



Traditional Wedding Ceremony

WELCOME STATEMENT

OFFICIANT *(to congregation):*

Please be seated. Thank you.

Welcome Friends, Family, and loved ones! We are gathered together today in the sight of God and of each other as witnesses to celebrate the marriage of _____ and _____. We hold _____ and _____ up to each other as a family, and a community of loved ones, to christen this step on their journey toward what we pray will be a long, happy, and healthy life together!

SPEECH/SERMON/INTRODUCTION

OFFICIANT *(to congregation):*

Before we begin, let us bow our heads and ask God's blessing for _____ and _____.

(Congregants bow heads)

(Officiant leads congregation in prayer appropriate to denomination of service - if no prayer is requested or provided by the couple, the following may be used)

OFFICIANT:

Heavenly Father,

We ask your blessing upon _____ and upon _____. We come to you knowing that you have created them for a purpose, and we're confident, oh Lord, that your will for their lives contains some amazing triumphs for them as they walk together in your name. We ask that you bless them and keep them with you, and that you hold us accountable to do the same, Lord.

In your Holy name we pray,

Amen

OFFICIANT (to congregation):

Ladies and gentlemen, we hold marriage up as a sacred union between two people who are committed to loving one another and spending the rest of their lives together, faithful to each other, and to their journey together. But we also know as a society that marriage is a serious institution. It requires deep commitment, faith and trust in your spouse, and a lot of patience to make it work. In the time I've known _____ and _____, and in the conversations we've had discussing this ceremony, I've seen those things. I've seen their commitment to one another, their faith and trust, and their patience - and above it all, I've seen the love that these two wonderful people have for each other.

Now in the book of 1st Corinthians, the Apostle Paul provides us with a beautiful description of the kind of love that a marriage needs. He writes, "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."

OFFICIANT (to couple):

_____ and _____, I want to urge you to hold to that vision of your love for one another, because even though all of us hear are behind you and rooting for you, life throws us challenges, and in the midst of those challenges, it's the kind of love St. Paul was describing that is going to get you through it.

Knowing this, it's time to declare yourselves to one another.

DECLARATION OF INTENT

OFFICIANT (to _____):

_____, do you take _____ to be your lawfully wedded *husband/wife/partner* from this day forward - to have and to hold, in good times and bad, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health; will you love, honor, and cherish *him/her/them* for as long as you both shall live?

_____ : I do.

OFFICIANT (to _____):

_____ do you take _____ to be your lawfully wedded *husband/wife/partner* from this day forward - to have and to hold, in good times and bad, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in

health; will you love, honor, and cherish *him/her/them* 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: _____, with this ring, I thee wed, and I do promise to love, honor, and cherish you, in good times and bad, for richer or poorer, in sickness and health, until death do us part.

(_____ puts ring on _____'s finger)

OFFICIANT (*to _____*):

_____, please repeat after me: _____, with this ring, I thee wed, and I do promise to love, honor, and cherish you, in good times and bad, for richer or poorer, in sickness and health, until death do us part.

(_____ puts ring on _____'s finger)

PRONOUNCEMENT

OFFICIANT (*to couple*):

_____, _____, having proclaimed your love for, and commitment to one another in the sight of Almighty God and 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! You may now kiss your *groom/bride/spouse*!

(Couple kisses)

OFFICIANT *(to congregation)*:

Gathered guests, it is my great pleasure to present to you *Mr./Mrs./Mx.* and *Mr./Mrs./Mx.* _____!

CLOSING STATEMENT

OFFICIANT *(to congregation)*:

Following the processional, the couple have asked that you meet them for a reception at _____. Thank you so much for joining us today. God bless you all.