



11052 Ventura Boulevard, Rockford~Machesney Park, Illinois 61115
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The Usual Sequence of the River House Marriage/Wedding Ceremony

Your marriage ceremony can be in any sequence you choose, but the usual sequence is the following:

Greeting & gathering of the guests;

(Lighting of the Unity Candle tapers by _____)

Reverend and Groom enter;

Groomsmen and Bridal attendants enter;

Maid/Matron of Honor enters;

Ring Bearer/Flower Girl enter;

Reverend:

"ALL RISE PLEASE";

Processional:

Father/Mother/_____ and Bride enter;

Addressing of the Guests:

"WELCOME, FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS. WE ARE GATHERED HERE TO WITNESS AND TO CELEBRATE THE JOINING TOGETHER OF _____ AND _____ IN MARRIAGE. THEY ARE PLEASED THAT YOU ARE PRESENT, BECAUSE IT IS YOU WHO HAVE KNOWN THEM, CARED FOR THEM, AND LOVED THEM, AS INDIVIDUALS. YOU HAVE HELPED TO NUTURE AND SHAPE THEIR LIVES AND BRING THEM TO THIS POINT IN TIME. NOW WE ARE JOINING TOGETHER THEIR INDIVIDUAL LIVES FORMING NEW TIES WITH TWO SETS OF FAMILIES AND TWO SETS OF FRIENDS. THEY WISH FOR, AND WILL VALUE, YOUR CONTINUED LOVE AND SUPPORT AS A MARRIED COUPLE.";

Presentation of the Bride by the person escorting her: (Some Brides choose not to do this.)

"WHO GIVES/PRESENTS _____ TO BE MARRIED TO _____?"

Father/Mother/_____ says: "I do."/"Her Mother and I do."/"_____".

Father/Mother/_____ kisses/hugs the Bride; Groom steps forward;

Father/Mother/_____ shakes hands with the Groom, then places Bride's right hand in Groom's left hand, and goes to his/her seating place;

Bride and Groom step forward to Reverend;

Reverend to guests: "YOU MAY BE SEATED."

Addressing the Bride and Groom:

HELLO, _____ AND _____. YOU ARE HERE TO JOIN YOUR LIVES IN MARRIAGE. THIS IS A DAY FULL OF JOY THAT WILL ALTER THE REST OF YOUR LIVES. THE LOVE, TRUST, HONOR, AND RESPECT THAT YOU SHARE TODAY MUST BE NURTURED AND ALWAYS REMEMBERED.

REMEMBER THESE FEELINGS, AND THAT MEMORY WILL ENCOURAGE YOUR PERSONAL HAPPINESS TO GROW, TO FLOURISH, AND TO MATURE, AS TIME GOES BY...

REMEMBER, TRUE LOVE IS BEING WITH THAT SPECIAL SOMEONE WHO MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD ABOUT LIVING...SOMEONE WHO ACCEPTS YOU, JUST AS YOU ARE, AND ALWAYS ENCOURAGES YOU TO BECOME THE BEST YOU CAN BE...

REMEMBER, LOVING GIVES YOU THE CHANCE TO BE STRONG, WHILE STILL KNOWING THAT HELP AND SUPPORT IS THERE IF YOU NEED IT. LOVING ALLOWS YOU TO MAKE YOUR OWN DECISIONS AND CHOICES, YET OFFERS COMFORT WHEN YOU SOMETIMES MAKE A MISTAKE.

REMEMBER, LOVE IS A PLACE WHERE YOU GROW AND LEARN TOGETHER. YOUR LOVING HEARTS ARE THE SAFE AND SECURE HOME FOR ALL THE WISHES AND DREAMS THAT, TOGETHER, YOU CAN WATCH COME TRUE. "

(Lighting the Unity Candle:

Bride and Groom step to Unity Candle.

"THE LIGHTING OF A UNITY CANDLE IS A TRADITION FOLLOWED BY MANY CULTURES. I WILL REPEAT THE SENTIMENT EXPRESSED IN THE NATIVE AMERICAN CEREMONY."

Bride and Groom light their individual tapers.

"AND NOW YOU SHALL FEEL NO PAIN, FOR EACH OF YOU SHALL BE COMFORT FOR THE OTHER. AND NOW YOU SHALL FEEL NO RAIN, FOR EACH OF YOU SHALL BE SHELTER FOR THE OTHER. AND NOW YOU SHALL FEEL NO COLD, FOR EACH OF YOU SHALL BE WARMTH FOR THE OTHER. NOW THERE IS NO LONELINESS FOR YOU. YOU ARE TWO PERSONS, BUT YOU NOW SHARE ONE UNITY OF PURPOSE."
Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle together at same time with tapers.)

Marriage Vows: (Choose from these vows, change them, or compose your own.)

1. Do you (name) take (name) to be your lawful wedded wife? I do. Will you love, respect and honor her throughout your years together? I WILL.(Bride repeats the same vows.)
2. (Name) do you take (name) whom you now hold by the hand to be your lawful wedded wife? I DO. Do you promise to love and cherish her, in sickness and in health, for richer for poorer, for better for worse, and forsaking all others, keep yourself only unto her, for so long as you both shall live? I DO(Bride repeats the same vows.)
3. Do you mutually promise in the presence of your friends and family that you will at all times and in all circumstances, conduct yourselves toward one another as becomes Husband and Wife? WE DO. Do you mutually promise you will love, cherish and respect one another throughout the years? WE DO.
4. (Name) do you pledge to love (name) and throughout your years together to be honest, faithful, and kind to her. Do you pledge to give to her the same happiness she gives to you, to react to her as only you can, and to respect her for who she is, not who you want her to be? I DO. (Bride repeats the same vows.)
5. (repeated to each other after Reverend by phrases) With all my heart I take you to be my wife. I will love you through the good and the bad, through the joy and the sorrow. I will try to be understanding, and to trust in you completely. I will make you a part of me and in turn, become a part of you. Together we will face all of life's experiences and share one another's dreams and goals. We will be equal partners in an open, honest relationship throughout the years. (Bride repeats the same vows.)
6. (repeated to each other after me by phrases) (Name) it is my intention to be your best friend, to respect and support you, to be patient with you, to work together with you to achieve those things that are important to us, to accept you unconditionally, and to share life with you throughout the years. (Bride repeats the same vows.)
7. (repeated to each other after me by phrases) I pledge to you with all my heart and being to love and support you in all ways, to my utmost capabilities, for the rest of our lives. (Bride repeats the same vows.)

Rings: (Choose from these or compose your own.)

1. "With this ring I thee wed."
2. "With this ring I pledge my love."
3. "With this ring I pledge my commitment."
4. "With this ring I pledge my love and commitment."

Pronouncement After the Marriage Vows:

"_____ AND _____, YOU HAVE SPOKEN YOUR VOWS OF MARRIAGE TO ONE ANOTHER AND HAVE DECLARED THE SAME BY GIVING AND RECEIVING A RING, ALL IN THE PRESENCE OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS. I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU HUSBAND AND WIFE."

Kiss: "_____, YOU MAY NOW KISS YOUR BRIDE."

Presentation: (Some couples would rather not be presented.)

"AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I HAVE THE PLEASURE OF PRESENTING MR. & MRS. _____."

or

"I NOW HAVE THE PLEASURE OF PRESENTING TO YOU _____ and _____, HUSBAND AND WIFE."

Recessional:

Bride and Groom; Flower Girl/Ring Bearer; Best Man with Maid/Matron of Honor; Attendants: Reverend

Receiving Line: (Some couples prefer to receive/greet guests as they exit the ceremony in an informal manner.)

Same order as above with Bride's Parents and Groom's Parents first.



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