

The Wedding Ceremony

Prelude Music, Songs? CD? MP3?

Seating of the Mothers/Grandmothers? Song? Who will be seating them?

Attendants Processional Same song, or a different song?

Bride's Processional Song?

The Giving of the Bride

Welcome/Prayer (Pastor prays)

Scripture Reading (The Pastor will read this, or you can have a person of your choice)

Wedding Message

The Declaration of Intent (This is the "I do's" – see options)

Exchange of Vows (see options)

Exchange of Rings (see options)

Unity Candle/Unity Sand/Communion Song?

The Pastoral Blessing (Pastor)

Pronouncement of Marriage (Pastor)

The Wedding Kiss

The Introduction of the new couple (Pastor)

Recessional Song?

Dismissal Bride & Groom to release? Ushers?

Options

Declaration of Intent – the 'I Do's'

Option A: For the Groom

_____, do you desire _____ to be your wife, and do you promise to provide for her, to care for her and to protect her, and to love her and preserve this bond with her holy and unbroken...till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ...or till death itself shall separate you? "I do."

Option A: For the Bride:

_____, do you take _____ to be your husband, and promise to honor him and support his goals... to respect and care for him ...and to preserve this bond with him holy and unbroken...till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ... or till death itself shall separate you? "I do."

Option B: For the Groom

_____ do you take _____ whose hands you are holding, to be your wife, and promise to fulfill your obligations to her as her husband, to provide for her and protect her, to honor her and love her in all circumstances, and to keep yourself for her alone, so long as you both shall live?" "I do."

Option B: For the Bride

_____ do you take _____ whose hands you are holding, to be your husband, and promise to fulfill your obligations to him as his wife, to respect him and care for him, to support him in his goals and dreams, and to keep yourself for him alone, so long as you both shall live?" "I do."

Option C: For the Bride & Groom

_____ will you have _____ to be your husband/wife, and will you pledge yourself to him/her in all love and honor, in all faith and tenderness, and promise to live with him/ her and cherish him/her according to the ordinance of God in the holy bond of marriage?" "I will."

Exchange of Vows

Option A: For Bride & Groom

I _____ take you _____ to be my wife...and I promise to love you as Christ loves the Church...and to honor you above all else. I promise to be faithful and true to you...in the good times as well as the bad...whether in joy or in sorrow...whether in sickness or in health... for as long as we both shall live.

Option B: For Bride & Groom

In the name of God and in the presence of our families, I _____ take you _____ to be by my side for the rest of my life. I promise to cherish and love you even as Christ loved the church. I promise to comfort and encourage you in times of sickness or in health, in times of success or in sorrow. I will love you when times are good, and when times are bad. I promise to honor you...and will never be disloyal to you; with God as my witness.

Option C: For Bride & Groom

I _____ take you _____ to be my husband/wife. I promise to love and cherish you, to be faithful and honest to you, and to honor and trust you. When you fall, I will catch you, when you hurt, I will comfort you, when you laugh, I will share your joy. Everything I have is yours, for all eternity. I promise to love you without condition, for the rest of my life.

Option D: For Groom

_____, I ask you to be my wife...in the presence of God...and before our families. I give myself to you completely...and promise to love and cherish you...to encourage and protect you...no matter what the cost...all the days of my life...as we walk together with Christ.

Option D: For Bride

_____, I take you as my husband...in the presence of God...and before our families. I give myself to you completely...and promise to love and respect you...to honor and support you...no matter what the cost...all the days of my life...as we walk together with Christ.

Option E: For Groom

_____ with all my heart I ask you to be my wife. I promise to love you all the days of my life, and to support you in times of need, to share with you in times of joy, and to honor you in the building of a Christian home. I promise to love you as my equal. I give myself to you as your husband, for as long as we both shall live.

Option E: For Bride

I take you _____ to be my husband, giving you my love and respect. I will love you when we are together and when we are apart; when life is peaceful and when it is stormy. I will support your goals and dreams, and help you to fulfill them. I will be open and honest with you, and accept you as my equal. I promise these things to you, believing that Jesus Christ has brought us together. I am your wife from this day forward.

Option F: For Bride & Groom

I take you _____ to be my husband/wife, my partner in life, and my one true love. I promise to cherish our union, and love you forever. I will trust you and respect you, laugh with you and cry with you, and love you faithfully through the good times and the bad. I give you my hand, my heart, and my love, from this day forward, for as long as we both shall live.

Exchange of Rings

Option A:

_____ I give you this ring, as a symbol of my love for you, and as my promise, to be faithful to you and to our marriage, forsaking all others through God's grace, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Option B:

With this ring I thee wed. This ring is a symbol of my love for you, and I ask that you wear it always, through better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health. With this ring, I pledge you my everlasting love.

Option C:

_____ take this ring and remember, that I will always love you, and will never leave you, and that you are mine and mine alone. In front of God and those gathered here today, I commit these promises to you.

Option D:

I _____ give you this ring...as a sign of my eternal love for you...believing that our love is from God. _____ I ask that you wear this ring...knowing that I will always love you...and will never leave you...proclaiming to all... that you are mine and mine alone. In front of God...and those gathered here today...I commit these promises to you.

Option E:

(Pastor to Groom)

_____ a man must love his wife as a part of himself. "Live happily with the woman you love through the fleeting days of your life, for the wife God gives you is your best reward down here for all your earthly toil." _____ will you place the ring on _____ finger and repeat after me?

I _____ give you this ring as a sign of my eternal love, knowing that our love is from God. I ask that you wear it that all may know you are my wife.

(Pastor to Bride)

_____ a good wife is worth more than precious gems to her husband. She will not hinder him but help him all her life. Honor Christ by submitting to _____ leadership in the same way you submit to the Lord.

_____ will you place this ring on _____ finger and repeat after me?

I _____ give you this ring as a sign of my eternal love, knowing that our love is from God. I ask that you wear it that all may know you are my husband.

Other options for your ceremony

The "Hands" Ceremony

Would you please join your right hands, then cross over and join your left hands together...

now, while your hands are joined, look into each other's eyes, as I read a prayer of blessing.

These hands you are holding are the hands of your best friend. You are holding them as a promise to love each other today, tomorrow and forever.

These are the hands that will work alongside yours as together you build your future.

These are the hands that will love you and serve you through the years, and will comfort you like no other.

These are the hands that will hold you when you are fearful, and will strengthen you when you are weak.

May these hands always reach out with tenderness and care...

and strengthen your relationship with a love that lasts your entire life.

With your eyes locked, and your hands linked, this ceremony is symbolic of two hearts and two lives, forever united.

Unity Candle (or Blending of Sand) and Communion

It is common for the Bride & Groom's mothers to light the candles, or to place two containers of different colored sand on the altar, at the beginning of the service.

During the ceremony, the Pastor explains the significance of the candles or the sand, whichever is being used.

The Unity Candle, when lit by the Bride & Groom, during their ceremony, represents the uniting of their two lives into one.

The Blending of the Sand when combined into the one large container by the Bride & Groom, during their ceremony, represents the blending of their two lives together.

The couple either blends the colored sand together simultaneously into a clear glass container, or lights the single unity candle from the two burning candles on the altar, and this becomes a visual illustration of two becoming one in Christian marriage.

Communion, when taken during a wedding ceremony is symbolic of inviting God to be a part of their relationship, so the wedding couple will often serve communion to one another, and then pray alone together asking God to bless their marriage.

Wine Box Ceremony (A unique idea that comes from Dutch weddings)

(You will need a bottle of wine, two wine glasses, two letters and a special box to put them in)

(Pastor to the guests)

_____ & _____ would like you to witness a very special part of their ceremony today, a part that has deep significance to them. They've brought a box which you see before you on the table, and it contains a bottle of wine, two wine glasses and two letters. The letters are actually love letters that were written by _____ & _____. They are letters from their heart stating the reasons why they fell in love with each other. When they completed their letters, instead of reading them to one another, they sealed them in envelopes, and neither of them read the others letter.

Should _____ & _____ ever find that their marriage is in serious trouble, they are to open the box before making any irrational decisions, and they are to drink the wine and read the letters that they've written to one another. It is our prayer that this will cause them to reflect upon the reasons why they fell in love with one another in the first place, and remind them of this day, and the commitment they made to each other, and help them through their difficult time.

(Pastor to couple)

_____ and _____ if you find that you never need to open the box, you are then to pick an anniversary date to open the box together, and read your letters.

_____ & _____ will you now please seal the box?

Honoring of the Parents (Ex. 20:12 "Honor your father and your mother...")

I will invite the parents to stand with their children as we pray for their marriage.

Rose Ceremony

Give a rose or a hug to the parents/grandparents, to honor and show your appreciation for them.

Special Song or reading

If you have a special song or reading, it can be placed anywhere appropriate in the ceremony.

A few sample Bible Verses

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NLT)

4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud 5 or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. 6 It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. 7 Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. But love will last forever!

1 Corinthians 13:13

There are three things that will endure--faith, hope, and love--and the greatest of these is love.

Ephesians 5:31-33 (NLT)

31 As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." 32 This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. 33 So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Colossians 3:12-19

Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are all called to live in peace. And always be thankful. Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use his words to teach and counsel each other.

You wives must submit to your husbands, as is fitting for those who belong to the Lord. And you husbands must love your wives and never treat them harshly.

Philippians 2:2-4

...make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider the other as better than yourself. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of the other.

Genesis 2:21-24

So Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Ruth 1:16b-17

"...I will go wherever you go and live wherever you live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. I will die where you die and will be buried there. May the LORD punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!"

Ecclesiastes 9:9

Live happily with the woman you love through all the meaningless days of life that God has given you in this world. The wife God gives you is your reward for all your earthly toil.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two people can accomplish more than twice as much as one; they get a better return for their labor. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But people who are alone when they fall are in real trouble. And on a cold night, two under the same blanket can gain warmth from each other. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.

Proverbs 31:10

Who can find a virtuous and capable wife? She is worth more than precious rubies.