

I Tie the Knots

Premier Wedding Officiants

Outline of Wedding Ceremony

Processional
Welcoming
Silent Blessing
Foundation
Reading by Uncle Bob
Parental Honoring
Ring Ceremony
Vows
Unity Candle
Love Letter & Wine Box Ceremony
Marriage Box
Sand Ceremony
Benediction
Pronouncement
Conclusion
Recessional

Other Possibilities include:

Butterfly Ceremony
Releasing Of Doves
Breaking Of The Glass
Ceremony For Honoring and Recognizing Children During The Wedding Service
Honoring The Directions (optional)
Hand-Fasting Ceremony
Anything Else That You Want!



Sample Wedding Ceremony

Processional (optional) Seating of Bride's Mother, Seating of Groom's Parents
(by Groom or Ushers) Bride's Entrance with Flower Girl(s) & Ring Security

Officiant: Who gives their blessing for this union today? I DO or Her Mother & I DO

Welcoming (*Option 1*)

Good evening. It is truly a blessing from heaven for two people to find one another and to love so deeply that they embrace the holy bond of marriage. That is why we are all here today, to witness and celebrate Bride & Groom's commitment to their union. On behalf of them, I welcome you all.

Welcoming (Option 2)

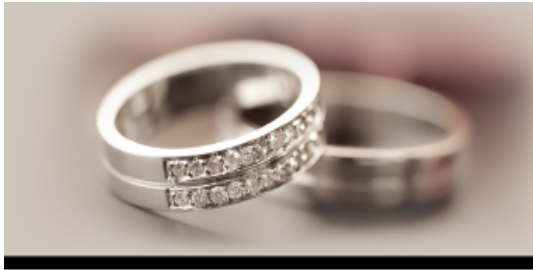
Good afternoon. We gather here today to witness and celebrate an act of deep love. Bride & Groom, in their devotion, respect, and love for each other wish to unite in the bond of marriage, and to dedicate themselves to each other's happiness and well-being as life mates and partners. On behalf of them, I welcome you all.

Welcoming (Possible Addition to Above)

Although this is their day, it is also a tribute to all of you. For knowing you and interacting with you has helped to make our Bride and Groom who they needed to be to find each other. They would like to thank you all for that. All of you are the threads of which are woven the tapestry of their lives. Each one of you is an important piece in the story it tells. It is the fabric that they wrap around themselves and take comfort in when the world seems cold. And on days like today when everything is right in their world, that tapestry is proudly spread out and displayed for everyone to see, with all the glorious colors and textures that your diversity adds. You all hold a place in their hearts reserved for those that they have chosen to call 'Family' and "Friends" and they are deeply grateful for each and every one of you here today

Foundation (Option 1)

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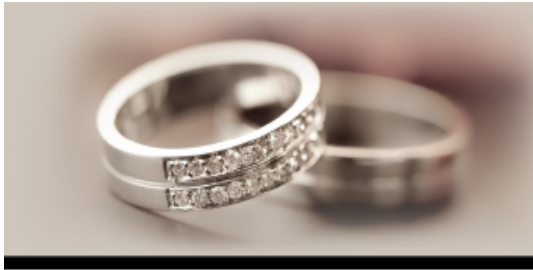
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Marriage is the beginning of a new life, a chance at fulfilling long-held dreams, and an opportunity for great personal and spiritual growth. Marriage endures through the ages of trends and fads. Marriage thrives, and continues to live as a promise of a beautiful dream come true. As long as individuals are drawn together, marriage will be a natural unfolding of that relationship.

Each of you brings gifts to the other today. Gifts of hope and laughter, focus and seriousness of purpose. Sensitivity and recognition of the beautiful and the profound. Since childhood, you have searched for and dreamed about that special someone who would embody and express the gifts you now stand ready to give and to receive. But these gifts are not to be yours alone. A strong and resilient marriage is not an escape from the world but a contribution to it. Nanette and Larry, may you now combine and strengthen your gifts, to be offered as a distinct and beautiful gift to the world. For the world is in need of the beautiful, the good and the holy and nothing is better suited to evoke that than a good marriage.

Foundation (Option 2)

Marriage is a supreme sharing, perhaps the greatest and most challenging adventure in the most intimate of human relationships. It is the joyful uniting of a man and a woman whose care and affection and understanding have flowered into a deep and abiding love. Those who take its sacred vows have their lives blended together into one, as the waters of two rivers are joined when they come together to form an even greater one.



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In such a marriage, the wedding ceremony is the gateway into this mystery. For the lives the two of you have lived up until this moment are, in some sense, now truly completed and over. Together you now live within the creation of something wholly new and transcendent, something which has never existed before-your miraculous marriage-an expression that is at once public and private, precious, sacred, and truly unique to the two of you. In this act, you open yourselves to a fuller experience and expression of the great, vast miracle of love.

No ceremony can create your marriage. Only you can do that-through love, patience, dedication, perseverance-through talking and listening and trying to understand-through helping and supporting and believing in each other-through learning to forgive, learning to respect and appreciate your differences, and learning to make the important things matter and to let go of the rest. What this ceremony can do is to witness and affirm the choice you have made to begin a new life today as husband and wife.

Parental Honoring (optional)

Bride & Groom want to acknowledge their parents on this occasion, _____.
Bride & Groom offer their profound gratitude to their parents for all the love and care they showed in raising them. The unconditional gifts of love and support that you have continually offered have inspired them to become who they are today, and they thank you, from the bottom of their hearts, for guiding them to this celebration of love here today. Without you, this day would not be possible.

Silent Blessing (Optional)

We now close our eyes and bring to mind any loved ones who could not be here today. Though they are absent physically, we invoke, through our thought and prayers, their loving



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presence. We pray that God might multiply beyond measure the blessings from these loved ones to this loving couple, and any children who might one day be a part of this union. Now, from our hearts, we ourselves visualize and sanctify all the blessings we would bestow on Bride & Groom in their lives as a couple and a family. And in our sincere desire to bless, we in turn, are blessed also. Blessed Be.

Candle Lighting Ceremony (*Optional*)

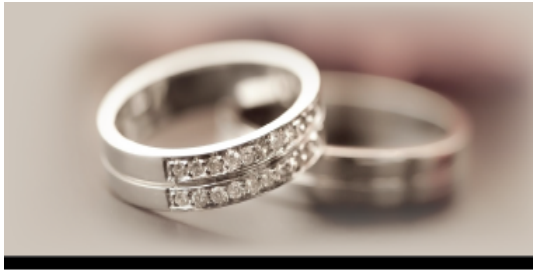
(Note: This ceremony can be done with 4 candles, as its written here, or can be modified to use the Unity Candle, which has 3 candle. Kindly bring candles and candleholders)

Within each human being burns the spark of the Divine. When two people love one another with devotion and freedom, they kindle the awareness of that spark in each other as nothing else quite can do. The lighted candle is symbolic of the cosmic creation and the light and truth in the human heart, mind and soul. Fire also symbolizes both purity and passion. For many, the flame means the security of home and family, the warmth of the hearth.

Take into your beings the warmth, radiance and light that the divine flame represents. Let it light your way on the journey of life that you are about to embark on.

In committing to one another today, in the spirit of being born new to one another, you kindle each other's divine light and promise always to see that light in one another-to nurture and tend that divine flame in your partner as best you can each day-especially at the times it may be hardest to see, and the times your partner may doubt or forget the existence of that light within him-or herself.

Bride, take this candle now and symbolically enter the sacred trust to honor the divine spark in Groom by lighting it from this candle representing the Divine Source. *(She lights candle)*



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Groom, take this candle now and symbolically enter the sacred trust to honor the divine spark in Bride by lighting it from this candle representing the Divine Source. (*He lights candle*)

If at this time you wish to affirm your free choice to unite as partners in marriage, please light the unlit candle together now. (*They light unlit candle together*) As you bring your individual flames together to symbolically form the new and greater flame of your marriage, never forget that the light of your union is made up of your unique, individual expressions of light and is continually sustained and renewed by your connection to the Divine Spark, the eternal light of God.

The candle you lit together symbolizes your marriage, your willingness to surrender to something greater than yourselves. May the light of your marriage, Nanette and Larry, be a beacon in the night, a safe harbor from the storms of life. May your future be made infinitely brighter by the light and the love that you share.

The Hands Ceremony (optional)

Bride & Groom, Please face each other and take each other's hands, so that you may see the gift that they are to you.

These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love for you, 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 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 temporarily comes your way.

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 tenderly hold your children.

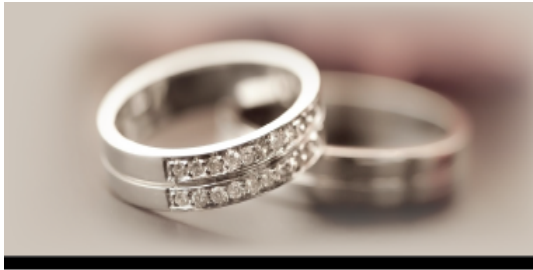
These are the hands that will give you support and encouragement to chase down your dreams.

These are the hands that will hold you tight as you struggle through difficult times.

These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it.

These are the hands that will lift your chin and brush your cheek as they raise your face to look into eyes that are filled with overwhelming love for you.

And lastly, 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.



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Love Letter & Wine Box Ceremony

Bride & Groom have chosen as a couple to perform a Love Letter & Wine Box ceremony.

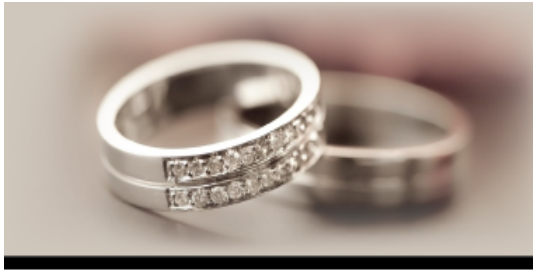
This box contains a bottle of wine, two glasses, and a love letter from each to the other. The letters describe the good qualities they find in one another, the reasons they fell in love, and their reasons for choosing to marry. The letters are sealed in individual envelopes and they have not seen what the other has written. You have created your very own "romantic" time capsule to be opened on your 5th wedding anniversary.

I recommend that you keep the box in a place of honor prominently displayed in your home as a constant reminder of your commitment to each other.

Then, on your 5th year wedding anniversary open the box, uncork the bottle of wine and share your love letters with one another. Bride & Groom, you may now seal the box.

Your Marriage Box

Most people get married believing a myth that marriage is beautiful box full of all the things they have longed for; Companionship, intimacy, friendship etc ... The truth is, that marriage at the start is an empty box, you must put something in before you can take anything out. There is no love in marriage, love is in people, and people put love



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in marriage. There is no romance in marriage, you have to infuse it into your marriage. A couple must learn the art, and form the habit of giving, loving, serving, praising, of keeping the box full. If you take out more than you put in, the box will be empty.

The Questions (I Do Vows)

Bride & Groom, If you are ready to step into the holy circle of matrimony, assuming all its rights, obligations and abundant joys, please so indicate by joining hands.

Do you, Bride take this man, Groom as your husband, to love him and to honor him, to nurture, serve and support him, in times of joy and in times of difficulty? Do you promise to remain by his side regardless of what trouble befalls you, and in the presence of temptation to forsake this love, do you promise to remain steadfast and true? Do you promise with all your heart and soul to honor this vow till death do you part? If so, answer now, "I do."(Bride answers, "I do")

Do you, Groom take this woman, Bride as your wife, to love her and to honor her, to nurture, serve and support her, in times of joy and in times of difficulty? Do you promise to remain by her side regardless of what trouble befalls you, and in the presence of temptation to forsake this love, do you promise to remain steadfast and true? Do you promise with all your heart and soul to honor this vow till death do you part? If so answer now, "I do."(Groom answers, "I do")



Self-Written Wedding Vows can be included here.

Vows

Bride & Groom, having thus committed themselves, now wish to declare their love for one another in words that they have written.

Vows now recited by Bride & Groom

Traditional Vows or a Vow Choice

Please join hands, look into each other's eyes, and repeat after me:

I, Groom, take thee, Bride, for my lawful wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health as long as we both shall live. Today I make this vow to you.



I, Bride, take thee, Groom, for my lawful wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health as long as we both shall live. Today I make this vow to you.

Traditional Ring Ceremony or Ring Choice

And so we come Bride & Groom, to the presentation of rings by which you symbolize and bind your love.

Groom, place the ring on Bride's finger and repeat after me: "With this ring, I pledge my love and faithfulness to you, today, tomorrow and always. As this ring has no end, neither shall my love for you. I choose you to be my wife, this day and forevermore. Wear this ring and think of me, and know that I love you.

Bride, place the ring on Groom's finger and repeat after me: "With this ring, I pledge my love and faithfulness to you, today, tomorrow and always. As this ring has no end, neither shall my love for you. I choose you to be my husband, this day and forevermore. Wear this ring and think of me, and know that I love you.

Wear these rings as the enclosing bond of reverence and trust. Fulfill the circle of love that now makes you one.



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Questions/Ring Ceremony Combined

Do you have your rings? *(They respond, "Yes")*

Without beginning or end and with no point of weakness, the circle is a reminder of the vows you take today. Let the seamless circle of these rings become the symbol of your endless love. Your wedding rings are most special because they say that even in your uniqueness you have chosen to be bonded, to allow the presence of another human being to enhance who you are. Your rings carry a potent double message: We are individuals and yet we belong; we are not alone. As you wear them through time, they will reflect not only who you are but also the glorious union that you are now creating.

Groom, as you place this ring on Bride, I now ask you: Do you take this woman to be your lawful wedded wife? Do you promise God, Bride and all of us here that from this point forward, your arms may be her shelter and your heart may be her guide? Do you promise to support her and nourish her and to love and respect and honor her for the rest of your days on earth? If so please answer "I do."

Bride, as you place this ring on Groom, I now ask you: Do you take this man to be your lawful wedded husband? Do you promise God, Groom and all of us here that from this point forward, your arms may be his shelter and your heart may be his guide? Do you promise to support him and nourish him and to love and respect and honor him for the rest of your days on earth? If so please answer "I do."



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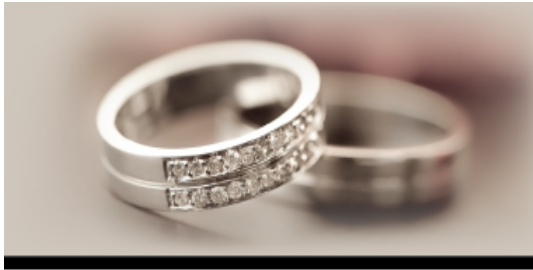
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Songs, Readings, Poems and Prayers (Optional)
(see the last half of this package for samples)

The Rose Ceremony (optional)

(Minister gives bride and groom a rose) Your gift to each other for your wedding today has been your wedding rings - which shall always be an outward demonstration of your vows of love and respect; and a public showing of your commitment to each other. You now have what remains the most honorable title which may exist between a man and a woman - the title of "husband" and "wife." For your first gift as husband and wife, that gift will be a single rose.

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In the past, the rose was considered a symbol of love and a single rose always meant only one thing - it meant the words "I love you." So it is appropriate that for your first gift - as husband and wife - that gift would be a single rose. Please exchange your first gift as husband and wife. (*couple exchanges roses*)

In some ways it seems like you have not done anything at all. Just a moment ago you were holding one small rose - and now you are holding one small rose. In some ways, a marriage ceremony is like this. In some ways, tomorrow is going to seem no different than yesterday. But in fact today, just now, you both have given and received one of the most valuable and precious gifts of life - one I hope you always remember - the gift of true and abiding love within the devotion of marriage.

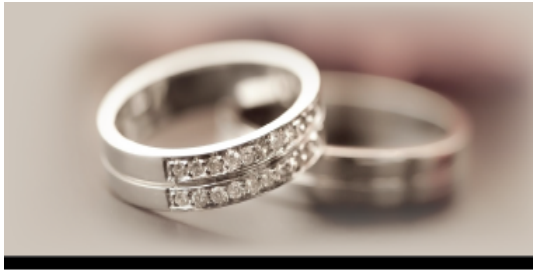
Bride & Groom, I would ask that where ever you make your home in the future - whether it be a large and elegant home - or a small and graceful one - that you both pick one very special location for roses; so that on each anniversary of this truly wonderful occasion you both may take a rose to that spot both as a recommitment to your marriage - and a recommitment that THIS will be a marriage based upon love.

In every marriage there are times where it is difficult to find the right words. It is easiest to hurt those who we most love. It is easiest to be hurt by those who we most love. It might be difficult some time to be able to express the words "I am sorry" or "I forgive you" or "I need you" or "I am hurting". If this should happen, if you simply can not find these words, leave a rose at that spot which both of you have selected - for that rose than says what matters most of all and should overpower all other things and all other words.

That rose says the words: "I still love you." The other should accept this rose for the words which cannot be found, and remember the love and hope that you both share today. Nanette and Larry, if there is anything you remember of this marriage ceremony, it is that it was love that brought you here today, it is only love which can make it a glorious union, and it is by love which your marriage shall endure.

Pronouncement (*Option 1*)

Bride & Groom in the presence of your family and friends today, you have spoken the words and performed the rites which unite your lives. It is my greatest joy and privilege to declare you husband and wife. Groom, You may now kiss the/your bride.



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Pronouncement (Option 2)

Forasmuch as you, Bride and you, Groom, have openly declared your wishes to be united in marriage, and in the presence of these witnesses have pledged love to each other, and have confirmed the same by joining hands, exchanging rings and declaring your vows, I pronounce that you are now husband and wife. You may now kiss the bride.

Benediction - Traditional

The two of you are now joined in one unbroken circle. Wherever you go, may you always return to one another in your togetherness. May you two find in each other the love for which all men and women long. May you grow in understanding and in compassion. May the home that you establish be such a place of sanctuary that all who visit will find there a friend.

Benediction The Irish Wedding 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 the fields.

May the light of friendship guide your paths together.
May the laughter of children grace the halls of your home.
May the joy of living for one another trip a smile from your lips, a twinkle from your eye.
And when eternity beckons,
at the end of a life heaped high with love,
May the good Lord embrace you
with the arms that have nurtured you
the whole length of your joy-filled days.

Conclusion: And now, ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to present to you for the first time, Mr. and Mrs. _____.

Recessional (optional)



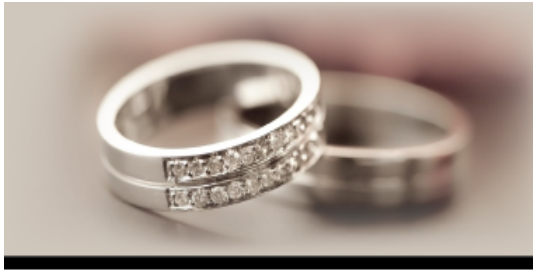
The End (or more truthfully, The Beginning!)

Sample Readings, Poems and Prayers That Can Be Used Within Your Ceremony:

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 others 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.

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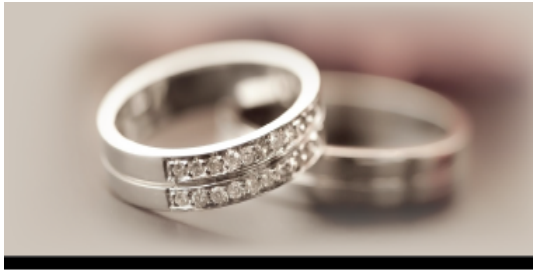
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The key to love is giving...
without thought of return,
but with the hope of just a simple smile,
and by giving in but never giving up.
The key to love is respect...
realising that you are two separate people, with different ideas; that you don't belong 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.

1 Corinthians 13 (often used in Christian weddings)

If I speak in 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 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.
When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child;
when I became a man, I gave up childish ways.



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For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood.

So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Psalm 1 (often used in Jewish or interfaith weddings)

Blessed are the man and the woman who have grown beyond themselves and have seen through their separations. They delight in the way things are and keep their hearts open, day and night. They are like trees planted near flowing rivers, which bear fruit when they are ready. Their leaves will not fall or wither. Everything they do will succeed.

Special Reading

“Only once in your life, I truly believe, you find someone who can completely turn your world around. You tell them things that you’ve never shared with another soul and they absorb everything you say and actually want to hear more. You share hopes for the future, dreams that will never come true, goals that were never achieved and the many disappointments life has thrown at you. When something wonderful happens, you can’t wait to tell them about it, knowing they will share in your excitement. They are not embarrassed to cry with you when you are hurting or laugh with you when you make a fool of yourself. Never do they hurt your feelings or make you feel like you are not good enough, but rather they build you up and show you the things about yourself that make you special and even beautiful. There is never any pressure, jealousy or competition but only a quiet calmness when they are around. You can be yourself and not worry about what they will think of you because they love you for who you are. The things that seem insignificant to most people such as a note, song or walk become invaluable treasures kept safe in your heart to cherish forever. Memories of your childhood come back and are so clear and vivid it’s like being young again. Colors seem brighter and more brilliant. Laughter seems part of daily life where before it was infrequent or didn’t exist at all. A phone call or two during the day helps to get you through a long day’s work and always brings a smile to your face. In their presence, there’s no need for continuous conversation, but you find you’re quite content in just having them nearby. Things that never interested you before become fascinating because you know they are important to this person who is so special to you. You think of this person on every occasion and in everything you do. Simple things bring them to mind like a pale blue sky, gentle wind or even a storm cloud on the horizon. You open your heart



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knowing that there's a chance it may be broken one day and in opening your heart, you experience a love and joy that you never dreamed possible. You find that being vulnerable is the only way to allow your heart to feel true pleasure that's so real it scares you. You find strength in knowing you have a true friend and possibly a soul mate who will remain loyal to the end. Life seems completely different, exciting and worthwhile. Your only hope and security is in knowing that they are a part of your life."



— [Bob Marley](#) (Author name not revealed until reading is complete.)

On Friendship

by Roy Croft (also called 'Love'; also called 'To my Friend')

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

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

I love you for the part of me that you bring out.

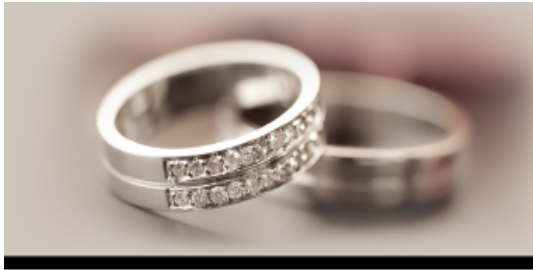
I love you for putting your hand into my heaped up heart and passing over all the frivolous and weak things that you cannot help seeing there, and for drawing out into the light all the beautiful and radiant things that no one else has looked quite far enough to find...

I love you because you have done more than any creed could have done to make me good, and 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 means after all.



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Apache Marriage Blessing

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be the shelter for each other. Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be the warmth for the other. Now you are two persons, but there is only one life before. Go now to your dwelling place to enter into the days of your life together. And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

Treat yourselves and each other with respect, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together. Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your connection deserves. When frustration, difficulty and fear assail your relationship - as they threaten all relationships at one time or another - remember to focus on what is right between you, not only the part which seems wrong. In this way, you can ride out the storms when clouds hide the face of the sun in your lives - remembering that even if you lose sight of it for a moment, the sun is still there. And if each of you takes responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and delight.

What is Love?

by Susan Polis Schutz

Love

Love is the strongest feeling known

an all -encompassing passion

an extreme strength

an overwhelming excitement

Love is trying not to hurt the other person

trying not to change the other person

trying not to dominate the other person

trying not to deceive the other person

Love is understanding each other

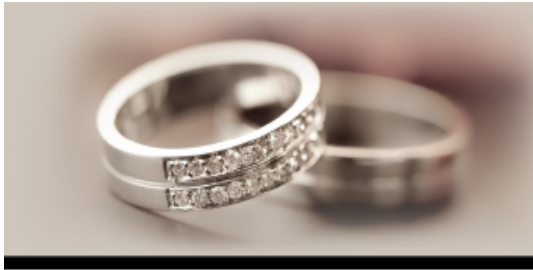
listening to each other

supporting each other

having fun with each other.

Love is not an excuse to stop growing

not an excuse to stop making yourself better



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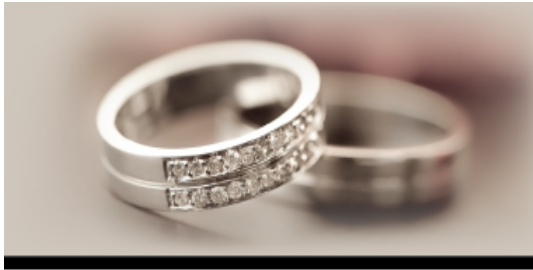
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not an excuse to lessen one's goals
not an excuse to take the other person for granted
Love is being completely honest with each other
finding dreams to share
working towards common goals
sharing responsibilities equally
Everyone in the world wants to love
Love is not a feeling to be taken lightly
Love is a feeling to be cherished, nurtured and cared for
Love is the reason for life

From This Day Forward

From this day forward, let us laugh together, and plan together,
let us find our favorite places, and go together...
Let us enjoy the sunshine, and the rain,
being alone together, and in crowds together...
From this day forward, together,
Let us love!
Let Us Walk Together
Let us walk together yet not as one, but such that our shadows are separate and distinct, such
that our souls are unbound and free.
Let us share our time, yet do not give all your time, nor take all of mine for in order to develop to
the fullest, to be free, we must have solitude and individuality.
Let me wander in solitude, when I need to be alone, yet be near, when I need you.
Let us share our love.
Give freely of your love, but do not smother me, my soul must breathe a free air.
Take my love, but do not demand it, for love given of obligation, is stale and without life.
Let us share our lives.
Share my life, but do not try to shape it.
Let me share your life, but do not let it revolve around me.
Let us share ourselves.

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Accept me as I am, do not attempt to change me to fit your dreams.
Respect me for what I am, not for what I was or one day may be.
Share yourself with me, but do not allow me to limit your freedom or bind your soul.
Let us share our minds, thoughts, goals, values and dreams.
Let us develop these within ourselves without restriction or loss of freedom
Thus our two free souls, may wander together as they develop in freedom.
As we share our lives, as we walk through life together, know my love is yours, but not my soul
for it must be free.

From 'Letters to a Young Poet'

Rainer Maria Rilke

For one human being to love another human being: that is perhaps the most difficult task that has been entrusted to us, the ultimate task, the final test and proof, the work for which all other work is merely preparation. Loving does not at first mean merging, surrendering, and uniting with another person - it is a high inducement for the individual to ripen, to become something in himself, to become world, to become world in himself for the sake of another person; it is a great, demanding claim on him, something that chose him and calls him to vast distances.

From *To Know Yourself*, by Swami Satchidananda:

A wedding is between two reflections of God. Two pairs of eyes see one vision. They are dedicated to serve one another and the humanity at large. Two minds come together to help each other realize their true nature. Going side by side with the right partner is a good way to reach God quickly. When the husband's and the wife's love for each other blends together and becomes love of God, marriage is a divine institution.



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The next passage is from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran.

And what of Marriage, master?

And he answered saying:

You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.

You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.

Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.

But let there be spaces in your togetherness,

And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.

Love one another, but make not a bond of love:

Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.

Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.

Sing and Dance together and be joyous, but each one of you be alone.

Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

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



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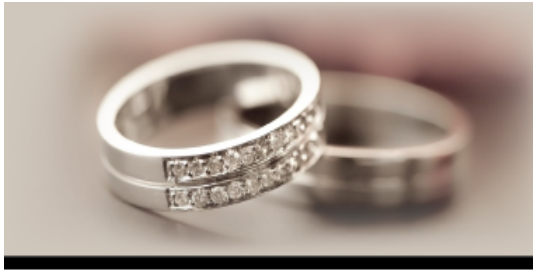
Navajo Prayer

When you were children, you talked like children, But now that you've grown, you should be done with childish things and put them away. When you were children, you looked into a mirror that gave only a blurred reflection of reality. But with love and maturity, you shouldn't be afraid to look into that mirror and see each other face to face. Be swift like the wind in loving each other. Be brave like the sea in loving each other. Be gentle like the breeze in loving each other. Be patient like the sun who waits and watches the four changes of the earth in loving each other. Be wise like the roaring of the thunder clouds and lightning in loving each other. Be shining like the morning dawn in loving each other. Be proud like the tree who stands without bending in loving each other. Be brilliant like the rainbow colors in loving each other. Now, forever, forever, there will be no more loneliness because your worlds are joined together with the world. Forever, forever.

Anne Morrow Lindburgh:

“When you love someone you do not love them all the time, in exactly the same way, from moment to moment. It is an impossibility. The only continuity possible, in life as in love, is in growth, in fluidity, in freedom, in the sense that dancers are free, barely touching as they pass, but partners in the same pattern.

The only real security is not in owning or possessing, not in demanding or expecting, not in hoping even. Security in a relationship lies neither in looking back to what was in nostalgia, nor forward to what might be in dread or anticipation, but living in the present relationship and accepting it as it is now. One must accept the security of the winged life, of ebb and flow, of intermittency.”



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Blessing For A Marriage ~ James Dillet Freeman ~

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.

Excerpt from *The Bridge Across Forever* (Richard Bach)

A soul mate is someone who has locks that fit our keys, and keys to fit our locks. When we feel safe enough to open the locks, our truest selves step out and we can be completely and honestly who we are; we can be loved for who we are and not for who we're pretending to be. Each unveils the best part of the other. No matter what else goes wrong around us, with that one person we're safe in our own paradise. Our soul mate is someone who shares our deepest longings, our sense of direction. When we're two balloons, and together our direction is up, chances are we've found the right person. Our soul mate is the one who makes life come to life.



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Marriage Joins Two People In The Circle Of Its Love

-By Edmund O'Neill

Marriage is a commitment to life, the best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other relationship can equal. It is a physical and an emotional 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, lover, teacher, listener, and critic. And there may come times when one partner is heartbroken or ailing, and the love of the other may resemble the tender caring of a parent for a child.

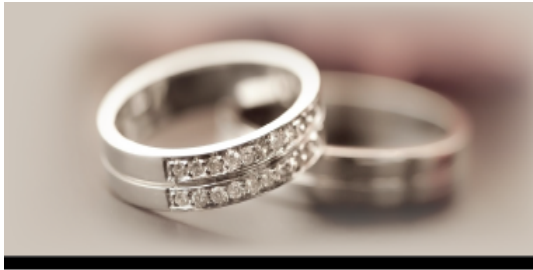
Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller, memories are fresher, commitment is stronger, even anger is felt more strongly, and passes away more quickly.

Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, and new ways of expressing a love that is deeper than life. When two people pledge their love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique unto 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 each other and takes a lifetime to fulfill.

On Love~ By Thomas Kempis ~

Love is a mighty power,
a great and complete good.
Love alone lightens every burden, and makes rough places smooth.

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It bears every hardship as though it were nothing, and renders all bitterness sweet and acceptable.

Nothing is sweeter than love,
Nothing stronger,
Nothing higher,
Nothing wider,
Nothing more pleasant,
Nothing fuller or better in heaven or earth; for love is born of God.

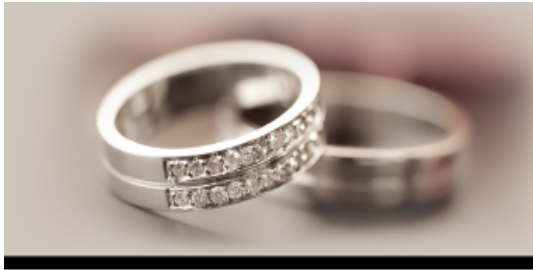
Love flies, runs and leaps for joy.
It is free and unrestrained.
Love knows no limits, but ardently transcends all bounds.
Love feels no burden, takes no account of toil,
attempts things beyond its strength.

Love sees nothing as impossible,
for it feels able to achieve all things.
It is strange and effective,
while those who lack love faint and fail.

Love is not fickle and sentimental,
nor is it intent on vanities.
Like a living flame and a burning torch,
it surges upward and surely surmounts every obstacle.

What Is Love? ~ Author Unknown ~

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 favorite 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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True Love -Author Unknown

True love is a sacred flame
That burns eternally,
And none can dim its special glow
Or change its destiny.
True love speaks in tender tones
And hears with gentle ear,
True love gives with open heart
And true love conquers fear.
True love makes no harsh demands
It neither rules nor binds,
And true love holds with gentle hands
The hearts that it entwines.

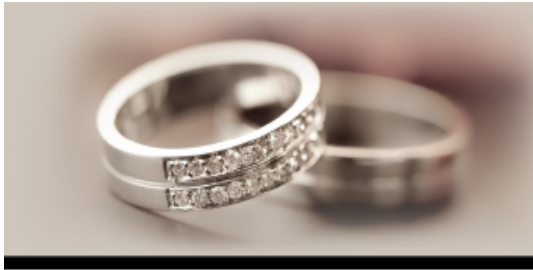
The Art of Marriage

The little things are the big things.
It is never being too old to hold hands.
It is remembering to say "I love you" at least once 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.



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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 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.

Prayers

Prayer (Option 1)

Let us Pray: Dear God, thank you for this joyous day. Thank you for Your Light that has entered Bride & Groom's life. Thank you for all the miracles and blessings. Please bless this union. Help Bride & Groom find the perfect place in this world for their love to flourish. Let the radiant light of their love shine on all those around them. May all their future creations be blessed. God, bless them with the inner gifts of trust, compassion, forgiveness and truth that they may live and grow together in love and peace. Amen.

Prayer (Option 2)

Father of mankind, whose nature is love, look with favor upon this woman and this man who desire to make their vows before you. We are grateful for the providence that has led to this union. Grant this to be more than an outward union, but also the blending of hearts and spirits and purposes. Bless each with the inward qualities of integrity, trust, cooperation and forgiveness, that they may live together in love and peace. Amen.



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Prayer (option 3)-adapted from *Illuminata* by Marianne Williamson

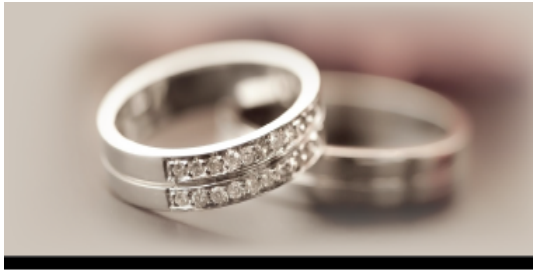
Dear God, Please make of this relationship a great and holy adventure. May their joining be a sacred space. May the two of them find rest here, a haven for their souls. Remove from them any temptation to judge themselves or each other or to direct each other. May they surrender to You their conflicts and their burdens. We know You are their Answer and their rock. Help them not forget. Bring them together in heart and mind as well as body and guide them in the ways of holiness. May this relationship be a burst of light. May it be a fount of love and wisdom for them, for their family, for their community, and for their world. May this bond be a channel for Your love and healing, a vehicle of Your grace and power. As lessons come and challenges grow, let them not be tempted to forsake each other. Let them always remember that in each other they have the most beautiful woman, the most beautiful man, the strongest one, the sacred one in whose arms we are repaired. May they remain young in this relationship. May they grow wise in this relationship. Bring them what You desire for them. And show them how you would have them be. Thank You, dear God.

The Lords' Prayer (*Option 4*)

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallow be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.) Amen

Prayer (option 5)

Gracious God, spirit of life and love, we ask all blessings upon Bride & Groom in their life together. May they be blessed with patience, to see them through times of tensions or conflict. May they be blessed with kindness, to enable them to nurture and care for one another in times of pain or sorrow. May they be blessed with a spirit of play and joyfulness, that they may participate fully in the beauties and pleasures of creation. May they be blessed, finally, with a knowledge of the ever-flowing presence of love in the world, that they may be channels of this love to one another and to all whom they meet in their life's journey. Amen.



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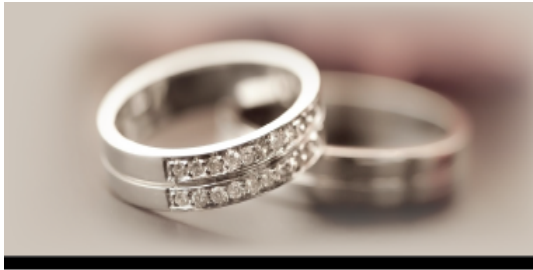
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Prayer (option 6)

O God of love, you have established marriage for the welfare and happiness of mankind. Yours was the plan, and only with you can we work it out with joy.

Bless this husband. Bless him as provider and nourishment and raiment, and sustain him in all the extractions and pressures of his battle for bread. May his strength be her protection, his character be her boast and her pride and may he so live that she will find him the haven for which the heart of woman truly longs.

Bless this loving wife, Give her tenderness that will make her great, a deep sense of understanding, and a great faith in you. Give her that inner beauty of soul that never fades, that eternal youth that is found in holding fast the things that never age. Teach them that marriage is not living merely for each other; it is two uniting and joining hands to serve you. Give them great



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spiritual purpose in life. May they seek first the kingdom of God and His Righteousness, and the other things shall be added unto them.

May they never take each other's love for granted, but always experience that breathless wonder that exclaims.

"Out of all this work, you have chosen me"

When life is done and the sun is setting, may they be found then as now, hand in hand, still thanking God for each other. May they serve you happily, faithfully, together, until at last one shall lay the other into the arms of God.

This we ask through Jesus Christ, great lover of our souls. AMEN.

Honoring The Directions (used in earth honoring traditions)

In many ancient religious traditions, it is customary to bring a service of worship or celebration by calling on the four directions. This is a way of symbolically inviting all of creation to be present and take part in the festivities. This morning, we, too, want to invite the whole of creation to be with us here and now.

Oh Great Spirit of the North, we come to you and ask for the strength and the power to bear what is cold and harsh in life. We come like the buffalo ready to receive the winds that truly



can be overwhelming at times. Whatever is cold and uncertain in our life, we ask you to give us the strength to bear it. Do not let the winter blow us away. Oh Spirit of Life and Spirit of the North, we ask you for strength and for warmth.

Oh Great Spirit of the East, we turn to you where the sun comes up, from where the power of light and refreshment come. Everything that is born comes up in this direction the birth of babies, the birth of the puppies, the birth of ideas and the birth of friendship. Let there be the light. Oh Spirit of the East, let the color of fresh rising in our life be glory to you.

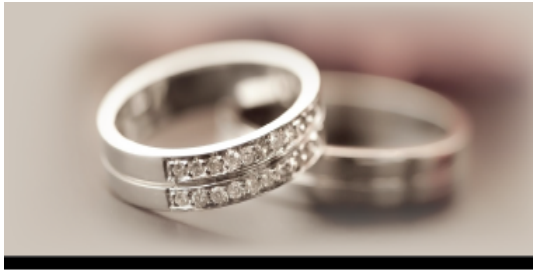
Oh Great Spirit of the South, spirit of all that is warm and gentle and refreshing, we ask you to give us this spirit of growth, of fertility, of gentleness. Caress us with a cool breeze when the days are hot. Give us seeds that the flowers, trees and fruits of the earth may grow. Give us the warmth of good friendships. Oh Spirit of the South, send the warmth and the growth of your blessings.

Oh Great Spirit of the West, where the sun goes down each day to come up the next, we turn to you in praise of sunsets and in thanksgiving for changes. You are the great colored sunset of the red west, which illuminates us. You are the powerful cycle, which pulls us to transformation. We ask for the blessings of the sunset. Keep us open to life's changes.

Ceremony For Honoring Children During The Wedding

(Note: Below you will find the Family Medallion ceremony which can be modified however you like to fit your particular situation and preferences. Instead of medallions, you can give your child/children flowers, jewelry, hugs or anything else. The important part is to make the child/children feel like they are a part of the festivities.)

Often marriage is viewed as the union of two individuals. In reality, however, marriage is much broader. As we give thanks to God for the love that brings _____ and _____ together, so too we recognize the merging of families taking place and the additional love and responsibility that jfamily and friends bring to this relationship.



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We are, in fact, all members of one family, of Gods family, a relationship emphasized in the scriptures. And it was a happy day for God when we received our new lives, through the truth of God's work and we become, as it were, the first children in God's new family.

As part of the family nature of God's creation we recognize _____ and the significant role he/she/they play(s) in this marriage today celebrated. (*Child/children may be brought forward by grandparents or others if they are too young to stand as members of the wedding party.*)

Presentation of Medallions (or any other suitable object such as a rose, flower or piece of jewelry)

_____ and _____ present to _____ this/these Family Medallion(s) created as a symbol for new family relationship and in recognition of the hope and joy made visible through this marriage.

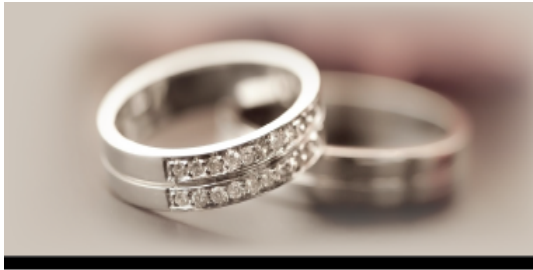
(Addressing child/children), _____, In the placing of this/these medallion(s) _____ pledge to you their continuing love even as they surround him/her now with their arms of support and protection.

Reading

Our children are gifts entrusted to us not as objects to be controlled but as human beings, each unique in their own personality, each separate in their own identity. Consider the words from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran:

You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls, for they dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams. You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday. You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.

Prayer For the Family



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Creator God, you have made us in your own image, male and female, that together, we may live as members of your one family. As you surround us with never-ending love, strengthen us that we, too, might reflect your love, becoming ever supportive of one another in times of sorrow, forgiving of one in other in times of anger, patient in those moments when we seek to rebuild.

We give thanks, O Lord, for the relationship here celebrated. In your presence we are humbled by the recognition that, today, we face a new future, one which love has unfolded and is unfolding before our very eyes. May we ever respect the sanctity of this gift.

As you have filled our cup with joy, may we share the strength of our deepening love for one another. Amen.

Go forth bound together by the love of God. Go forth with hope and joy and a heart full of dreams, knowing that God is always with you. Amen

Introduction of the Family (could use at the end of the ceremony or not)

It is my pleasure to present to you _____ and _____ in their new relationship as husband and wife and their son/daughter/children _____.

P.S. Remember: This is your wedding ceremony on your special day. We are here to help you make it into something beautiful and unique so that it reflects the two of you and your one-of-a-kind love. We promise to be here for you and to put our whole heart and soul into making your wedding ceremony the greatest happening of your life. May your union be blessed with peace, love and joy forever.