

MARRIAGE CEREMONY NON-DENOMINATIONAL By: Rev. Luther Gillispie

We are gathered together to witness the marriage of:

LORD'S PRAYER

MINISTER: Who gives this bride in marriage?

MINISTER: Into this union _____ and _____ now come to be joined.

If any of you can show just cause why they may not lawfully be married, speak now or forever hold your peace.

(I add quickly-TIME'S UP)!

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

MINISTER: (Addressing Bridegroom)

Do you take _____ to be your wedded wife, to love her, to inspire her with courage and true thoughts and always honor and cherish her?

Groom answers: I do!

MINISTER: (Addressing Bride)

Do you take _____ to be your wedded husband, to love him, to inspire him with courage and true thoughts, and always honor and cherish him? If so, say, I do!

Bride answers: I do!

MINISTER -OPTIONAL: This is to be a blended family. The bride (call her by name) is bringing her children (name them) to the marriage.

The groom (call him by name) is bringing his children (name them) to the marriage.

MINISTER: I ask you both: do you promise to love them, guide them, protect them, be an example for them to follow and always honor and cherish them? If so, both say, "WE DO!"

MINISTER: True marriage is more than the joining in bonds of matrimony of two persons. In its right relation, it is the uniting of two souls already attuned with each other. When such a true bond already exists between man and woman, it is proper that an acknowledgement be made. This acknowledgement is the prime purpose of this gathering and this ceremony. We are here to bear witness to the entry into the closer relationship of these two beloved friends who are already one in Spirit.

MINISTER: Reads "This is Friendship"

THIS IS FRIENDSHIP By: Mary Carolyn Davies

I love you, not only for what you are,

But for what I am when I am with you.

I love you, not only for what you have made of yourself.

But for what you are making of me.

I love you for the part of me that you bring out.

I love you for putting your hand into my heaped heart,

And passing over all the frivolous and weak things

That you cannot help seeing there –

And drawing out into the light all the beautiful, radiant things

That no one else looked quite far enough to find.

I love you for ignoring the possibilities of the fool in me,

And for laying firm hold of the possibilities of good in me.

I love you for closing your eyes to the discord in me,

And adding to the music in me by worshipful listening.

MINISTER: _____ and _____ you are now taking into your care and keeping the happiness of the one in all the world whom you love best, and by the same token something of the happiness of all who love you. This is a blessed privilege and a spiritual responsibility.

You are adding to your life, not only the affection and the response that your heart desires, not only the happy companionship of hours together, but a deep trust as well. It is the implied trust of loving. You are agreeing not only to work out your own salvation, but to help another as well. You are finding in each other that which complements your life. You are agreeing to be a light and a tower of strength to each other. You

are agreeing to carry a part of each other's responsibilities. You are entering an act of pure faith in which you give of yourself to the utmost.

The estate of wedlock is a Holy one and not to be entered into lightly, and only under the guidance of Infinite Wisdom and Divine Love. The Master's first recorded miracle was at a wedding feast, which He endorsed and approved by His Presence. It is therefore fitting that we pause and realize the Presence of God at this time.

(I adlib prayer)

Now, faults may appear, excellences may seem to fade, but still remain unmoved in your devotion to each other. Still remain confident and hopeful of each other. Amid the seeming reality of present imperfection, believe in the ideal. You saw it once, it still exists.

As you readily and willingly accept the joys and bliss of marriage, may you also accept the responsibilities of marriage. Resolve every difference with love, meet every obstacle in faith. Always work together and your lives will be blessed with true happiness.

MINISTER: Reads "The Art of Marriage"

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens.

A good marriage must be created. In the art of 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 each day.

It is never going to sleep angry.

It is at no time taking the other for granted. The courtship shouldn't end with the honeymoon. It should continue through all the years.

It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.

It is standing together facing the world.

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

It is doing things for each other, not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice,

But in the spirit of joy,

It is speaking words of appreciation

And demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.

It is not expecting the husband to wear a halo

Or the wife to have the wings of an angel.

It is not looking for perfection in each other.

It is cultivating flexibility, patience, understanding, and a sense of humor.

It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.

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

It is finding room for things of the Spirit.

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

It is not only marrying the right partner:

It is being the right partner.

It is discovering what marriage can be, at its best

As expressed in the words Mark Twain used in a tribute to his wife,

He said, "Wherever she was, there was Eden."

THE VOWS

MINISTER: (Addressing Groom)

Repeat after me:

I, _____, take you _____,

to be my wife – to have and to hold – from this day forward – for better, for worse – for richer, for poorer - in sickness and in health - until death do us part.

MINISTER: To bride:

I, _____, take you _____,

to be my husband – to have and to hold – from this day forward –

or better, for worse – for richer, for poorer - in sickness and in health – until death do us part.

MINISTER: The rings please.

MINISTER: (Addressing Groom)

_____, place this ring on the third finger of _____'s hand and repeat after me:
With this ring I thee wed - and with it I give unto you – all the treasures of my mind – of my heart - And of my soul.

MINISTER: (Addressing Bride)

_____ place this ring on the third finger of _____'s left hand and repeat after me.
With this ring – I thee wed – and with it I give unto you – all the treasures of my mind - of my heart - and of my soul.

MINISTER: The word of God tells us what love is like and what love does. This is an translation of part of I Corinthians, Chapter 13. The Apostle Paul said: “Though I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, if I have no love, I am clanging bell or a tinkling cymbal. Though I prophesy and see into all the mysteries and all hidden knowledge and have faith enough to move mountains, if I have no love, I am nothing. And though I give away all my possessions to feed the poor and offer up my body to be burned, if I have no love, I gain nothing Love is patient, love is kind, is never envious or boastful or conceited, does not act rudely or selfishly, is not easily angered, does not count up offenses; takes no pleasure in injustice; but rejoices in the truth; includes all things, has faith in all things, hopes for all things, endures all things. Love never ends. If there are prophecies, they will disappear; if there is ecstasy, it will cease; if there is knowledge it will vanish... But faith, hope and love remain forever these three - and the greatest of these is love.”

Optional: (more for first marrieds) From Matthew

Have ye not read that He who made them from the beginning, made them male and female and said, ‘For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two become one flesh?’ ... What therefore God is putting together, let not man put asunder.” Matt. 19: 4-6

(Optional) – to the bride and groom

You have declared your consent, spoken your vows, and exchanged your rings: it is now time for the lighting of the Unity candle.

LIGHTING THE UNITY CANDLE

(Three candles have been arranged on a table nearby. The center candle is unlit, the outer two candles are burning – I often have the mother of the bride and the mother of the groom come forward (to open the marriage ceremony) and light the two single candles.

NOTE: When any of them are lighting the candles they should be behind the table so as to make for good pictures.

CAUTION THE BRIDE TO KEEP HER VEIL AWAY FROM FLAMES.

MINISTER: “The two outside candles have been lighted to represent your lives at this moment. They are two distinct lights, each capable of going their separate way. To bring joy and radiance into your home, there must be the merging of these two flames into one.” Direct the bride and groom to go behind the table and direct them to pick up the single candles, bring the tips together and together light the center candle. When this is done, have them extinguish the single candles and replace them in holders and:

MINISTER: The center candle represents the union of your two lives into one. As the center light cannot be divided, let not your lives be divided; instead, be the united testimony of a spiritual home.

MINISTER: Let us pray

Heavenly Father, at every turning of life’s way, we would stop and seek Thy guidance and Thy blessing. We thank Thee that Thou art Love and that Thou hast created us in Thine own Image. We thank Thee for planting love for woman in the heart of man and love for man in the heart of woman. Richly bless these two lives now to be made one by this bond of love. May they live each for the other and both for Thee. May their home be Thy abiding place and Thou their constant guest. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

MINISTER: And now, please join hands, under the authority of the law of our land and in the name of the Holy Spirit who performs every true marriage: I pronounce you, Husband and Wife!

To the groom: You may kiss the bride.

I present to you all: Mr. & Mrs.

