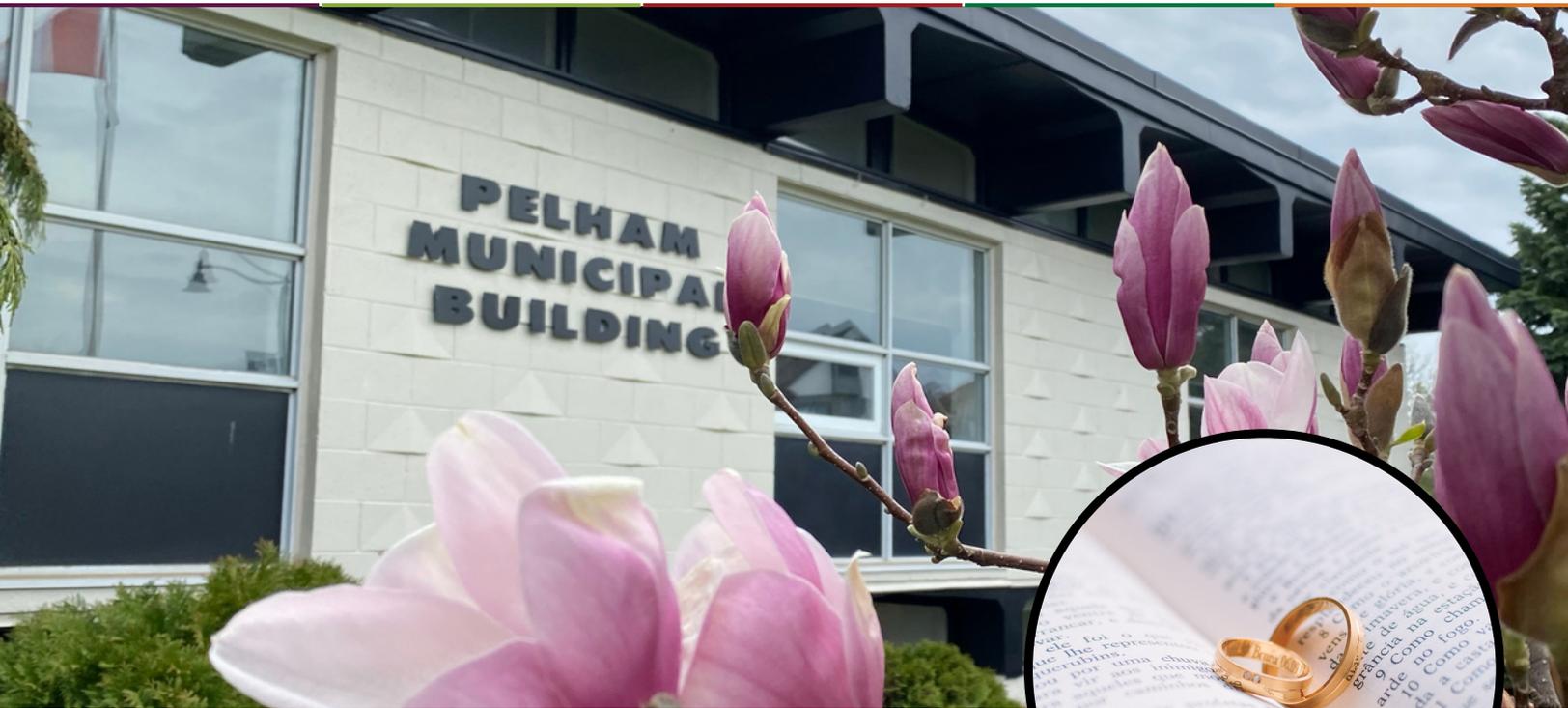
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# Table of Contents

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<b>Introduction</b>	2
Applicant Checklist	3
Civil Marriage Guidelines	4
Common Questions	7
Marriage Certificate and Name Change	9
Town of Pelham Ceremony Locations	10
<b>Civil Marriage Ceremony</b>	11
<b>Design your Ceremony</b>	15
Ceremony Introduction and Legal Declaration(s)	16
Reading(s) (Optional)	19
Statement of Intent (Optional)	26
Exchange of Vows	27
Exchange of Rings (Optional)	29
Ceremony Conclusion	31

# Introduction



The Town of Pelham is proud to offer non-religious, legal civil marriage ceremonies presided over by a legal Officiant.

A civil marriage ceremony can take place anywhere in Ontario and look however you'd like. Your ceremony can be a brief event at a municipal facility, an intimate gathering with friends and family, or a larger celebration. Regardless of your selection, the Town of Pelham and its Officiants will give your ceremony the priority it deserves.

Please refer to the following sections of the guide for more information:

- Applicant Checklist
- Civil Marriage Guidelines
- Common Questions
- Marriage Certificate and Name Change
- Town of Pelham Ceremony Locations
- Pre-selected Civil Marriage Ceremony
- Design your Ceremony

# Applicant Checklist



## Book your civil marriage ceremony with the Town of Pelham using the following checklist.

-  Contact the Office of the Clerk to confirm Officiant availability for your preferred ceremony time and date.
-  Book your venue.
-  Make arrangements for two (2) witnesses. Witnesses can be provided by the Town at the request of the applicant(s). Additional fees will apply.
-  Review this Civil Marriages Guide, complete and return the Civil Marriage Pre-Ceremony Questionnaire to reserve your ceremony date and time.
-  Pay all required fees.
-  Obtain a valid marriage licence in Ontario (valid for ninety (90) days from issuance). Should you wish to receive your licence from the Town of Pelham, please apply online on the Town's website, Marriages and Civil Ceremonies webpage and book an appointment for issuance.
-  Arrange for any desired music, videographer, photographer and/or decorations.
-  Approximately three (3) months following your civil marriage ceremony, apply for your Marriage Certificate through Service Ontario.

# Civil Marriage Guidelines



## General

- Civil marriage ceremonies may be conducted during regular office hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:00 pm) or after-hours/off-site at the discretion of the applicant(s) and will be subject to the availability of the Officiant/venue. Additional fees will apply for after-hours/off-site ceremonies.
- A civil marriage ceremony shall incorporate all mandatory declarations under the Marriage Act, with various options being made available through the Clerk's Office.
- Civil marriage ceremonies shall be secular, with no reference to God, a Supreme Being, or any religious connotations.
- Celebrants for a civil marriage ceremony will consent to defend and indemnify the Town of Pelham for any loss or damage incurred by their invitees.
- Celebrants shall agree that the Town of Pelham will not be held responsible for personal injury or damage, nor for the theft or loss of any personal property of anyone attending the civil marriage ceremony.
- Celebrants shall be responsible for the conduct and supervision of all ceremony attendees and ensure that all event regulations are followed.

## Booking a Civil Marriage Ceremony

- Scheduling a civil marriage ceremony should be made with the Clerk/Designate at least four (4) weeks prior to the intended ceremony date. All efforts will be made to accommodate your desired ceremony date and time.
- Civil marriage ceremony fees are detailed in the Town of Pelham Fees and Charges By-law. Applicable fees shall be paid by cash, debit or cheque.
- A civil ceremony booking shall be confirmed once the pre-ceremony questionnaire has been returned, Officiant availability confirmed and payment received in full.
- Celebrants shall advise the Clerk/Designate of any accessibility requirements prior to the date of the ceremony.

# Civil Marriage Guidelines Cont'd



## **Witnesses and Interpreters**

- Two (2) witnesses shall be present at a civil marriage ceremony. The official witnesses must be fourteen (14) years of age or older.
- Municipal staff may act as witnesses, subject to an additional fee.
- The parties must supply an interpreter in the event that they do not speak English and require language assistance if the Clerk/Designate deems it necessary.
- The interpreter cannot be one of the witnesses. Interpreters will be required to sign a declaration.

## **Location and Facilities**

- Unless otherwise requested, the municipal facility chosen for the ceremony will only be available for a maximum of one (1) hour per ceremony. Rental fees will apply.
- Using confetti, rice, bubbles, candles, incense, etc., inside the municipal facility or on municipal property is prohibited. Any breach of this provision shall result in the imposition of a cleaning fee.
- If the ceremony is conducted in a facility not owned by the Town of Pelham, it shall be the sole responsibility of the celebrants/participants to make the appropriate arrangements and pay for the use of the facility.

## **Ceremony**

- Celebrants are encouraged to arrive at least fifteen (15) minutes before the ceremony.
- Personal vows, readings and/or music may be permitted in addition to the mandatory declarations, subject to the approval of the Clerk/Designate.
- Cell phones must be turned off or silenced before the commencement of the ceremony.
- To maintain the ceremony's dignity, personal attire should be appropriate for the occasion, although formal attire is not required.

# Civil Marriage Guidelines Cont'd



## **Decorations, Flowers, Music and Photography**

- Music appropriate to the dignity of the occasion will be permitted and must be identified to the Clerk/Designate upon booking. Celebrants are responsible for providing the equipment.
- Photographs are permitted during the formal ceremony, subject to the discretion of the Officiant.
- Town-owned grounds may be used for photographs if the ceremony is held in a municipal facility.
- Celebrants may place floral arrangements and/or other decorations in the municipal facility fifteen (15) minutes before the ceremony under the approval of the Clerk. Decorations shall be removed immediately following the conclusion of the ceremony.

## **Drugs, Alcohol and Stimulants**

- If the Officiant believes that alcohol and/or other stimulants have been used, the ceremony will not proceed.
- The Clerk/Designate has the authority to refuse to solemnize the civil marriage of any person(s) if they have reasonable grounds to believe the person(s) lack the capacity to marry by reason of being mentally ill or under the influence of alcohol and/or other stimulants.
- Smoking is prohibited in municipal facilities and on municipal property.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in municipal facilities and on municipal property.

# Common Questions

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## **What documents are required for a civil marriage ceremony?**

The applicants are required to obtain an Ontario marriage licence before the civil marriage ceremony. The licence is valid for ninety (90) days following the date of issue. A marriage licence may be obtained from the Town of Pelham or any municipality in Ontario. To reserve the date and time of the civil marriage ceremony, the applicants must complete and return a pre-ceremony questionnaire with the applicable payment to the Clerk's Office.

## **Who may officiate the wedding?**

In the Town of Pelham, the Clerk and their designate(s) are appointed Officiants and may perform civil marriage ceremonies.

## **Can a friend or family member officiate the civil marriage ceremony?**

In Ontario, a Judge or Justice of the Peace, Town or City Clerk and/or Religious Official may perform a civil marriage ceremony. A friend or family member who does not hold the above title cannot perform a legal ceremony. Subject to the approval of the Clerk/Designate, a friend and/or family member may join in the formal ceremony to perform a reading.

## **Can we get married on the weekend?**

Yes. Officiants may conduct civil marriage ceremonies outside regular business hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm) upon request. Additional fees will apply to ceremonies held off-site or outside of regular business hours. Confirmation of civil marriage ceremonies held off-site or outside of regular business hours shall be subject to the availability of the Officiant.

## **Does the Town of Pelham offer "same-day service" for a ceremony?**

The Town of Pelham does not offer same-day service for civil marriage ceremonies. Requests should be made a minimum of four (4) weeks prior to the ceremony date, or as may be agreed upon depending on the availability of the Officiant. The Town of Pelham will not issue a marriage licence the same day as the civil marriage ceremony.

# Common Questions Cont'd



## **Are witnesses required for a civil marriage ceremony?**

Yes, all celebrants require two (2) witnesses present during the ceremony. Witnesses must be at least fourteen (14) years of age and speak English, or have a translator present. If no witnesses are available, the Town may supply one (1) or two (2) witnesses upon request. Additional fees will apply per witness. The Town will only supply witnesses for civil marriage ceremonies held on Town property.

## **May we include a reading from the Bible or a blessing during the ceremony?**

The Officiant may not perform any type of religious ceremony in keeping with the spirit of the Marriage Act, which requires ceremonies to be "non-denominational". The celebrants may have someone other than the Officiant provide a religious reading or blessing.

## **Who registers our civil ceremony?**

After the ceremony, all parties must sign the statement of marriage, record of solemnization (to be retained by the celebrants) and the Town's civil marriage ceremony record. The Officiant will ensure all documentation is forwarded to the Office of the Registrar General in Thunder Bay within two (2) business days to register your marriage with the Province of Ontario.

# Marriage Certificate and Name Change



## **Receiving a Marriage Certificate from Service Ontario**

A Marriage Certificate is the legal record of a marriage. It lists the date, location of the marriage and the names of the people who were married.

Before you can apply to obtain a Marriage Certificate, the marriage needs to be registered by the Province of Ontario. The officiant who performed the marriage will do this by sending a complete and signed marriage licence to the Office of the Registrar immediately following the ceremony. The registration process takes approximately 6-8 weeks after the license is filed; once processed, a Marriage Certificate can be ordered.

A Record of Solemnization is not the same thing as a Marriage Certificate.

**To order a Marriage Certificate, wait 6 to 8 weeks following the ceremony and then complete the forms available at [www.serviceontario.ca](http://www.serviceontario.ca)**

Obtaining a Marriage Certificate is not required; however, individuals need this document to:

- Provide legal proof that they are married
- To apply for certain social benefits
- Settle an estate
- To apply for a change of last name

## **Changing Your Last Name After Marriage**

It is not required to change your last name after marriage. A new name can be assumed straight away; however, for changes to official documents, a Marriage Certificate will be required for proof of marriage.

Should you or your spouse wish to change your/their last name, go to the Service Ontario website for more information.

[www.ontario.ca/page/change-your-last-name](http://www.ontario.ca/page/change-your-last-name)

# Town of Pelham Ceremony Locations



## **Peace Park Bandshell/Gazebo**

The Peace Park Bandshell is located on the manicured grounds of Peace Park adjacent to Pelham Town Hall. This semi-enclosed structure acts as a beautiful outdoor venue.

Capacity: 15-20 people within the bandshell; ample standing room outside of the bandshell/Gazebo. Seating is not provided.



## **Old Pelham Town Hall (OTPH)**

Built-in 1888, the Old Pelham Town Hall offers a beautiful Victorian-style venue for your civil marriage ceremony.

Capacity: 110 people. Seating is available.

Reservation of this venue is the applicant's responsibility and can be completed by contacting the Town of Pelham Facilities Rental Associate at 905-732-7891.



## **Meridian Community Centre (MCC)**

The Meridian Community Centre indoor and outdoor spaces are flexible spaces that can host your civil marriage ceremony. Outdoor space includes the garden area and the interior community rooms, including the Accursi and Kinsmen Rooms.

Outdoor Capacity: under 100

Indoor Capacity: 209 people (full room) / 86 people (half room)

Seating and other amenities are available by request.

Reservation of this venue is the applicant's responsibility and can be completed by contacting the Town of Pelham Facilities Rental Associate at 905-732-7891.



Accessibility accommodations may be provided for each Town of Pelham location. Please notify the Clerk of requirements upon booking.

**Town of Pelham Officials may officiate a civil marriage ceremony off-site, subject to availability. Reservation and payment of an off-site location shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant(s).**

# Civil Marriage Ceremony



The Town of Pelham Clerk's Office offers a pre-selected ceremony, or applicants may choose to design and customize their civil marriage ceremony from the "Design Your Ceremony" section. Applicants wishing to have a ceremony comprised only of the required legal components are encouraged to review and select the 'Civil Marriage Ceremony' that follows.

**The following civil marriage ceremony script is comprised only of the legal components of the ceremony.**

At the applicants' request, the Clerk's Office will utilize alternative gender-neutral language throughout the ceremony.

# Civil Marriage Ceremony



**The following civil marriage ceremony script is comprised only of the legal components of the ceremony.**

Officiant: We are gathered here today to witness the formal joining of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in legal matrimony according to the custom and law prevailing by the Government of the Province of Ontario.

Marriage is not to be entered upon thoughtlessly or irresponsibly but with a due and serious understanding and appreciation of the ends for which it is contracted.

Therefore, if there is anyone present who can show just cause why these two people may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, they should declare it now or hereafter remain silent.

Officiant to 1st person:

Repeat after me please:

"I do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I, \_\_\_\_\_ may not be joined in matrimony to \_\_\_\_\_."

Officiant to 2nd person:

Repeat after me please:

"I do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I, \_\_\_\_\_ may not be joined in matrimony to \_\_\_\_\_."

Reading (Optional, chosen by the applicants)

# Civil Marriage Ceremony



## Exchange of Vows

Officiant: Would you please face each other, join hands and repeat after me

Officiant to 1st person:

Please repeat after me.

"I call upon these persons here present to witness that I \_\_\_\_\_, do take you \_\_\_\_\_ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/spouse/partner).

Officiant to 2nd person:

Please repeat after me.

"I call upon these persons here present to witness that I \_\_\_\_\_, do take you \_\_\_\_\_ to be my lawful wedded (husband/wife/spouse partner).

## Exchange of Rings (Optional)

Officiant to 1st person:

This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and life together.

Please place this ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s left hand and repeat after me:

"I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and promise to be with you as long as I live."

Officiant to 2nd person:

This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and life together.

Please place this ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s left hand and repeat after me:

"I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and promise to be with you as long as I live."

# Civil Marriage Ceremony



## **Pronouncement**

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have pledged themselves to each other and have declared this symbolically by their vows and the exchange of rings

I, \_\_\_\_\_, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act of Ontario, do hereby pronounce you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to be (husband and wife/partners in life/married).

You may celebrate your marriage with a kiss

## **Ceremony Conclusion**

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, I wish you a long life, happiness and prosperity. May the vows that you made to each other today sustain you forever.

Loved ones, friends and family, may I introduce to you

\_\_\_\_\_ (Mr. and Mrs. (shared last name) / first name, first name (shared last name) / the happy couple)

## **Signing of the Register**

At this time, the wedded parties and their witnesses will sign the Official Marriage Register.

# Design your Ceremony



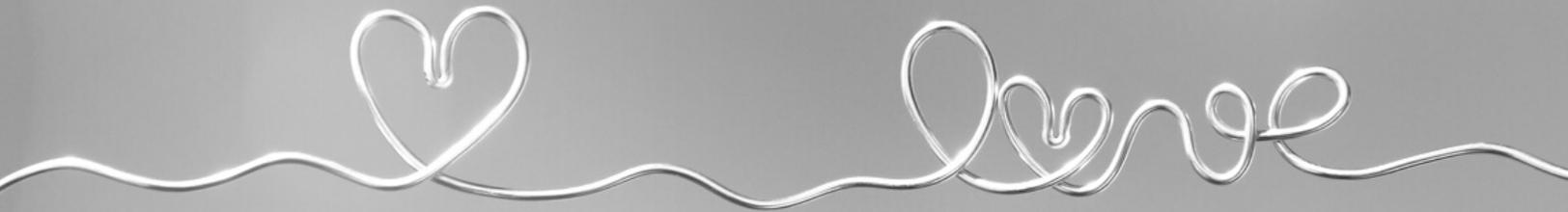
The Town of Pelham Clerk's Office welcomes applicants to design and customize their civil marriage ceremony. Please review and select your preferred option(s), from the order of service to follow. Please indicate your selection on the Civil Marriage Pre-Ceremony Questionnaire.

Applicants wishing to have a civil marriage ceremony comprised only of the required legal components are encouraged to review and select the Civil Marriage Ceremony found previously in this guide. At the applicant's request, the Clerk's Office will utilize alternative gender-neutral language throughout the ceremony.

## Order of Service

1. Ceremony Introduction and Legal Declaration(s)
2. Reading(s) (Optional)
3. Statement of Intent (Optional)
4. Exchange of Vows
5. Exchange of Rings (Optional)
6. Pronouncement
7. Ceremony Conclusion
8. Signing of the Registrar

# Ceremony Introduction



## Introduction 1

Good Afternoon – What a beautiful day for a wedding!

We are gathered here today to witness the formal joining of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in legal matrimony according to the custom and law prevailing by the Government of the Province of Ontario.

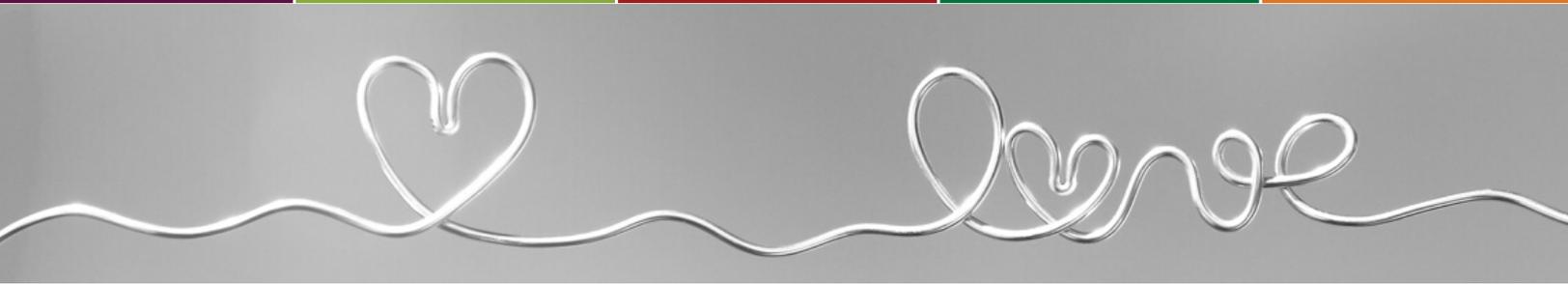
Marriage is not to be entered upon thoughtlessly or irresponsibly but with a due and serious understanding and appreciation of the ends for which it is contracted.

Therefore, if there is anyone present who can show just cause why these two people may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, they should declare it now or hereafter remain silent.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ you have made it known that you want to be joined in marriage and no one has shown any valid reason why you may not. If either of you know of any lawful impediment why you should not be married, you are now to declare it.

Introduction options continued on following page.

# Ceremony Introduction



## Introduction 2

On behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ welcome and thank you for being here on this special day. By your presence, you celebrate with them the love they have discovered in each other and you support their decision to commit themselves to one another for the rest of their lives. Today we are here to celebrate love. We come together to witness and proclaim the joining together of these two persons in marriage.

Marriage is not to be entered upon thoughtlessly or irresponsibly but with a due and serious understanding and appreciation of the ends for which it is contracted.

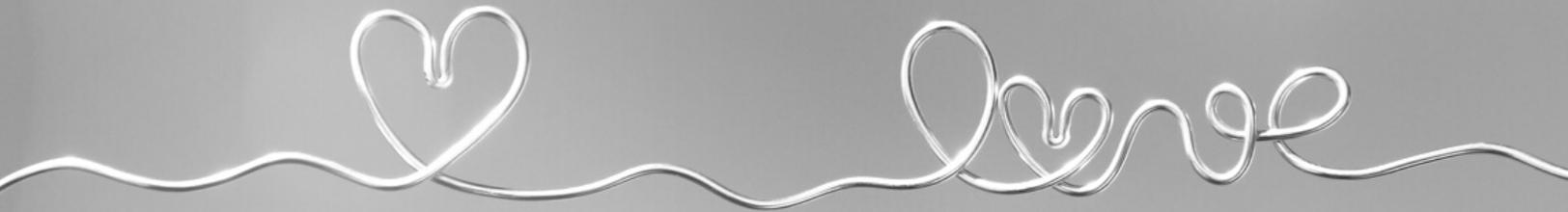
Therefore, if there is anyone present who can show just cause why these two persons may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, they should now declare it or hereafter remain silent.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ you have made it known that you want to be joined in marriage and no one has shown any valid reason why you may not.

If either of you know of any lawful impediment why you should not be married, you are now to declare it.

Introduction options continued on following page.

# Ceremony Introduction



## Introduction 3

Welcome, family, friends and loved ones. We gather here today to celebrate the marriage of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. You have come here to share in this formal commitment they make to one another, to offer your love and support to this union, and to allow \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to start their married life together surrounded by the people dearest and most important to them.

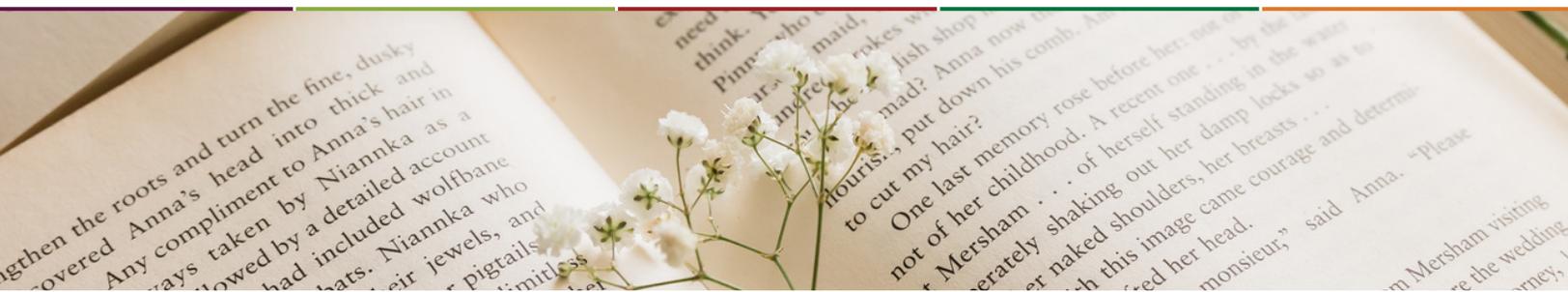
Marriage is the faithful union between two people, the result of which is the growth of a family whose members support and enjoy each other in good times and in bad times. Marriage is not to be entered upon thoughtlessly or irresponsibly but rather with maturity and honesty.

Therefore, if there is anyone present who can show just cause why these two people may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, they should speak now or hereafter remain silent.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ you have made it known that you want to be joined in marriage and no one has shown any valid reason why you may not.

If either of you know of any lawful impediment why you should not be married, you are now to declare it.

# Readings (Optional)



Applicants may provide the Clerk/Designate with a reading of their choice outside of the list below. All readings must be reviewed and approved by the Clerk/Designate in advance of the ceremony.

## Reading 1

### I Will Be Here

If in the morning when you wake,  
If the sun does not appear, I will be here.  
If in the dark we lose sight of love,  
Hold my hand and have no fear, I will be here.  
I will be here,  
When you feel like being quiet,  
When you need to speak your mind I will listen.  
Through the winning, losing, and trying we'll be together, and I will be here.  
If in the morning when you wake,  
If the future is unclear, I will be here.  
As sure as seasons were made for change,  
Our lifetimes were made for years, I will be here.  
I will be here,  
And you can cry on my shoulder,  
When the mirror tells us we're older.  
I will hold you, to watch you grow in beauty,  
And tell you all the things you are to me.  
We'll be together and I will be here.  
I will be true to the promises I've made,  
To you and to the one who gave you to me.  
I will be here.

Reading options continued on following page.

# Readings (Optional)



## Reading 2

### True Love

Love is patient, love is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking,  
it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

## Reading 3

### Blessing of the Hands

These are the hands of your partner, young and strong and full of love, holding your hands as you promise to love each other today, tomorrow, and forever.

These are the hands that will work alongside yours as together you build your future.

These are the hands that will hold you and comfort you in grief and uncertainty.

These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes, tears of sorrow and joy.

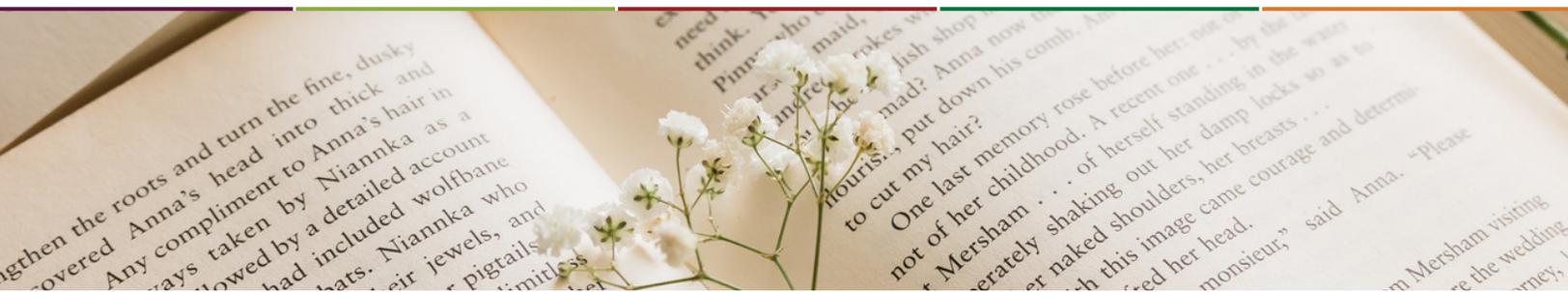
These are the hands that will hold your family as one.

These are the hands that will give you strength.

And these are the hands that even when wrinkled and aged, will still be reaching for yours, still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch.

Reading options continued on following page.

# Readings (Optional)



## Reading 4

### Love is Friendship Caught Fire

Love is friendship caught fire;

it is quiet, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving.

It is loyalty through good and bad times.

It settles for less than perfection, and makes allowances for human weaknesses.

Love is content with the present, hopes for the future, and does not brood over the past.

It is the day-in and day-out chronicles of irritations, problems, compromises, small disappointments, big victories, and working toward common goals.

If you have love in your life, it can make up for a great many things you lack.

If you do not have it, no matter what else there is, it is not enough.

## Reading 5

### Excerpt from "The Art of a Good Marriage"

A good marriage must be created.

In 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 a day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

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

It is standing together and facing the world.

It is forming a circle 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.

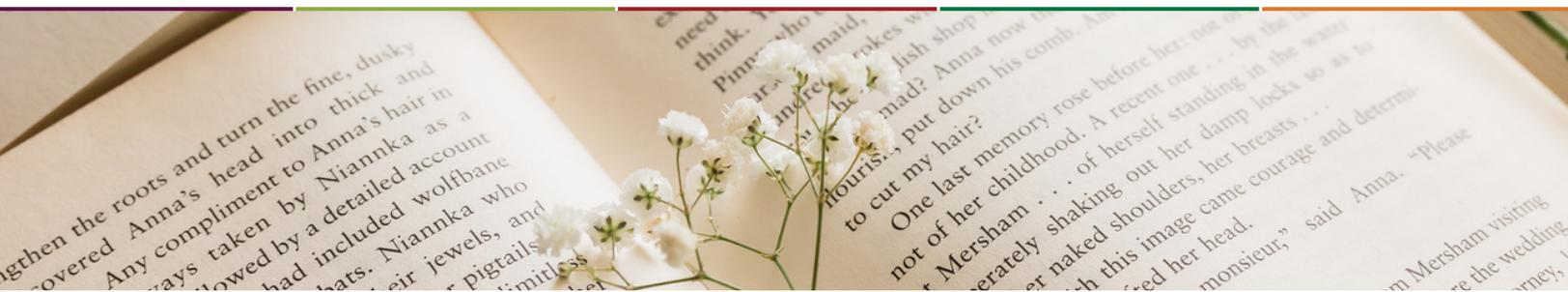
It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

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

It is not only marrying the right person - it is being the right partner.

Reading options continued on following page.

# Readings (Optional)



## Reading 7 The Key to Love

The key to love is understanding.  
The ability to comprehend not only the spoken word,  
but those unspoken gestures,  
the little things that say so much by themselves.

The key to love is forgiveness;  
to accept each other's faults and pardon mistakes,  
without forgetting, but with remembering what you learn from them.

The key to love is sharing.  
Facing your good fortunes as well as the bad, together;  
both conquering problems, forever searching for ways to intensify your happiness.

The key to love is giving without thought of return,  
but with the hope of just a simple smile,  
and by giving in but never giving up.

The key to love is respect,  
realizing that you are two separate people, with different ideas;  
that you don't belong to each other,  
that you belong with each other, and share a mutual bond.

The key to love is inside us all.  
It takes time and patience to unlock all the ingredients  
that will take you to its threshold;  
it is the continual learning process that demands a lot of work,  
but the rewards are more than worth the effort - and that is the key to love.

Reading options continued on following page.

# Readings (Optional)



## Reading 8

### The Promises of Marriage

Marriage is a promise of companionship,  
Of having someone to share all of life's experiences.

Marriage does not promise that there will not be any rough times,  
Just the assurance that there will always be someone who cares and will help you  
through to better times.

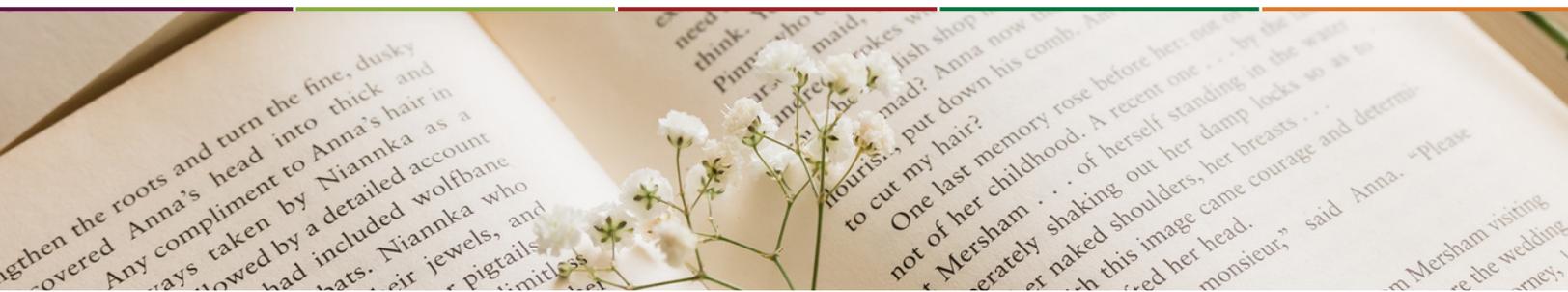
Marriage does not promise eternal romance, just eternal love and commitment.  
Marriage cannot prevent disappointments, disillusionment, or grief,  
But it can offer hope, acceptance and comfort.

Marriage can't protect you from making individual choices  
Or shelter you from the world,  
But it will help to reassure you that there is someone by your side,  
Who truly cares when the world hurts you and makes you feel vulnerable.  
Marriage offers the promise that there will be someone waiting to listen,  
to console, to inspire.

Marriage is the joining of two people who share the promise that only marriage can  
make – To share the sunshine and the shadows and to experience a richer, more  
fulfilling life because of it.

Reading options continued on following page.

# Readings (Optional)



## Reading 9

### Handfasting Reading

**\*To be performed by two people other than the Officiant\***

Officiant: "Now our (Reader 1) and (Reader 2) will do the Handfasting prayer."

Reader 1 to Partner 1:

\_\_\_\_\_, please face \_\_\_\_\_ and hold her/his/their hands, palms up, so you see the gift that they are to you. These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years, for a lifetime of happiness. These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes: tears of sorrow and tears of joy. These are the hands that will comfort you in illness, and hold you when fear or grief fill you. These are the hands that will give you support and celebrate with you in your accomplishments.

Reader 2 to Partner 2:

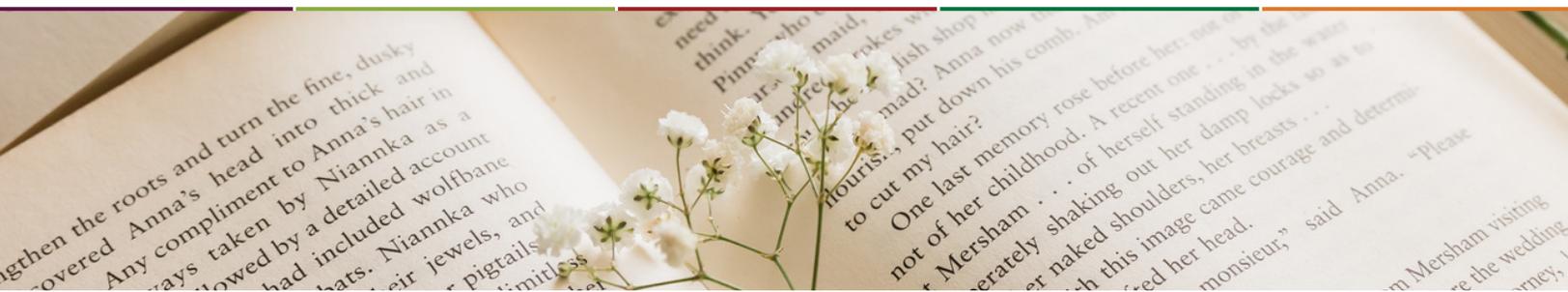
\_\_\_\_\_, please face \_\_\_\_\_ and hold her/his/their hands, palms up, where you may see the gift that they are to you. These are the hands that will hold you tight as you struggle through difficult times. They are the hands that will comfort you when you are sick or console you when you are grieving. These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years, for a lifetime of happiness. These are the hands that will give you support as she encourages you to fulfill your dreams. Together, as a team, everything you wish for can be realized.

(Optional)

Officiant: "Bless these hands that we join in marriage today. May they always be held by one another. May you have strength to hold on during the storms of stress and the dark of disillusionment. Keep them tender and gentle as you nurture each other in their wondrous love. May these hands be used to continue building a relationship founded in love and rich in caring. May \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ see their four hands as healer, protector, shelter and guide."

Reading options continued on following page.

# Readings (Optional)



## Reading 10

### Union

You have known 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 commitments in an informal way. All of those conversations that were held in a car, or over a meal, or during long walks – all those conversations that began with, “When we’re married”, and continued with “I will” and “you will” and “we will” – all those late night talks that included “someday” and “somehow” and “maybe” – and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart. All these 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 that 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, lover, dancing partner, even teacher, for you have learned much from one another these past few years. Shortly you shall say a few words that will take you across a threshold of life, and things between you will never quite be the same.

For after today you shall say to the world – This is my husband. This is my wife.

# Statement of Intent "I Do's"(Optional)



## Statement of Intent 1

Officiant:

\_\_\_\_\_ do you take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your lawful wedded wife/husband/partner?

Each person responds, "I do."

## Statement of Intent 2

Officiant:

\_\_\_\_\_, do you pledge to love \_\_\_\_\_ and throughout your years together to be honest, faithful, and kind to her/him/them? Do you pledge to give to her/him/them the same happiness she/he/they gives to you, and to respect her/him/them for who she/he/they is, not who you want her/him/them to be?

Each person responds, "I do."

## Statement of Intent 3

\_\_\_\_\_, will you take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your wife/husband/partner? Do you commit yourself to her/his/their happiness and self-fulfillment as a person? Do you promise to love, honour, and trust her/him/them in sickness and in health, in adversity and prosperity, and to be true and loyal to her/him/them so long as you both shall live?

Each person responds, "I do."

## Statement of Intent 4

Do you \_\_\_\_\_ take \_\_\_\_\_, to be your lawfully wedded wife/husband/partner, to share your life openly, standing with her/him/them in sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow, in hardship and in ease, to cherish and love forever more?

Each person responds, "I do."

## Statement of Intent 5

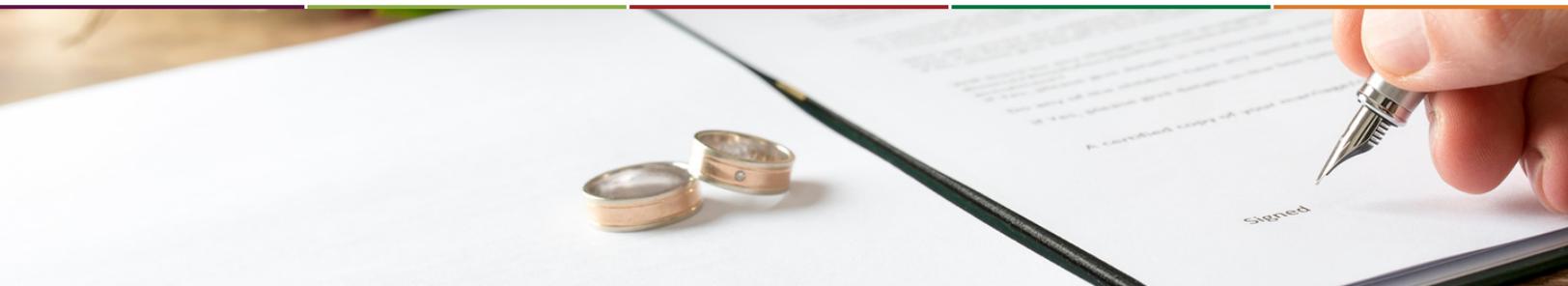
Do you \_\_\_\_\_ promise to love \_\_\_\_\_ and respect her/him/them, to share your life and your dreams, to build with her/him/them a home that is a place of love, happiness, commitment and growth?

Each person responds, "I do."

Do you promise to be a companion to her/him/them in all of her successes and failures, her happiness and sadness, to always give to her/him/them your unwavering support and above all else, the freedom to be themselves?

Each person responds, "I do."

# Exchange of Vows



Applicants may provide the Clerk/Designate with personalized vows. All vows must be reviewed by the Clerk/Designate in advance of the ceremony.

## **Vows 1**

Officiant:

“Would you please face each other, join hands and repeat after me”

Officiant to each person:

“I call upon these persons here present to witness that I \_\_\_\_\_, do take you \_\_\_\_\_ to be my lawful wedded (wife/husband/spouse/partner).”

## **Vows 2**

Officiant:

“Would you please face each other, join hands and repeat after me”

Officiant to each person:

“I call upon these persons here present to witness that I \_\_\_\_\_, do take you \_\_\_\_\_ to be my lawful wedded (husband/wife/spouse partner). For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health. To love and to cherish, so long as we both shall live.”

## **Vows 3**

“Would you please face each other, join hands and repeat after me”

Officiant to each person:

“I call upon these persons here present to witness that I \_\_\_\_\_, do take you \_\_\_\_\_ to be my lawful wedded (husband/wife/spouse partner). To laugh with you in joy, to grieve with you in sorrow, to encourage you in doubt, to grow with you in love, and to be faithful to you alone, as long as we both shall live.”

Exchange of Vow options continued on following page.

# Exchange of Vows



## **Vows 4 - Handfasting Vows (To follow Handfasting reading)**

Officiant:

“Please join hands. As your hands are joined, so are your lives - Holding each other, Caressing each other, Supporting each other, Loving each other.”

(Officiant ties the ribbon around bride and groom hands).

Officiant to each person:

I call upon these persons here present that I, \_\_\_\_\_, do take you \_\_\_\_\_ to be my lawful wedded (husband/wife/spouse). I promise you that I will be your (husband/wife/spouse), From this day forward, To love and respect you, To support and to hold you, To make you laugh, And to be there when you cry, To softly kiss you when you are hurting, And to be your companion and your friend, On this journey that we will now make together.

“ \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are now bound to each other.” (Officiant unties the ribbon)

**Note: Applicants must provide their own ribbon for the ceremony.**

# Exchange of Rings (Optional)



## Exchange of Rings 1

Officiant to each person: "This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and life together. Please place this ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s left hand and repeat after me":

"I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and promise to be with you as long as I live."

## Exchange of Rings 2

Officiant to each person: "This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and life together. Please place this ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s left hand and repeat after me":

"I give you this ring as a token of my love and devotion to you. I pledge to you all that I am and all that I will ever be as your (husband/wife/spouse partner). With this ring, I gladly marry you and join my life to yours."

Officiant: "As you wear these rings may you find them reminders of an endless love which may grow more meaningful with each passing day."

## Exchange of Rings 3

Officiant: "\_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_, you have decided to exchange rings with each other. These rings are a symbol of your love and life together. Every time you look at them may you be reminded of the commitment that you have made to each other today."

Officiant to each person: "Please place this ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s left hand and repeat after me":

"I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and lifelong faithfulness to you. With this ring I thee wed."

Exchange of Ring options continued on following page.

# Exchange of Rings



## Exchange of Rings 4

Officiant: "The wedding ring seals the vows of marriage as a signature and bears witness to a written covenant. It is a symbol of your life together and commitment to one another."

Officiant to each person: "Please place this ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s left hand and repeat after me":

"In pledge of the vow of marriage made between us, I offer you this ring. Let it be to you and to me, and to the entire world, the symbol of the covenant of marriage we have accepted."

## Exchange of Rings 5

Officiant to each person: "This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and life together. Please place this ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s left hand and repeat after me":

"I give you this ring to wear with love and joy. As a ring has no end, neither shall my love for you. I choose you to be my (wife/husband/partner) this day and forevermore."

## Exchange of Rings 6

Officiant to each person: "As you place this ring on \_\_\_\_\_'s finger, please repeat after me":

"You are more precious to me today than yesterday,  
and you will be more cherished tomorrow than you are today.

Please wear this ring

as a symbol of my eternal love for you,  
a love that transcends all our yesterdays,  
all our todays, and all our tomorrows."

# Ceremony Conclusion



## **Conclusion 1**

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, I wish you a long life, happiness and prosperity. May the vows that you made to each other today sustain you forever.

## **Conclusion 2**

As you enter upon your marriage, let your relationship be one of truth and understanding between you both; respect the confidences of your partner in this marriage, and consider that as the world gives nothing freely, neither will your marriage yield you more than you give into it. May you enjoy length of days, fulfilment of hope and peace and contentment of mind as day by day you fulfill the terms of this commitment you have made with one another.

## **Conclusion 3**

Today you have pledged yourselves to a lifetime of faithfulness and caring for one another. May this be a commitment made in love, kept in faith, lived in hope and eternally renewed. As you stand before us, it is our hope that you will go through life loving, trusting, and caring for one another, completely and forever.

## **Conclusion 4**

### **An Ancient First Nations Blessing**

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter for the other.  
Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to the other.  
Now there will be no loneliness, for each of you will be companion to the other.  
Now you are two persons, but there are three lives before you: his/her/their life, her/his/their life and your life together.  
Go now to your dwelling place to enter into your days together.  
And may all your days be good and long upon the Earth.

Ceremony Conclusion options continued on following page.

# Ceremony Conclusion



## **Conclusion 5**

### **The Elements of Love**

May your Love be like the earth  
Rich, natural, and deeply rooted  
Strong as rock yet soft as sand  
Always growing and always patient  
May your love be like fire  
Passionate, intense and energetic  
A flame that never dies  
As radiant as the morning sun  
And as warm as an evening embrace  
May your love be like water  
Moving, constantly changing  
Never still, never stagnant  
As vast as the ocean  
And as fresh as a spring's rain  
May your love be like air  
The sharing of dreams, thoughts and emotions  
Always fragrant, always carefree  
Found in the breeze of a whisper  
Or in the breath of a kiss  
May your love be like all four elements  
Physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually intertwined  
To create the perfect balance  
And to craft the perfect ribbon  
For to bind these two hearts into one.

## **Conclusion 6**

### **An Irish Blessing**

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.

Ceremony Conclusion options continued on following page.

# Ceremony Conclusion



## **Conclusion 7**

### **An Irish Blessing (2)**

May the road rise to meet you, May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your home, The rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And the light of friendship guide your paths together,  
And until we meet again, 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 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.  
And when eternity beckons, at the end of a life heaped high with love,  
May you know the hand of a friend was always near.  
And, today, may the Spirit of Love find a dwelling place in your hearts.

## **Conclusion 8**

### **Poem**

Together in marriage you will bring out the best in each other.  
You will learn from each other and grow from your differences.  
You will be two individuals living your own lives with each other as one.  
Together in marriage you will be stronger, more sensitive,  
More aware, more knowing and more at peace  
Than you are individually.  
You will be better people.  
Together in marriage your love will give understanding  
To all that you do because you will share your ideas,  
Goals, and frustrations.  
And you will always have someone to support whatever you say and do.  
Together in marriage  
You will be able to achieve all that you want in life.

Ceremony Conclusion options continued on following page.

# Ceremony Conclusion



## **Conclusion 9**

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 which 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.

## **Conclusion 10**

Sooner or later we begin to understand that love is more than verses on valentines and romance in the movies.

We begin to know that love is here and now, real and true, the most important thing in our lives.

For love is the creator of our favourite memories and the foundation of our fondest dreams.

Love is a promise that is always kept, a fortune that can never be spent, a seed that can flourish in even the most unlikely of places.

And this radiance that never fades, this mysterious and magical joy, is the greatest treasure of all – one known only by those who love.



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