

Wedding Ceremony (1 of 2)

We are gathered here today to unite **Bride and Groom** into the bond of holy matrimony. Who gives this woman to be married to this man? (*I do/ or / Her mother and I do*)

Bride and Groom marriage began in the beautiful Garden of Eden thousands of years ago with God Himself as Guest and sole witness. Marriage is not by any to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly, but reverently, discreetly and in the fear of God.

In the beginning, God made man from the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. When God saw that man was lonely, he took a rib from Adam's side, near his heart, and made a helpmate called "woman". When the miracle was complete, Adam said, "This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." God decreed that a man should leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden in complete innocence and God came and walked with them in the cool of the day. It was a literal paradise. Jesus Himself, sanctified marriage by turning water into wine at the marriage feast at Cana of Galilee, which was his first recorded earthly miracle.

The New Testament gives us a beautiful portrait of marriage when it exhorts the husband to love his wife as Christ loved the Church and gave His life for Her. The New Testament further teaches the wife to submit to her husband as unto the Lord. In the Corinthian Letters, The Holy Spirit, speaking thru the Apostle Paul states that,

*Love is patient and kind;
Love is not jealous or conceited, or proud;
Love is not ill-mannered, or selfish, or irritable;
Love does not keep a record of wrongs;
Love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth.
Love does not demand its own way.
Love never gives up: it's faith, hope, and patience never fails.
Love.... bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
These three remain: faith, hope, and love,
And the greatest of these is love.*

I Cor. 13:4-13

Bride and Groom you have come to exchange the most important and precious vows of marriage, which are never to be broken. Desiring this day to enter into bonds of holy wedlock, will the two of you face each other, join hands, and repeat your sacred vows after me:

I, **Groom**, take you **Bride**, to be my lawful wedded wife, to live together after God's own ordinance in the holy state of matrimony, for richer or poorer, for better or worse, in sickness or in health, till death do us part. And, thereto, I do pledge you my love.

Likewise, **Bride**, looking at your husband to be, will you repeat after me your sacred vows:

I, **Bride**, take you **Groom**, to be my lawful wedded husband, to live together after God's own ordinance in the holy state of matrimony, for richer or poorer, for better or worse, in sickness or in health, till death do us part. And thereto I do pledge you my love.

The Giving and Receiving of Rings

Let us seal the marriage vows by the giving and receiving of rings **Groom** what token do you offer in pledge of your love for **Bride**? (This ring) is made of gold, the purest of all metals. May your marriage be pure undefiled and the two of you keep yourselves for each other, as long as you both shall live.

Groom will you place this ring on the 3rd finger of your bride's left hand, and while looking at her repeat after me your solemn promise: I, **Groom**, take you **Bride**, to be my lawful wedded wife. I do hereby promise you, on this our wedding day, that I will be true and faithful to you as your husband and I will keep myself for you only and no one else. With this ring, I thee wed and all my love to you I give. *In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Bride, what token do you offer in pledge of your love for **Groom**?

You will observe that this ring has no beginning and no end. It is a perfect circle.

It symbolizes your endless love for each other. With the exchange of this ring you forever seal the vows of marriage binding the two you together as husband and wife, so long as you both shall live.

In token of your love for **Groom** will you place this ring on the 3rd finger of his left hand, and while looking at him repeat your solemn vows after me:

I, Bride, take you **Groom** to be my lawful wedded husband, and I do hereby promise you, on this our wedding day, that I will be true and faithful to you as your wife, and I will keep myself for you only and no one else. With this ring, I thee wed, and all my love to you I give. *In the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

The Unity Candle Ceremony

We now come to the most beautiful part of the marriage ceremony with the lighting of the Unity Candle. Before you are three candles. The lighted candles on each side of the unity candle represent your individual lives, friends and family at this moment in time.

Bride and Groom, please take your individual candles and together light the unity candle, indicating that you knowingly accept the responsibility of starting a new family, and that you will take your responsibilities with due diligence. By lighting the unity candle you announce to the whole world that your love is now one and is stronger and more beautiful than that represented by your individual candles which you will now extinguish. In as much as the two of you have come together in the presence of Almighty God, these witnesses, family and friends,

- You have joined your hands and hearts together in holy matrimony;
- You have sealed your marriage vows by the giving and receiving of rings;
- You have made a mutual promise to each other that you will be true and faithful to each other so long as you both shall live

There are no perfect people...hence there is no perfect marriage, but the love that is between the two of you can be so strong that you can make your marriage almost perfect.

And now, by the authority vested in me as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the laws of the State of Indiana (*or- the Commonwealth of Kentucky*), I now pronounce **Bride and Groom** to be husband and wife. *In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

May I be the first to present to you, **Mr. and Mrs.**

The Wedding Ceremony Of Bride and Groom (2 of 2)

We meet in this place to witness the joining of **Bride and Groom** in marriage.

Marriage is a sacred and joyous covenant, which should be entered into reverently, that husband and wife may give to each other companionship, help and comfort, in times of prosperity and adversity. Into this sacred covenant these two persons now desire to enter.

The marriage of **Bride and Groom** has called us together because the union touches each of us. A new family is established in our midst, and we celebrate that new relationship with the bride and groom.

Love between man and woman, like any other love, is love generous in offering and generous in receiving. It is full of laughter, mercy, and rejoicing. Love nourishes but it does not possess; in love we affirm one another but do not dominate. To love is not to win or lose, but to help and to be helped. In the words of the Apostle Paul, we are reminded that,

*“Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one.
Love is never boastful, nor conceited, not rude;
Never selfish, not quick to take offense.
Love keeps no score of wrongs;
Does not gloat over another’s failings,
But delights in the truth.
There is nothing love cannot face;
There is no limit to its faith, its hope and its endurance.
Love never ends. So faith, hope and love abide,
But the greatest of them all is love.”*

If you then, **Bride and Groom**, have freely chosen each other, in token of this, and your love will you please join hands.

Groom, in taking **Bride**, whom you hold by the hand to be your wife before God and these witnesses, you must promise to love her and honor her and cherish her in that love relationship. Leaving all others, be only unto her, and to be to her in all things a true and faithful husband in the sacred bond of marriage. Do you so promise? [**Groom response...”I do”**]

Bride, in taking **Groom**, whom you hold by the hand to be your husband before God and these witnesses, you must promise to love him and honor him and cherish him in that relationship. Leaving all others, be only unto him and to be in all things a true and faithful wife in the sacred bond of marriage. Do you so promise? [**Bride: “I do!”**]

Then you are given to each other in friendship as well as love, through tragedy and hardship, in creativity and fulfillment, in heartache and despair, and in freedom and joy.

The hand offered by each of you is an extension of self, just as is your mutual love. Cherish the touch, for you touch not only your own but another life. Be ever sensitive to its pulse. Seek always to understand and respect its rhythms.

The ring has long been the visible symbol of vows taken in marriage. A circle, with no beginning and no ending, represents that love which is everlasting, which begins in trust, grows through companionship, and deepens with understanding. Do you bring such a symbol to seal your vow?

Bride, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love, but when you want to know the true depth of my love, look not at the ring, but into my eyes.

Groom, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love, but when you want to know the true depth of my love, look not at the ring, but into my eyes.

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 **Bride and Groom** together, so too, we recognize the merging of families taking place and the additional love and responsibility that family and friends bring to this relationship. At this time we ask that **All the Children** join the **Bride and Groom**.

(Groom and Bride will you present to all your children these family medallions created as a symbol for new family relationships and in recognition of the hope and joy made visible through this marriage. They promise to love you and to work with you to have that love grow with each new day.)

The Bride and Groom Give medallions.

(Poem to be read by the minister while parents are giving the medallions)

**This family is a circle of love and strength.
With every birth and every union, the circle grows.
Every joy shared adds more love.
Every obstacle together makes the circle stronger.**

(Children will return to their seats.)

Now that **Bride and Groom** have given themselves to each other by solemn vows, with the giving and receiving of rings and the joining of families, I announce to you that they are husband and wife.

“A good marriage must be created.

In 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 having a mutual sense of values, and common objectives.

It is standing together and facing the world.

It is forming a circle that gathers in the whole family.

It is speaking words of appreciation, and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

It is giving each other an atmosphere in which each can grow.

It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.

It is not only marrying the right person – it is being the right partner

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 your fields and

May God hold you in the palm of his hand. Amen.

(Groom kisses bride)

It is my pleasure to present to you **Mr. and Mrs. Groom** in their new relationship as husband and wife, with their children **Child 1, Child 2, and Child 3** (All children should be listed).