

## **A TRADITIONAL CEREMONY (examples)**

(A Twenty Minute Ceremony)

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### **A CALL TO CELEBRATION**

There is nothing is sweeter than love, nothing more courageous, nothing higher, nothing wider, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in heaven or earth, because love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God, it is above all things God has created.

Love is the reason we are here. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have chosen each other and we are gathered here in the sight of God, and in the family and friends to join them together in holy matrimony.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are delighted that you will share their wedding day. Thank you for the greatest gift anyone can give, your participation in their celebration as they pledge their lives to one another in marriage.

Who presents \_\_\_\_\_ in marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ come together from different backgrounds and experiences. In the covenant of marriage they do not leave these behind but form a new family which will extend the circle of love. They pledge to each other to be a family and their confidence in the future brings them before us today to enter into marriage. They commit themselves to working at this relationship so that it will always grow, enriching their lives and love from this day forward so long as they shall live.

Marriage is a sacred relationship. It requires much of two people, sometimes more than you can give each other. But God promises to be with you in the marriage and help you with its responsibilities.

### **READING**

*(A reading may be inserted)*

### **PRAYER**

Gracious Heavenly Father, guide \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and walk beside them together as husband and wife. Give them grace and love enough to forgive each other during those turbulent times in their relationship. Grant them also the gift of celebration so they can enjoy the many happy times they will share together. Dear Lord, grant their love for each other be as beautiful as it is in this hour, may it grow deeper and stronger in the years ahead. Amen

## **QUESTION OF INTENT**

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, I require and charge you both as you stand in the presence of God, to remember that love and loyalty alone will avail as the foundation of a happy and an enduring home. No other human ties are more sacred than those you now assume. If these vows be kept unbroken, and steadfastly as you endeavor to do the will of your Heavenly Father, your life will be full of joy and the home which you are now establishing will abide in peace.

\_\_\_\_\_, do you take \_\_\_\_\_, to be your wedded wife/husband, to live together in the Holy estate of marriage? Do you promise to love her/him, comfort her/him, honor and keep her/him in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others keep yourself only for her/him as long as you both will live?

## **READING**

"What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel they are joined together to strengthen each other in all labor, to minister to each other in all sorrow, to share with each other in all gladness, to be one with each other in silent unspeakable memories?" George Elliot

## **RING CEREMONY**

Do you have a token of exchange whereby these vows may be sealed?

The perfect circle of the ring symbolizes eternity. Precious metal and stone is a symbol of all that is pure and holy. Our prayer is that your love for each other will be as eternal and everlasting as these rings. In the years to come, may these rings remind you of the overwhelming joy of this special occasion when you were united in marriage. The ring is an endless circle. This says that marriage is permanent and should only be broken through death.

\_\_\_\_\_, take this ring a place it on \_\_\_\_\_ finger and repeat after me:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wedded wife/husband. To have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish 'til death to us part, and with this ring I thee wed.

### **UNITY CANDLE (Optional)**

The lighting of the candle of unity represents the merging of two wonderful families taking place and the significant role that parents, grandparents and siblings will play in this marriage today celebrated. These candles have been lit by your family in honor of your love for each other. As you light the candle of unity together may it remind everyone present of the importance of family, the eternal flame of love that burns with these two hearts for each other and for the flame of love that burns within the heart of God for each of us eternal and unconditional.

### **APACHE BENEDICTION**

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 for 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 life, Her life and Your life together.

May beauty surround you both in the journey ahead and through all the years. May happiness be your best friend and traveling companion. Go now to your dwelling place to enter into your days together. May all your days be good and long upon the earth. For in your journey above you there will be stars. Beneath your feet there will be stones. As time passes, remember, like a star your love should be constant and like the earth your love should be firm. Be patient with each other. Storms will come but they will go quickly. Always be free in the giving of warmth and affection. Never let the ways or the words of the worldly or un-enlightened give you unease. For God is with you now and with you always.

### **PROCLAMATION**

Forasmuch as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have pledged their vows to each other; in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and with the authority of God's Word, I pronounce that they are husband and wife. Those whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. You may kiss your bride!

It is a pleasure to present to you: Mr. & Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

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