Rev. Will’s Hand Washing Ceremony

**Meaning** - This ceremony is about starting a marriage with a clean slate and being vulnerable together to increase the closeness of the couple.

**Time** - about 1 to 2 minutes

**Supplies:**

- Large Bowl filled with water (the water can contain flowers or lemon slices to make look attractive)
- Two hand towels

**Placement** - This Ceremony Enhancement is best done before the Wedding Vows

Spoken by the Officiant:

_____ and _____, today, as you stand before your family and friends, you begin your life together as a married couple. As with any new endeavor, it is best to start with a clean slate – putting problems big and small behind you.

You come, acknowledging that the person you have chosen is not perfect; yet fits with you in a way no other person can. Whatever difficulties you may have experienced, today you have decided that your love is bigger than any of them and you have chosen a life together.

Water brings forgiveness and we all need forgiveness. We need to forgive ourselves and we need to forgive others. As you wash your hands in this bowl of water, forgive yourself and each other for any pain in the past. Allow yourself to be forgiven for your human imperfections.

(Couple washes their hands in the water together)

Allowing yourselves to have your hands dried by each other signifies your vulnerability. And we have to be vulnerable -- it breaks through isolation and in our own vulnerability, we become more caring and understanding of our mate. In a loving and compassionate marriage, to achieve the greatest intimacy you must have the courage to be open and vulnerable to each other.

(Bride and Groom dry the other’s hands)

_____ and _____, do you begin your lives together with grace and compassion?

“We do”

Then let us now move to the portion of your ceremony where you will state your vows to one another.