

Inter-Faith Wedding Service Information

First of all let me congratulate you on this step in your life.

The information provided should assist you in deciding how to go about planning the format and structure of your wedding celebration. Please take the time to read through this information. Keep in mind that this is information to assist you in planning what you would like minister to do, it is my no means a recipe or something that is cast in stone. You may desire a very simple ceremony in which guests, family and friends are acknowledged and vows are exchanged, or something a little more spiritual. It is entirely up to you.

The main parts of a Wedding and how Ministerial services fit in:

The Wedding Rehearsal Held approximately 2 days *before* the wedding. The minister generally acts as the “director” of the wedding plan. During the rehearsal, the final decisions are made as to music, brides maids, who is giving away the bride, who will hold the ring, etc.

The Wedding Ceremony Minister usually arrives about 30 minutes prior to the Ceremony. If there are any final questions/concerns they should be stated at that time.

The Wedding Reception Customarily a Minister will attend the Wedding Reception to offer thanks and Bless the food.

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Ceremonies of Union

Ceremonies of Union

By the time you read this, you will probably have made several decisions. You've decided to share your life with another and to celebrate that publicly. If you've read beyond the opening page, chances are you're contemplating a ceremony. If both of these are true, this guide may be for you.

Philosophy and Overview

My approach to ceremonies, consistent with our philosophy, is that the service belongs to the couple. No one can dictate the content of the ceremony. **It's your wedding.** You are in charge of who is in it, how it goes and to a large extent what is said. As a minister, my role is to make sure you develop the right wedding/ceremony of union. As we work together to craft the ceremony I will make suggestions, based on my expertise, about different ways that the various elements of a ceremony might best flow together. Always the final decision remains with you.

A Ceremony: How It Works

There are actually two aspects to every ceremony: a public dimension -- in which your invited guests witness your pledges to each other, and a private dimension in which you say your vows and join your lives together. These two dimensions--the public and the private--are necessarily interwoven, which makes weddings interesting and enjoyable. Even at small weddings/unions, there are all these people gathered around! Planning is critical, but we are there to guide you in tailoring your own unique ceremony, that the public and private dimensions of the ceremony can flow beautifully together.

There are three movements to a wedding/union ceremony. The ceremony weaves from the public dimension to the private, then back to the public dimension to close.

First Movement: Public Dimension

Welcome

The ceremony begins with welcoming. We generally remind the guests that while we may come from different backgrounds and from different walks of life, it is our common caring for the couple that brings us together.

Candle Ceremony or Rose Ceremony

In a traditional wedding ceremony this is often followed by the Giving Away: Minister: "Who gives this woman to be married to this man?" Father of the Bride: "I do." In contemporary weddings and ceremonies of union, I've evolved other forms for involving the significant people in a couple's life, two primarily: a Candle Ceremony and a Rose Ceremony.

In the Candle Ceremony, the candles sit on an altar table. The couple's mothers /parents light candles. Finally, the couple light a single candle at the center. As candles are lit, words are said about the importance of mothers, fathers, friends, and finally about the centrality of love.

In the Rose Ceremony, the couple takes roses (or another flower of choice) from a bouquet sitting on the altar table. One by one they visit parents, and/or significant family members, presenting them with the gift of a rose, followed by hugs or handshakes. As the couple briefly visits parents and friends, I say some words about their appreciation of the role all their guests have played in their coming to this moment, then these words: "At this time they wish to especially honor those who have been important above all others in their lives with the gift of roses."

Neither of these ceremonies is required. The beauty of both is that they involve family and friends from "both sides of the aisle" -- groom as well as bride; the families of both partners. In general one would choose one ceremony or the other. The Candle Ceremony works well in more formal settings, though I've used it in a ceremony in the woods. The Rose Ceremony is somewhat less formal, works well in a garden wedding, and is fine in a formal sanctuary. Which you choose is a matter of personal preference.

Readings

Brief readings are optional. Sometimes a couple have a favorite poem or prose piece they want read. Sometimes they'll have a brother or sister of mutual friend whom they want to include in a performing role. Brief readings typically follow the Candle or Rose Ceremonies.

Address

The largest single part of a wedding is the address. This part is said by the minister. In it I reflect with the couple on what it means to make a life-time commitment. What is this thing called love? What are our best hopes for success in our relationships? These questions have occupied philosophers (and everyone else!) for ages, I don't propose to answer all questions in a five minute address. However, on such an important occasion, it is worth while to take a few moments to reflect on the meaning that underlies the sacred act of exchanging vows.

My approach is that the address while delivered by me ought to reflect the couple's values. The address is not simply by me to you. It is also to your guests. So it should reflect your ideas and understandings. When we meet to plan a wedding this is one of the elements we discuss. Examples of the address and all the elements of a ceremony are available in a packet of materials I provide to each couple I work with.

Second Movement: Private Dimension

Question

The second movement of the wedding -- the private dimension -- begins with a simple question: Of all the women and men you have come to know, you have found and chosen each other. I ask you now, "Are you ready to be married?" The couple answers: "We are."

Vows

This is followed by the exchange of vows. While all the elements of the wedding can be blended together from other sources, couples may write their own vows, and we will be happy to guide you in doing so. This is not a requirement. Couples sometimes use the traditional vows, or know of vows from weddings they especially appreciated that they choose to use.

Ring Ceremony

Traditionally, following the exchange of vows, comes the exchange of rings. This is preceded by a brief blessing of the rings. In traditional ceremonies the couple say to each other, "With this ring, I thee wed." In contemporary ceremonies, you might say, "Accept this ring as a sign of my love and a symbol of our union." Again, there are options and choices. Nothing to memorize!

Wine Ceremony

From time to time couples choose to include an optional Wine Ceremony immediately following the exchange of rings. The particular ceremony is based on a theme from the poet Kahlil Gibran in which he says, "Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup." The general form is reminiscent of Jewish wine ceremonies, though breaking a glass is optional. And the ceremony has the effect of the couple toasting each other within the ceremony itself.

In the ceremony, following a brief reading of Gibran's words, the couple fill each other's glass, then drink from their own. As they do, I remind them that what brought them together was their uniqueness. As they become a couple (which they honor by filling each other's glass), may they cherish their individuality (which they honor by drinking from their own glass). Alternately, the couple drinks from one cup, first the groom who then offers the cup to the bride, who then drinks from it. One final note. It is called a Wine Ceremony, however, the actual contents of the decanter might be water or a non-alcoholic beverage. Occasionally individuals have a sensitivity to alcohol. What's important is the form, not the fluid.

Third Movement: Public Dimension

Since the Wine Ceremony contains aspects of a toast, albeit a silent one since in the Wine Ceremony the couple do not speak, this element when couples choose it, makes a natural transition to the public dimension as the ceremony draws to a close.

Declaration

This is the moment when the minister declares the couple to be married.

Wedding Prayer

It is often followed by a Wedding Prayer. Again, the form of the prayer is discussed during initial planning.

Benediction (Good Words)

Benediction means, literally, "good words." That's how a ceremony appropriately ends, with good words and best wishes as the couple go their way "as wife and husband" or "as life-partners."

And then the couple KISS

Additional Aspects

Flowers

Most weddings include flowers. Flowers depend on the couple's taste and budget. In some instances wild flowers or flowers from a garden can be simply and beautifully arranged. Florists do remarkable things with flowers. Take time to find a florist whose ideas and abilities fit your preferences and budget.

Music

Most weddings include music, though it is not required. Almost any kind of music, instrumental or vocal, can significantly enhance a wedding. Again arrangements should be made well in advance. There is a wide range of musical forms from which to choose. Take your time and find the music that right for you.

Photographs

Photographs help preserve the occasion in memory. Most couples choose to have a wedding photographer. Contemporary couples may choose to have a videographer as well. Particularly in small chapels or garden weddings where space is at a premium, planning is important, so that the process of recording the ceremony is coordinated and works easily with the flow of the ceremony itself.

In Conclusion...

After you've read this, I hope two things will be true. First: that you know that your ceremony belongs to you. As an Interfaith Minister, I have two roles: to help you design the ceremony that's right for you; then to lead you and your betrothed through it. I have been a minister for many years. I know my craft. You know your

ideas, wishes, dreams and values. Together we can create a truly meaningful wedding or ceremony of union -- one that is right, that fits who you are and the things you truly treasure.

Second, I hope that you continue to be excited by the prospect of creating your ceremony. To create the right ceremony does take time and effort. But it is truly exciting to know that at the end of the process you will have created a ceremony that reflects the two of you. At its best, the process of creating the ceremony will mirror, indeed amplify, the process of your relationship.

Wedding Planner

Wedding Timetable and Checklist

Eighteen-12 Months before Wedding

- Announce engagement
- Decide budget and choose site of ceremony
- Reserve your date at a catering hall
- Arrange to meet clergyman
- Select photographer, videographer

Twelve-6 Months before Wedding

- Choose attendants
- Select music and flowers
- Order wedding party's dresses
- Plan new home

Six-4 Months before Wedding

- Compile guest list
- Order invitations, thank you's and personal stationery
- Plan honeymoon (don't forget pass-ports and other necessary documents)
- Shop for trousseau
- Order rings
- Select bridal registry

Three Months before Wedding

- Visit doctor for physical
- Confirm delivery date for wedding dress and bridal party
- Purchase gifts for bridal party
- Arrange for limousine service
- Choose formal wear for men

Two Months before Wedding

- Address and mail wedding invitations
- Arrange to get marriage license

- Arrangements for out-of-town guests
- Contact local newspaper for wedding announcement

One Month before Wedding

- Make appointment for final consultation with the catering hall
- Arrange for final fitting on all gowns Make appointment with hair stylist, make-up artist and manicurist
- Have wedding portrait taken
- Confirm all arrangements with photographer, videographer, band or DJ
- Confirm honeymoon reservations
- Make rehearsal dinner reservations
- Write Thank You notes as gifts are received
- Change name on legal documents

Two Weeks before Wedding

- Arrange to move belongings to new home
- Arrange seating plan with place cards
- Pick up wedding rings
- Pick up all gowns
- Pick up honeymoon tickets for reception

Ten Days before Wedding

- Call the catering hall with final guest count
- Call photographer, videographer, band or DJ
- Begin packing for honeymoon
- Purchase travelers checks

Two Days before Wedding

- Final consultation with the catering hall to pay balance with certified check
- Bring favors, final payment, etc. to the catering hall

One Day before Wedding

- Pick up men's formal wear
- Attend rehearsal dinner
- Rehearsal
- Present gifts to attendants

- Check your luggage

Wedding Day

- Relax and enjoy your special day.

Sample Ceremonies

Outlines of Various Inter-faith Ceremonies

Greeting from Clergy

Processional "Longer"/ Dan Fogelberg Bride and groom process in, each accompanied by their parents

Candlelighting "Sunrise,Sunset"/ J. Bock & S Harnick Each set of parents lights a candle symbolizing their family tradition. During the last chorus, the bride and groom hug and kiss their parents and then move away from them to stand as a couple before the clergy.

Opening Prayer by Clergy

Reading 1

Reading 2

Statement of Intentions

Exchange of Vows

Lighting of the Candles "Sabbath Prayer"/J Bock & S Harnick Bride and groom take the flames from their parents' candles and light their own candle together.

From Our Friends

The Couple's Prayer "Lord, they stand before you happy and hopeful, yet also somewhat frightened. We believe that you brought them together and that You're one with them now. We also know that the road ahead will have both good times and hard times. We ask now that You bless them and be with them in the following days."

"Help them to live up to the vows they made to each other today. Keep their love fresh, alive, and growing. Remind them always to approach each other with gentleness and patience. Teach them how to communicate and trust more completely. Never let them take one another for granted."

"Guide them as we strive to hear You speaking to them through their religious traditions. Make them faithful to Yourself, as well as to each other. May their life together be a sign to others that people can live together in peace in spite of differences."

"Make their home a place of peace and growth where people are always welcome. Help them reach out to others to share the love and blessings they themselves have experienced."

"If You bless them with children make them good and loving parents. Help them always to remember that they are first of all Your children. Guide them as they try to raise them to be full and complete human beings aware of Your love, and help them to step aside when it is time to let go."

"Thank you for their family and friends, both those present and those unable to be with us today. Their love and friendship has led them to be what they are today. May their celebration strengthen their awareness of Your lover and their commitment to love others."

"And finally, guide those present home safely at day's end. Amen."

Song of Blessing: "Forever Young" / Bob Dylan

Clergy: Final Blessing

The Wine Ceremony: "Drinking from the wine glass and then crushing it is a tradition with many meanings. One is that it is a reminder of the hardships endured throughout life. Another can be summed up in "what has been will never be the same, can never be the same, can never be put back together again". Finally, it serves as a reminder about marriage. Drinking the wine represents the joys and sweetness of life, and crushing the glass represents the hardships."

(Bride and groom each drink from the wine glass. Groom breaks the glass.

Introduction of the Newlyweds.

Recessional

Processional "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" /Beethoven

Opening Statement: Minister: "We are gathered today [in the presence of God] to give thanks for the gift of marriage, and to witness the joining together of _____ & _____. In various traditions, marriage is a sign of our Creator's intention for wholeness in all creation. Out of the chaos, God brought order. That creative purpose is still at work. The joining together of two persons into one unique, intimate, and creative unity in marriage is therefore not only a symbol but also a demonstration of the well-being, the purpose of human society. And so marriage is truly a celebration of God's good work in creation

The uniting of two individuals from two separate families and backgrounds to establish a new family is an important and memorable event. For us, attached as we are to _____ & to _____ by special bonds of love and affection, the uniting of these two people in heart and body and mind, is an occasion of great significance which we can all celebrate.

Marriage is not a casual event, nor is it simply a private affair between two individuals. Marriage is to be entered into responsibly and prayerfully. This marriage brings together this day two individuals, two families, and two communities of faith. It is then, in the midst of a troubled and broken society, a sign of hope. It deserves and needs the support of a wider community. Today is a time for family and friends to share in their commitment to each other by offering _____ & _____ our continued support, love and best wishes in their lives together.

In their love together, which they publicly express in this ceremony, _____ & _____ demonstrate not only their joy in the present but their commitment to share the future together. We share their joy, and promise to do all we can to help bring to fulfillment a future of peace and justice for them and for all humanity.

Prayer: Let us pray: O Lord our God, source of all blessing, in happiness and joy we thank you for the gift of marriage, which we celebrate today. May you give _____ & _____ the ability to rejoice always in their love. May you fulfill every worthy wish of their hearts. May you open their eyes to the beauty and the mystery of the love they hold for each other, every day as today. And may their life together embrace and nurture the promise of this moment, so that all who know them will call them truly blessed. Amen.

Musical Interlude "Sunrise, Sunset" / J.Bock and S.Harnick

Vows: Minister: _____ & _____ please state your intent to enter into this union by expressing your vows to one another. _____, repeat after me: "I promise, _____, before family and friends to commit my love to you; to respect your individuality; to be with you through life's changes; and to nurture and strengthen the love between us, as long as we both shall live".

(Bride repeats vow, then same for the groom)

Witnesses' Vow:

Minister: (To the congregation) "Will all of you witnessing these vows do everything in your power to uphold _____ & _____ in their marriage? Congregation: "We Will."

Rings

Minister: The wedding ring is a symbol of unity, a circle unbroken, without beginning or end. And today _____ & _____ give and receive these rings as demonstrations of their vows to make their life one, to work at all times to create a love that is whole and unbroken, and to love each other without end.

Groom, take this ring, and place it on your Bride's finger and state your pledge to her, repeating after me: "This ring I give you as a sign of our constant faith and abiding love."

Groom repeats and then bride.

Prayer: Minister: "Eternal God, without your grace no promise is sure. Strengthen _____ & _____ with patience, kindness, gentleness, and all the other gifts you so abundantly impart, that they may fulfill the vows they have made this day. Keep them faithful to each other and to You. Fill them with such love and joy that they may build a home of peace and welcome. And guide them by your word to serve you all their days. Amen.

Pronouncement of Marriage Minister: "Before God and in your presence as witnesses, ___ & ___ have made their solemn vows to each other. They have confirmed their promises by joining of hands and the giving and receiving of rings. Therefore I proclaim that _____ & _____ are husband and wife.

Benediction: Minister: At the end of some ceremonies, we hear bells ringing, and of others, the breaking of the glass. Among the many interpretations of these two customs, one is that the loud noise of both the bells and the breaking of the glass scares away evil spirits wishing harm to the newly married couple.

Breaking a glass summons the notion that sweetness can only exist alongside bitterness---breaking the glass reminds us that although this wedding has provided joy, the world is still in turmoil, and requires our care and love. Its breaking is not only a reminder of sorrow, but also an expression of hope for a future free from all violence.

Frailty of the glass also suggests the frailty of human relationships. The glass, then, is broken to protect the marriage with an implied prayer, "As this glass shatters, so may your marriage never break".

The tradition of the breaking of the glass is a symbolic prayer and hope that your love for one another will remain until the pieces of this glass come together again. It is also a reminder that in the midst of all our rejoicing we should be mindful of all the want, pain and suffering that exist elsewhere in the world.

Let us, with this symbol, be particularly mindful of the needless barriers that people erect between one another, and try to think with the breaking of the glass, of breaking down those barriers and helping to build a world of respect, unity and peace."

And now may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His countenance to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace this day and all your days. Amen.

Breaking of the Glass: Groom breaks the glass.

You may kiss your bride.

Recessional

Nontheistic Humanist Wedding Ceremony

by *James T. McCollum*

The Wedding Ceremony of
Angus Andrew Malcom and **Heather Jean Campbell**
at the
University of Rochester, Interfaith Chapel
on 22 December 1989

Opening Words

We are gathered here, not to witness the beginning of what will be, but rather what already is! We do not create this marriage, because we cannot. We can and do, however, celebrate with Angus, Heather and their families the wondrous and joyful occurrence that has already taken place in their lives.

So let the celebration begin!

The Processional

Trumpet Voluntary, by Clarke
Bridal Chorus from *Loehengrin*, by Richard Wagner
Ralph Heimbürger - Organ

The Celebration Of Marriage

This wedding, in the Humanist spirit, celebrates the joy and beauty of life. Humanism sees a person as an active and inseparable unity of body and personality. Reason is the guide, but reason never separate from the emotions and strivings of the whole person; so that emotion and intellect functioning together provide the firmest foundation for married love.

Marriage is a supreme sharing of experience and an adventure in the most intimate of human relationships. It is the joyous uniting of a man and a woman whose comradeship and mutual understanding have flowered into romance. Today Heather and Angus proclaim their love to the world and we who are gathered here rejoice with them and for them in the new life they now undertake together.

Marriage is universally regarded as one of the crucial events of human life, taking its place with those other two - the coming hither in birth and the departure from life through death.

The joy we now feel is a solemn joy because the act of marriage is fraught with weighty consequences, both social and personal. By this marriage you two will reach a new social status and rise to a new plane of social dignity. But, also, with the founding of the family, there come the most difficult tasks and exacting disciplines which fall to our human lot.

Your marriage requires "love," which is a word often used with vagueness and sentimentality. We mean something very real, when we bind ourselves in love. It can mean sweet freedom and fulfillment. When we love we see things other people do not see. We see beneath the surface and observe qualities which make this one different from and dearer than all others. To see with loving eyes is to know inner beauty and to be loved is to be seen and known as we are known to no other.

Such love means security. Each of us would like to have an absolute security. This we cannot have, but we come close to it when we are loved - when another human being wants us, wants to share life with us, accepts us, without qualification or reservation, not as perfect, but as human, with strengths and weaknesses.

The love of which we speak is not static. It is a growing and dynamic relationship. We dream that tomorrow we will grow and fulfill our possibilities. It is a blessing when someone believes in our dream of ourselves and wants to live with us and help make dreams and aspirations come true.

Love of this sort can grow. It is not, like youth, a moment that comes and is gone, remaining only a memory of something which cannot be recovered. It can grow because it has something to grow upon and grow with. It

does not become contracted and stale, because it has for its object all the objects with which the two lovers are concerned. Love endures only when the lovers love many things together and not merely each other.

True love breeds unlimited courage and confidence. Such courage and confidence we know are yours as you continue your lives together under the ever embracing bond of marriage. In addition to the fund of affection and thoughtful consideration which you have for one another, you will need a capacity for self-sacrifice, patience and forbearance, for this is no light adventure which you are undertaking.

The secret of love and marriage is that of religion itself. It is the emergence of the larger self. It is the finding of one's life by losing it. Such is the privilege of husband and wife - to be each himself, herself and yet another; to face the world strong, with the courage of two.

The high and fine art of married life is in this mutual enrichment, mental and spiritual, this give and take between two personalities, this mingling of two endowments which depletes neither, but enables each. The more he or she gives, to receive only the more.

Marriage is dedication. You give yourself, your life and love, into the hands of the one you love. You do so trustingly and generously. By the same token, each of you receives a gift - the life and love of the other. You receive this gift not only from the one you love, but also from the parents who brought you into the world and reared you and from the personal world of friends and family who are joined in friendship and faith in your marriage.

Heather and Angus hold in common the interests and ideals of a Humanist world. Living together in this way, they will deepen their love for each other.

It is a Humanist belief that there should be equality between men and women in every relevant way and that it is especially important for this principle to be recognized in the marriage relationship. Marriage must be a cooperative venture in every sense. It is a relationship based on love, respect and a determination on the part of both wife and husband to adjust to each other's temperaments and moods - in health or sickness, joy or sadness, ease or hardship.

We are here to share your joy and hope and to speed you along the path which, henceforth, you are to tread together. May it be the path of blessedness, bright with the fragrant flowers of prosperity and spiritual conquest; a path of deepening and widening love that you shall travel arm in arm throughout eternity.

Reading by *Flora Macdonald*

Song of the Open Road

*Listen! I will be honest with you. I do not offer the old
smooth prizes, but I offer rough new prizes.*

*These are the days that must happen to you:
You shall not heap up what is called riches,
You shall scatter with lavish hand all that you earn or achieve.
However sweet the laid-up stores,
However convenient the dwelling,
You shall not remain there.
However sheltered the port, and however calm the waters,
You shall not anchor there.
However welcome the hospitality that welcomes you,
You are permitted to receive it but a little while.
Afoot and lighthearted, take to the open road,
Healthy, free, the world before you,
The long brown path before you leading wherever you choose.
Say only to one another:
Comerado, I give you my hand!
I give you my love more precious than money,
I give you myself before preaching or law:
Will you give me yourself?
Will you come travel with me?
Shall we stick by each other as long as we live?*

Walt Whitman

The Ceremony of the Candles

Our community is shared, if in a different way, by those who have passed beyond this life. Their roles in the lives of Heather and Angus are no less remembered and honored as we savor today's joyous moments. Join with us, then, in fond memory of all these people, and in particular Grandfather and Grandmother Malcolm. In their memory, let us be silent together.

In all the quiet of this very special moment, we pause, also, to give thanks for all the rich experiences of life that have brought Heather and Angus to this high point in their lives. We are grateful for the values which they have found by their own strivings. We are grateful that within them is the dream of a great love and the resources to use that love in creating a home that shall endure.

We are especially grateful for the values which have flowed into them from those who have loved them and nurtured them and pointed them along life's way. The heritage each brings to this marriage will continue to be an important element in their lives, but now will be shared between them. In commemoration of the merging of these two rich heritages and in memory of those, living and dead, who were part of these heritages, I now invite Angus's parents and Heather's parents to bring forth lighted candles, representing each of the families of this couple.

Angus and Heather will now light the flaming chalice with these candles, symbolizing the union of their two families in this marriage and the rich heritage each brings to it.

As Heather and Angus light the chalice, they do not extinguish their flames. Although they are embarking upon a new and unique relationship in the union of their lives in marriage, they, nonetheless, retain their own separate and unique identities and personalities.

(NOTE: The parents of the Bride and Groom each obtain a lighted candle from opposite sides of the front of the sanctuary or room in which the wedding is taking place, lighting it from stationary candles that have been burning throughout the service. They, in turn, present the lighted candles to their respective child. The couple then jointly light the flaming chalice at the center of the sanctuary. This ceremony signifies the heritage each is bringing to the marriage and the blending of these two heritages. If the third paragraph is used, the candles are not extinguished as the chalice is lit, but are placed in holders alongside. Appropriate music should accompany this ceremony)

The Commitment

This celebration is the outward token of a sacred and inward union of hearts, which the church and temple may bless and the state make legal, but which neither state nor church can create or annul. It is a union created by your loving purpose and kept by your abiding will. It is in this spirit and for this purpose that you have come here to be joined together.

Angus, will you have this woman to be your wedded wife, to live together in marriage; will you love her, comfort her, and honor her, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy, so long as you both shall live?

ANGUS: I will!

Heather, will you take this man to be your wedded husband, to live together in marriage; will you love him, comfort him, and honor him, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy, so long as you both shall live?

HEATHER: I will!

Will all you, here present, promise and commit yourselves to support and uphold this union of these two people?

CONGREGATION: Yes!

The Ceremony of the Rings

Traditionally, the marking of the passage to the status of husband and wife is marked by the exchange of rings. These rings are a symbol of the unbroken circle of love. Love freely given has no beginning and no end. Love freely given has no giver and no receiver - for each is the giver and each is the receiver. May these rings remind you always of the vows you have taken here today.

ANGUS: (Cued) This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my desire that you be my wife from this day forward.

HEATHER: (Cued) This ring, a gift for you, symbolizes my wish that you be my husband from this day forward.

Inasmuch as Heather and Angus have consented together in this ceremony to live in wedlock and have witnessed their vows in the presence of this company, by the giving and receiving of rings, it gives me great pleasure to now pronounce that they are husband and wife!

Treat yourselves and each other with respect, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together. Take responsibility for making the other one feel safe, and 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 sometime or another, remember to focus on what is right between you, not only the part that seems wrong. In this way, you can ride out the times when clouds drift across the face of the sun in your lives, remembering that, just because you may lose sight of it for a moment, does not mean the sun has gone away. And, if each of you take total responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and delight.

The Toast to Life

The years of your lives are as a cup of wine poured out for you to drink. The grapes when they are pressed give forth their good juices for the wine. Under the wine press of time our lives give forth their labor and honor and love.

This cup contains within it the sweet wine of happiness and hope. This same cup, at times, holds the bitter wine of sorrow and despair.

One who drinks deeply of life invites the full range of experience into his or her being.

This cup is symbolic of the pledges you have made to one another to share together the fullness of life.

As you drink from this cup, you acknowledge that your lives, until this moment separate, have become one vessel into which all your sorrows and joys, all your hopes and fears, will be poured, and from which you will receive mutual sustenance.

Many days you will sit at the same table and eat and drink together.

Drink now, and may the cup of your lives be sweet and full to overflowing.

-- Kenneth Patton

Hymn to be sung by the Congregation

Prayer for This House - Untermeyer/Quaile

May nothing evil cross this door,

*And may illfortune never pry
About these windows; may the roar
And rain go by.
By faith made strong, the rafters will
Withstand the battering of the storm.
This hearth, though all the world grow chill
Will keep you warm.
Peace shall walk softly through these rooms,
Touching our lips with holy wine,
Till every casual corner blooms
Into a shrine.
With laughter drown the raucous shout
And, though these sheltering walls are thin,
May they be strong to keep hate out
And hold love in.*

Hymn 159, Songs for the Celebration of Life Beacon Press, 1964

The Affirmation

We know not what the future may bring into the lives of Angus and Heather, but we pray that together they may be equal to the needs of their tomorrows. May they find patience in time of stress, strength in time of weakness, courage in time of discouragement, vision in time of doubt, and, in all time, a growing love.

We who are here present, and those who are absent, thinking of these two people, hope that the inspiration of this hour will not be forgotten. May they continue to love one another forever.

Apache Wedding Prayer

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 you are two persons, but there is only one life before you.

Go now to your dwelling to enter into the days of your life together.

And may your days be good, and long upon the earth.

Traditional

The Recessional

Mairi's Wedding (Lewis Bridal Song), Traditional

Dugald MacCrimmon - Great Highland Pipes

Fantasy and Fugue in G, JS Bach, Ralph Heimbürger Organ

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Processional Music

Music for weddings and receptions

Processional Music

"Friendship Theme" from the movie "Beaches"

"Canon in D" by Bach

"Maid Marion" from Robin Hood

"Fanfare for the Common Man" by Aaron Copeland

"Wedding March" from The Sound of Music

"Carolan's Draught" by Turlough O'Carolan

"Prince Of Denmark's March" by Clarke (sometimes incorrectly called "Trumpet Voluntary" and attributed to Purcell)

"Music for the Royal Fireworks" by Handel

"Here Comes the Bride" (Wagner's Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin)

"Pomp and Circumstance", Elgar

"The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba", Handel

"March" (from Scipio), Handel

"Trumpet Tune and Air", Purcell

"Trumpet Voluntary", Clarke

"Wedding March" (from The Marriage of Figaro), Mozart

"Wedding March" (from A Midsummer Night's Dream), Mendelssohn (Traditional)

"Carillion", Murril

"Coronation March", Walton

"Crown Imperial", Walton

"Orb & Sceptre", Walton

"Fantasia in G" (middle only), Bach

"Adagio in A Minor", Bach

"Tocatta and "Fugue in D Minor", Bach

"Sinfonia" (from Wedding Cantata), Bach

"Te Deum" (Opening Fanfare only, March and Rondeau), Charpentier

"Waltz in A Flat", Brahms

"Majesty", Telemann

"Grace", Telemann

Hymns/Songs

"The King of Love my Shepherd Is"

"Jerusalem"

"Love Divine, all Loves Excelling"

"Come, Holy Ghost"

"Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken"

"Lead Us, Heavenly Father, Lead Us"

"Christ is Made the Sure Foundation"

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

"Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven"

"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"

"Friends" by Michael W. Smith, on 'Project' and 'Go West Young Man' albums

Recessionals

"Trumpet Tune" by Henry Purcell (also used as processional)

"Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" by Bach (also a processional)

"Le Rondeau" (Masterpiece Theatre theme) by Mouret
"Allegro" (Water Music suite) by Handel
"Morgan Megan" by Turlough O'Carolan
"Grande Choeur Dialogue", Gigout
"Toccatà in B Minor", Gigout
"Triumphal (Homage) March" (Opus 53, No. 3), Grieg
"Transports de Joie", (No.3 from L'Ascension), Messiaen
"Music for the Royal Fireworks", Mendelssohn
"Trumpet Voluntary", Stanley
"Grand March" (from Aida), Verdi
"Tuba Tune", Lang
"Prelude and Fugue in A", Bach
"Processional", Mathias
"Sonata in A major", (first movement), Mendelssohn
"Tuba Tune", Cocker
"Trumpet Overture" (from the Indian Ocean), Purcell
"Marche Heroique", Brewer
"The Ride of the Valkyrie", Wagner
"Toccatà" (from Symphony No.5), Widor
"Rejoicing", Telemann

First Dance songs

"Babe" by Styx
"When I'm With You" (?) by Sheriff
"A Whole New World" from the Aladdin soundtrack
"With you I'm Born Again" by Billy Preston and Syreeta
"Wild is the Wind" by David Bowie
"Have I Told You Lately" by Rod Stewart
"Vision of Love" by Mariah Carey
"True Companion" by Mark Cohen
"I Cross My Heart" by George Strait from the movie "Pure Country"
"Colour My World" by Chicago
"You're The Inspiration" by Chicago
"Just The Way You Are" by Billy Joel
"I'll be There" (Live) by Mariah Carey
"Endless Love" by Lionel Richie
"Baby, I Do" by Natalie Cole
"Sunshine on Leith" by Scottish band called The Proclaimers.
"At Last" by Etta James
"Isn't it Romantic" by Frank Sinatra
"Is this Love" by Bob Marley
"All I Want is You" by U2
"Fairy Tale Love" from Princess Bride soundtrack
"Always" by Atlantic Starr
"Someone Like You" by Van Morrison
"Kiss the Girl" from Disney's Little Mermaid
"When I Fall In Love" by Nat King Cole
"Unforgettable" by Natalie Cole
"Everything I Do (I Do It For You)" by Bryan Adams
"Do I Have To Say The Words" by Bryan Adams
"All I Have" by Beth Nielsen Chapman
"Try A Little Tenderness" by The Commitments

Lots of possibilities by Air Supply.

"Wind Beneath My Wings" by Bette Midler (from "Beaches" soundtrack)

"Hero" by David Crosby / Phil Collins

"Wedding Song (There Is Love)" by Stookey; great version done by The Lettermen

Special Dances

Sunrise, Sunset from "Fiddler on the Roof" for bride & groom with parents

"Save the Best for Last" by Vanessa Williams for a last dance

Reception Music

"We've Only Just Begun"

"I love You Just the Way You Are"

"You Light Up My Life"

"Somewhere" (West Side Story)

"Just In Time"

"People Will Say We're In Love"

"Younger Than Springtime"

"You Are the Sunshine of My Life"

"Kiss the Bride"

"Endless Love"

"And I Love You So"