The following document contains the words which you can choose from to personalise your ceremony. **You must both choose a declaration and vow from the options you will find in this document.** All of the other words are optional.

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## 1. Escort Words

*These words are optional*

**1** -Thank you, . . (first name/s) . . for escorting . . (name/names) . . here for their celebration, please take your seat/s.

**2** -(Escort’s name/s) . . ., do you entrust . . . (first name) . . . to . . . (first name) . . . as they celebrate their union? Respond - “I / We do”.

## 2. Declarations

*This is a legal declaration that must be made during your ceremony so you must both select one of these options. You do not have to choose the same.*

**A** -I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I . . . (full name) . . . may not be joined in matrimony to . . . (full name) . . .

**B** -I declare that I know of no legal reason why I, . . . (full name) . . ., may not be joined in marriage to . . . (full name) . . .

**C** - Are you, .. . (full name) . . ., free lawfully to marry . . (full name) . . .? Respond – ‘I Am’

## 3. Optional I Do/I Will Declarations

*These words are optional. Choose from these options or submit your own. You do not have to choose the same. Please provide us with a copy of these words if you have written your own.*

**A** - . . (name). ., do you promise to love, respect, comfort and protect . . (name) . ., and to share with them all that you are and all that is yet to be? Respond – ‘I Do’

**B** - . . (name) . . do you promise to love and respect . . (name). . from this day forward? Respond ‘I Do’

**C** - Do you. . (name). . take. . (name). . to be your partner? Do you promise to be loving, tolerant and loyal, always supporting . . . (first name) . . . throughout life? Respond ‘I Do’

**D** - . . (name) . . will you promise to love, respect, and cherish. . (name) . ., will you comfort and support them in times of need and share your laughter in times of joy. Will you remain loving, faithful, and true to them throughout your life together? Respond ‘I Will’

**E** - . . (name). . will you promise to love, honour and respect. . (name). ., be their companion in life, embrace their . . . .OPPORTUNITY TO ADD SOMETHING PERSONAL – NO MORE THAN 20-30 WORDS – Please provide a copy of these words when you return this document . . , and cherish, support, and care for them through good times and bad? Respond ‘I Will’

## 4. Vows

*These are the words that legally marry you so you must both select one of these options. You do not have to choose the same.*

**A** - I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, . . (full name) . . , do take thee, . . (full name) . . , to be my lawful wedded husband / wife.

**B** - I . . . (full name) . . .  take you . . . (full name) . . .  to be my wedded husband / wife.

**C** - I . . . (full name) . . .  take thee . . . (full name) . . .  to be my wedded husband / wife.

## 5. Optional Personal Vows

*These words are optional. Choose from these options or submit your own. You do not have to choose the same. Please provide us with a copy of these words if you have written your own.*

**A** - Today, surrounded by people who love us, I choose you, . . (first name) . ., to be my partner.  I am proud to be your husband/wife and to join my life with yours.  I promise to support you, inspire you, and above all love you, for as long as we both shall live.

**B** - . . (first name) . . , I pledge to share my life openly with you.  I promise to cherish and care for you, to honour and support you.  I will respect you as an individual and I will be true to you, through good times and bad.  To these promises I give my word.

**C** - . . (first name) . . , I promise to laugh with you and cry with you.  I promise to love you in good times and bad, when life seems easy and when it seems hard, when our love is simple or when it needs a little bit of effort, this is my promise to you today and for the rest of my life.

**D** - I promise to love and care for you and to be faithful to you always.  May we look to our future together with hope, happiness, and joy, and remember this day and the feelings we share for each other.

**E** - I promise to be loving, faithful and loyal to you for the rest of our lives together.

**F** - . . (first name) . . I will love you faithfully.  I will help you when you need help and will turn to you when I need help.  As we face the future together, I promise to stand by your side.  I choose you as the person with whom I will spend the rest of my life.

## 6. Optional Ring exchange

*These words are optional. Choose from these options or submit your own. You do not have to choose the same. Please provide us with a copy of these words if you have written your own.*

**A** - . . . (first name) . . ., I give you this ring as a symbol of all that we have promised and all that we share.

**B** - I give you this ring as a token of my love and a sign of the promise I make to you today.

**C** - With this ring, I promise to be true to you, to support you and be there when you need me most.  I give you my hand, my heart, and my love always.

**D** - . . . (first name) . . . I give you this ring as a symbol of our marriage and as a token of my love and lasting friendship, always and forever.

## 7. Readings

*Please find below a selection of readings. The reading is optional. You can choose one of the following readings or select your own. This will be read by a family member or friend.*

**Section 1. Readings about Marriage**

**M1.**

**Marriage means being in Love**

Marriage is love walking hand in hand together. It's laughing with each other about silly little things, and learning to discuss big things with care and tenderness.

In marriage, love is trusting each other when you're apart. It's getting over disappointments and hurts, knowing that these are present in all relationships.

It's the realization that there is no one else in this world that you’d rather be with than the one you're married to.

It's thinking of new things to do together; It's growing old together.

Marriage is being in love for the rest of your life.

*Chris Ardis*

**M2.**

**Marriage is…**

Marriage is a dynamic process of discovery.

Marriage is a journey, not an arrival.

In marriage, being the right person is as important as finding the right person.

Marriage is starting to love, over and over again.

Marriage is a life’s work.

Marriage is an art…and like any creative process, it requires active thought and effort.

We have to learn how to share on many different levels.

We need to practise talking from the heart,

And understanding attitudes as well as words.

Giving generously and receiving graciously are talents that are available to anyone.

But these skills need to be developed, if the marriage picture that we paint is to be anything approaching the masterpiece intended.

*Anon*

**M3.**

**In marriage**

In marriage, cherish each other in big ways and in the small ways, and never forget the magic of those three little words “I love you…”

In marriage, remember that is it the little things that make the difference…

Don’t forget the birthdays and the anniversaries.

An occasional note means a lot.

Share each other’s life – even the small details – for too often we forget that day after day becomes year after year, and then it’s gone.

Give each other room to grow…, we all need our time alone.

Keep strong your faith in each other; time has a funny way of testing us, and it’s faith that gets us through.

Respect one another… this world could always use more of that.

Speak your mind honestly, openly, but with kindness.

*Anon*

**M4.**

**The promises of marriage**

The promises of marriage

Marriage is a promise of companionship, of having someone to share all of life’s experiences.

Marriage does not promise that there will not be any rough times, just the assurance that there will always be someone who cares and will help you through to better times.

Marriage does not promise eternal romance, just eternal love, and commitment.

Marriage cannot prevent disappointments, disillusionment, or grief, but it can offer hope, acceptance, and comfort.

Marriage can’t protect you from making individual choices, or shelter you from the world, but it will help to reassure you that there is someone by your side who truly cares, when the world hurts you and makes you feel vulnerable.

Marriage offers the promise that there will be someone waiting to listen, to console, to inspire.

Marriage is the joining of two people who share the promise that only marriage can make . . . to share the sunshine and the shadows, and to experience a richer, more fulfilling life because of it.

*Bettie Meeks*

**M5.**

**Wedding rings**

Engagement rings may vary as to price and size and kind

Diamonds, sapphires, pearls and rubies, many types you find,

But wedding rings look much alike in platinum or gold

No matter what they cost to buy, or whether new or old,

They all look much the same upon a person’s hand

Plain and unpretentious, just a simple little band.

Yet everyone is different, for everyone you see,

Has a story of its own, a secret history.

The tiny hoop, although so small, holds all the world for two,

Enclosing them within the circle of a dream come true.

Anon

**M6.**

**Union**

You have known each other from the first glace of acquaintance to this point of commitment. At some point, you decided to marry. From the moment of ‘yes’ to this moment of ‘yes’, indeed, you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way.

All those conversations that were held driving in a car or over a meal or during long walks; all those sentences that began with, “When we’re married” and continued with “I will and you will and we will”; those late night talks that included “someday” and “somehow” and “maybe”; and all those promises which are unspoken matters of the heart.

All the common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding. The symbolic vows which you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, “You know all those things we’ve promised and hoped and dreamed – well, I meant it all, every word.”

Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another – friend, confidante, lover, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another. Now you will say a few words which will take you across a threshold of life, and things will never be quite the same between you again.

For after these vows, you will say to the world, this in my husband; this is my wife.

*Robert Fulghum*

**M7.**

**A tapestry of love**

Just as two very different threads woven in opposite directions can form a beautiful tapestry, so can your two lives merge together to form a beautiful marriage.

To make your marriage work will take love. Love should be the core of your marriage; love is the reason you are here.

But it will also take trust – to know in your hearts you want the best for each other.

It will take dedication – to stay open to one another; to learn and to grow together even when this is not so easy to do.

It will take faith – to always be willing to go forward to tomorrow, never really knowing what tomorrow will bring.

And it will take commitment – to hold true to a journey you both now will share together.

*Anon*

**M8.**

**Love Is**

Love is more than passing pleasures

Love is happiness – found in home and homely treasures that the years will bless.

Love is caring – love is bearing one another’s crosses.

Love is sharing everything, the profits and the losses.

Love is more than bells and laughter on a wedding day.

Love is facing what comes after – sunny skies or grey…

Love is giving.

Love is living just for one another – working out the daily problems of our lives-

Together

Anon

**Section 2. Readings about Love and Life**

**L1.**

**I’ll still be loving you**

When your hair has turned to winter

And your teeth are in a plate

When your getter up & go

Has gone to stop and wait

I’ll still be loving you.

When your attributes have shifted

Beyond the bounds of grace

I’ll count your many blessings

Not the wrinkles in your face

I’ll still be loving you.

When the crackle in your voice

Matches that within your knee

And the times are getting frequent

That you don’t remember me

I’ll still be loving you.

Growing old is not a sin

It’s something we all do

I hope you’ll always understand

I’ll still be loving you.

**C. David Hay**

**L2.**

**Love is Giving**

Love is giving, not taking, mending, not breaking

Trusting, believing, never deceiving,

Patiently bearing and faithfully sharing

Each joy, every sorrow, today and tomorrow

Love is kind, understanding, but never demanding

Love is constant, prevailing, it’s strength never failing

A promise once spoken, for all time unbroken

Love’s time is forever

*Anon*

**L3.**

**Love is the most incredible of all experiences**

Love is the most incredible of all experiences to touch our lives.

It creates for us the world that we want to live in from the beginning of our lives,

We know that love is the power that comforts and protects us;

It is the one feeling that we can depend on to help us

Through life’s ups and downs, love is the understanding and security that never changes;

It allows us to be ourselves and feel self – confident.

Today, as the two of you join together and commit your love to each other,

Remember the lessons of love that you have always known.

Let your love comfort, support and encourage you.

Let your love be the best part of your lives;

Always know that it will make everything better;

And it will make your world a place of happiness.

*Anon*

**L4.**

**Love**

Love is worth a sacrifice and letting go of pride,

Worth a bit of toiling - if the toiling’s side by side.

Worth a little parting though the parting means much pain

Worth the weary waiting when the loved ones meet again.

Love is worth the losing of an independent start,

Worthwhile thrusting selfish wild ambitions from the heart.

Love is worth dividing all the dreams and plans in two,

Changing them, reshaping them to compass both of you.

Though certain pleasures fade away when single days are gone,

Other deeper worlds of joy are always added on.

*Anon*

**L5.**

**Doves Poem**

Two doves meeting in the sky

Two loves hand in hand, eye to eye

Two parts of a loving whole

Two hearts and a single soul

Two stars shining big and bright

Two fires bringing warmth and light

Two songs played in perfect tune

Two flowers growing into bloom

Two doves gliding in the air

Two loves free without a care

Two parts of a loving whole

Two hearts and a single soul

Two dreams found before too late

Two lives together bound by fate

Two people cling to one another

Two people in love with each other

Two doves, can you see them soar?

Two loves – who could ask for more?

*Anon*

**L6.**

**You can give without loving**

You can give without loving but you can never love without giving.

The great acts of love are done by those who are

habitually performing small acts of kindness. We

pardon to the extent that we love. Love is knowing

that even when you are alone, you will never be truly

alone again. And great happiness of life is the

conviction that we are loved. Loved for ourselves.

And even loved in spite of ourselves.

*Victor Hugo (1802 – 1885)*

**L7.**

**The One**

When the one whose hand you are holding

Is the one who holds your heart

When the one whose eyes you gaze into

Gives your hopes and dreams their start,

When the one you think of first and last

Is the one who holds you tight,

And the things you plan together

Make the whole world seem just right,

When the one whom you believe in

Puts their faith and trust in you,

You’ve found the one and only love

You’ll share your whole life through.

*Anon*

**L8.**

**Now we will feel no rain**

Now we will feel no rain,

For each of us will be shelter for the other.

Now we will feel no cold,

For each of us will be warmth for the other.

Now there will be no loneliness,

For each of us will be companion to the other.

We are two bodies,

But there are three lives before us:

My life, your life and our life together.

When evening falls,

I will look up and there you’ll be.

I’ll take your hand you’ll take mine

And we’ll turn together to look at the road we travelled to reach this the hour of our happiness.

It stretches behind us as the future lies ahead,

A long and winding road whose every turning means discovery.

Old hopes, new laughter and shared tears.

The adventure has just begun.

*From an American Indian ceremony – version two*

**L9.**

**From heart to heart**

Our love is like a lovely bridge

Between your heart and mine

A bridge we’ve built down through the years

Just to our own design.

It’s based on happy memories

Of the good times that we’ve known

The hopes and dreams we two have shared

The thoughtfulness you’ve shown.

It’s stronger now than ever

For it’s grown with every smile

And every act of kindness

That makes life seem more worthwhile.

And now I know that if you’re near

Or if we’re miles apart,

Our love still unites us

With a bridge from heart to heart.

*Anon*