

Traditional Ceremony

Opening Words:

Friends, Richard and Amanda have invited us here today, in the presence of God, to share in the celebration of their marriage. We who gather here today are separated by the many different experiences that we have had.

Despite these differences we gather here today in this place because we share something in common. We share a desire to affirm and support the relationship of Richard and Amanda.

Marriage is an act of will. It requires a commitment to care for another person. By caring we show concern for the life and growth of those whom we love.

Marriage requires a commitment to take responsibility for another person. By responding we experience the needs of that other person and try to help meet those needs.

Marriage requires a commitment to respect another person. By respecting one another, we help each other grow and we experience our unique individuality.

Marriage requires a commitment to understand another person. By understanding we transcend our own egos and see that other person in their own terms. When we use reason and humility to understand each other, we also discover ourselves.

All these commitments require that we give ourselves to each other. By giving, we experience our strength, our vitality, our love for one another, and our love for the world around us.

Today, guided by God's love and wisdom, we affirm and celebrate Richard and Amanda's wedding day.

Readings

I Love You for What You Are by Carl Sandburg

I love you for what you are, but I love you yet more for what you are going to be. I love you not so much for your realities as for your ideals. I pray for your desires that they may be great, rather than for your satisfactions, which may be so hazardously little. A satisfied flower is one whose petals are about to fall. The most beautiful rose is one hardly more than a bud wherein the pangs and ecstasies of desire are working for a larger and finer growth. Not always shall you be what you are now. You are going forward toward something great. I am on the way with you and therefore I love you.

(The Best Man will sing "And So It Goes" by Billy Joel)

The Question of Intent

Before God, your friends, and your families, I ask you to affirm your willingness to enter the covenant of marriage and to share all the joys and sorrows of your lives and your relationship, whatever the future may hold.

Richard, do you take this woman to be your wife? Do you promise to love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health as long as you both shall live?

Richard: I do

Amanda, do you take this man to be your husband? Do you promise to love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health as long as you both shall live?

Amanda: I do

Richard, repeat after me. I take you, Amanda, this day as my wife. I promise to walk by your side forever as your best friend and your soul mate. You are my beloved one and I am proud to marry you. I promise to support your dreams and to be there for you all our lives.

Amanda, repeat after me. I take you, Richard, this day as my husband. I promise to walk by your side forever as your best friend and your soul mate. You are my beloved one and I am proud to marry you. I promise to support your dreams and to be there for you all our lives.

Rings

From the earliest times, the circle has been a symbol of completeness, a symbol of committed love. An unbroken and never-ending circle symbolizes a commitment of love that is also never ending. This ring should be a reminder of the commitment to love each other that you have made today.

Richard, repeat after me. I, Richard, give you Amanda, this ring as a symbol of my commitment to love, honor and respect you.

Amanda, repeat after me. I, Amanda, give you Richard, this ring as a symbol of my commitment to love, honor and respect you.

Unity Candle

The two mothers light the side candles

In marriage, God calls a man and a woman to leave their parents and move forward. Each of your mothers has lit a candle for you. I now invite you to take those candles. Use them to light a candle that symbolizes your new unity. May its warmth give you shelter from the cold and may its energy fill your spirits with strength and joy.

Richard and Amanda light the main candle

Cup of Wine

Throughout the ages wine has been used for celebration. As you share this cup of wine, you undertake to share all that the future may bring. May whatever bitterness it contains be less bitter because you share it together. May all the sweetness that it holds for you be the sweeter because you taste it together.

Richard takes a sip and passes the cup to Amanda who takes a sip.

Blessing

Richard and Amanda, you have now affirmed your love for each other before your family and friends. You have come from different background. You have walked different paths. You are different individuals. Your love has transcended these differences. In the years before you may the richness of the traditions that have nurtured you enhance and brighten your lives as you help to create and shape the

future.

Breaking a Glass

At some point the glass from the wine portion is emptied and wrapped in a glass. It is placed on the floor to be broken by Richard.

Breaking the glass from which the wine of celebration has been shared is a tradition of uncertain origin that suggests many things. Some say that it is a reminder of the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, which must not be forgotten, even in moments of joy. For others, it recalls all the imperfection of the world. It suggests that the happiness of the bride and groom is not theirs alone, but a part of the universal answer to those imperfections. Some see the shattered glass as a symbol of a break with the past, which makes possible new relationships. Still another ancient blessing wishes that the years of happiness for these two people shall be no less than it would take to fit all the resulting fragments together again. So be it for Richard and Amanda.

Richard stomps on the glass

Closing Words

May God bless you and keep you.

May God's presence shine upon you and be gracious to you.

May God's presence be with you and give you peace.

Richard and Amanda, by the power vested in me, I now pronounce you husband and wife. Richard, you may kiss the bride.

Presentation of the new couple

It is my pleasure to present to you Richard and Amanda as husband and wife.