



Interfaith Wedding Ceremony

WELCOME STATEMENT

OFFICIANT *(to congregation):*

Please be seated... Thank you.

Welcome one and all! We come together today in this beautiful setting to celebrate and witness as we join the lives of _____ and _____. We come together as one body - a unified community of family, friends, and loved ones - to wish _____ and _____ a long and happy life together from this day forward.

SPEECH/SERMON/INTRODUCTION

OFFICIANT *(to congregation):*

Before we begin, I'd like to start with a poem that _____ and _____ have chosen to symbolize the journey upon which they're about to embark.

(Officiant reads poem of couple's choosing, if no poem is chosen, the following may be used.)

OFFICIANT *(to congregation):*

*I love you
Not only for what you are,
But for what I am
When I am with you.
I love you,
Not only for what
You have made of yourself,
But for what
You are making of me.*

*I love you
For the part of me
That you bring out;
I love you
For putting your hand
Into my heaped-up heart
And passing over
All the foolish, weak things
That you can't help
Dimly seeing there,
And for drawing out
Into the light
All the beautiful belongings
That no one else had looked
Quite far enough to find.*

—Roy Croft, *Love*

OFFICIANT (to congregation):

Love is universal, and its interpretations ubiquitous. Poets, philosophers, and prophets - writers, bards, and romantics of all stripes - seers, soothsayers and shamans, priests, rabbis, mullahs, yogis, gurus, and reverends - all claim to know what love is. But we all agree on some pretty universal truths about love. For example, we agree that love exists when we have compassion for one another. We affirm that love exists when we empathize with one another. We acknowledge that love is to blame when we sacrifice for one another. And we accept it as truth that it's love when we rejoice together and when we cry together.

We all account for love, not only as a noun - a feeling of affection... but as an action - a deliberate decision to act altruistically, putting someone else's best interest above your own. And we all attribute it to a magical bond, that none of us, including all of those types of people I mentioned earlier, can ever really quite pin down. That is love.

One other constant that we can find when it comes to love across so many faiths and philosophies, is that love hinges on our connectedness to one another. For many Eastern faiths this connection is quite literal - you and I are one and the same. In the Abrahamic traditions, we are all connected by the love of God. In cultures all across the globe, we recognize the "sameness" of our humanity.

Today _____ and _____ have chosen to affirm that sameness to one another and to us as witnesses, as they join their lives together in love.

OFFICIANT (to couple):

_____ and _____, I want you each to think about connection as the foundation of your love. We know from scientific evidence that we're all made of the same atoms. We know that we all breathe the same air, we know we all bleed, and we know we all love. _____, there's no difference between you and _____. _____, there's no difference between you and _____.

The two of you are one. That is the foundation of your love, and if you keep that in mind, you'll have peace, because you'll know that the person on the other side of the table has entered into a covenant of love with you and that though you may share separate physical bodies, you share one soul.

With this in mind, it's time to declare yourselves to one another.

DECLARATION OF INTENT

OFFICIANT (to _____):

_____, do you take _____ to be your lawfully wedded partner from this day forward; will you love, honor, and cherish *him/her/them*? Hold *him/her/them* up in good times and bad, and love *him/her/them* as you love yourself for as long as you both shall live?

_____: **I do.**

OFFICIANT (to _____):

_____, do you take _____ to be your lawfully wedded partner from this day forward; will you love, honor, and cherish *him/her/them*; hold *him/her/them* up in good times and bad, and love *him/her/them* as you love yourself for as long as you both shall live?

_____: **I do.**

VOW/RING EXCHANGE

OFFICIANT (to couple):

_____, _____, it's now time to say your vows.

(If the couple do not have their own vows prepared, the following may be used)

OFFICIANT (to _____):

_____, please repeat after me: _____, I give you this ring as a symbol of my eternal love for you, and my unbreakable connection to you. With it, I promise to love you, cherish you, and stand by you in good times and bad, for as long as I live.

(_____ repeats phrase-by-phrase and places ring on _____'s finger.)

OFFICIANT (to _____):

_____, please repeat after me: _____, I give you this ring as a symbol of my eternal love for you, and my unbreakable connection to you. With it, I promise to love you, cherish you, and stand by you in good times and bad, for as long as I live.

(_____ repeats phrase-by-phrase and places ring on _____'s finger.)

PRONOUNCEMENT

OFFICIANT (to couple):

_____, _____, having proclaimed your love for one another, founded in your unity, in the sight of myself and of these witnesses, it is my pleasure to pronounce you, by the power vested in me by the Universal Life Church and the state of _____, married as one!

(_____ and _____ kiss)

OFFICIANT (to congregation):

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to present to you the newly united _____ and _____!

CLOSING STATEMENT

OFFICIANT (to congregation):

_____ and _____ have asked that you join them for the reception, to be held at _____.
On behalf of _____ and _____, I thank you all so much for coming.