



Ron Ann Fuller

I have included the following sample ceremonies in a document set aside for “beach” ceremonies for several reasons:

- 1. They were all real ceremonies held on a beach.**
- 2. To varying degrees they each reference the setting at the beach.**
- 3. They include rituals easily done at the beach such as the sand ceremony, knot ceremony, bell of truce and wish upon a shell. *(If you have your heart set on a beach wedding do not even begin to consider a unity candle. The two are mutually exclusive.)***

These ceremonies by no means represent all that can or should be done for a wedding to be considered a beach wedding. The only thing required is the beach. You needn't mention the location at all if the symbolism has no meaning for you.

I chose to share these particular beach weddings because they also demonstrate the differences among the three primary types of wedding services I officiate: secular, spiritual and non-denominational Christian.

SECULAR BEACH CEREMONY

Presentation of the Bride

Who presents this woman at her wedding this day? ~ *Escort responds*

(Bride) and (Groom), please turn towards one another, join your hands and in so doing, join your hearts.

Words of Welcome

We are gathered here today in support of (Groom) and (Bride) as they publicly declare their love for one another and their desire to be joined as one in marriage. We witness the declaration of their hearts, built upon experience, and enriched by their love. Through their mutual esteem and support their joys will be multiplied and their sorrows diminished. They have chosen our setting at the beach this day because of the romance, power and majesty of the ocean. The beauty of our surroundings and the distance of the horizon calls to mind the future that is their shared potential stretching out before them as they go face it together. For the union (Groom) and (Bride) create this day is not a finished action, but an ever continuing process and a journey. By witnessing their marriage ceremony this day, they ask you to share in their future. Thank you for being with them as they pledge their love, devotion and joy, accepting responsibility for the commitment they make to one another.



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Declaration of Intent

The bond of marriage is one that can be entered into only by persons who are free to offer themselves to each other. Therefore, I ask you to state your intention. (Bride) and (Groom), have you come here joyfully and without reservation to give yourselves to one another in matrimony? ~ *We have.*

Affirmation of the Couple

(Bride) and (Groom), it is a great joy for all of us here with you on this day, witnessing the commitment you make to one another. (Bride), you have shared with me that some of your favorite things about (Groom) are that he is kind, romantic, and has a fabulous sense of humor, always able to make you laugh. (Groom), you have shared with me that some of your favorite things about (Bride) are...well quite a long list actually. You cherish her kindness, tenderness, generosity, devotion to family and that she not only appreciates your sense of humor but can make you laugh too. We are often reminded of the solemnity of our vows, the importance of love, respect and trust and they are indeed very important. But rarely are we reminded of how vital the little things like a bit of kindness and the ability to laugh when the absurdities of life become almost too much to endure are as well. Cherish this in one another and you will surely have a marriage of great beauty and delight. When we love, we do not love all the time precisely the same way each and every moment to moment, however, this is what most of us have come to expect. We often have too little faith in the ebb and flow of life, of love, and of relationships. We leap at the flow of the tide and resist its ebb. We needlessly fear it will never return. We insist on permanency, on duration, on continuity, when life gives us the gifts of transition and growth. Embrace the changes that will come in your marriage, they are the means to growth and strength for through a supportive partnership you can help one another become better and stronger individuals.

Exchange of Vows

(Bride) and (Groom), your marriage is created by the mutual exchange of pledges between you. And then only you can breathe life into these words and transform them into a meaningful union of heart, body and mind.

(Bride), please look into (Groom's) eyes as you repeat after me;

(Groom), there is no other person I would rather share my life with than you.

I want to be the one to give you warmth when you are cold,

comfort when you are in pain, and joy when you are sad.

I will care for you as you care for me,

sharing equally in the responsibilities we both bring to our marriage.

I will support you in all your endeavors.

I give you my trust and promise to be worthy of your trust.

I will remain by your side now and forever as your wife.



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(Groom), please look into (Bride's) eyes as you repeat after me;

(Bride), there is no other person I would rather share my life with than you.

*I want to be the one to give you warmth when you are cold,
comfort when you are in pain, and joy when you are sad.*

I will care for you as you care for me,

sharing equally in the responsibilities we both bring to our marriage.

I will support you in all your endeavors.

I give you my trust and promise to be worthy of your trust.

I will remain by your side now and forever as your husband.

Exchange of Rings

May I have the rings please?

The circle is a natural symbol of eternity as it has no beginning and no end. We place the ring on the left hand because it constitutes a direct path to the heart, a traditional metaphor for love and devotion. Its presence reminds us of the vows we have made and their relationship to the emotional seat of the heart. May (Bride's) and (Groom's) rings reside on the hands of the lover, the caregiver, the companion and the guide. (Bride) and (Groom) wear these rings as a visible symbol of your unity.

(Groom), please look into (Bride's) eyes, placing the ring upon her finger as you repeat after me.

Let this symbol of my eternal love be a reminder of my devotion to you.

I marry you with all that I have and all that I am. I am honored to call you my wife.

(Bride), please look into (Groom's) eyes, placing the ring upon his finger as you repeat after me.

Let this symbol of my eternal love be a reminder of my devotion to you.

I marry you with all that I have and all that I am. I am honored to call you my wife.

Knot Ceremony

(Groom) and (Bride) you have just sealed your relationship by the giving and receiving of rings. Today this relationship is further symbolized by the tying of a lover's knot.

At this time I invite (Groom's) and (Bride's) mothers to come forward to represent their respective families. These families have raised and nurtured this man and this woman and helped them become the person each holds most dear. It is right and fitting to acknowledge that now these two previously separate circles of love are being united in a new and wider circle.



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(Groom's Mother), please drape the cord over your son's wrist. It represents the wishes and blessings your family bestows upon your child, all that he is now and all he may become.

(Bride's Mother), please drape the cord over your daughter's wrist. This cord represents the wishes and blessings your family bestows upon your child, all she is now and all she may become.

Please tie these cords over your children's hands as a visual symbol of the joining of your two families through their hearts, bodies and souls. May their marriage endure in faith and fidelity knowing they have the blessing and support of the families that gave them life, hope and love.

(Groom) and (Bride), woven into this cord, within its very fibers, are all your hopes and dreams. With the fastening of this knot I secure the love and happiness wished here on this day for your new life together. May this cord draw your hands together in love so they will never be used in anger. May the pledges you have made never grow bitter in your hearts. Your two hearts are entwined in love, bound by all which brings strength to this union. Hold tight to one another through both good times and bad, and watch as your strength grows. Your bond is not formed of the knots of this cord, but instead by your pledges to one another. May your bond never be broken.

Affirmation of the Marriage

May the glory resting on all who love,
rest upon you, and bless you and keep you,
and fill you with happiness and a gracious spirit.
Despite all changes of time and fortune,
may all that is noble and lovely and true
abound in your hearts and abide with you,
and give you strength in all your days together.

Declaration of Marriage

(Groom) and (Bride), with the support of your families and friends, by the vows you have made to one another and the strength of your commitment, it is my pleasure to pronounce you "Husband and Wife." Please seal your marriage with a kiss!

Wish Upon a Shell

At this time, would everyone please take your shell and hold it close to your heart? Think of the gifts (Bride) and (Groom) bring to one another and the beautiful potential that is their shared life together. Consider how you can encourage them and help guide and support them in being steadfast in the promises they have made. Make a wish or just think a special thought for their union.



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In a moment we will follow (Groom) and (Bride) to the shoreline where we will then toss our shells into the ocean. All of our hopes and dreams will become one with all of creation and join together the well wishes of all of us gathered here this day.

Introduction of the Couple

Ladies and gentleman, it is my great joy to introduce to you for the first time, Mr. and Mrs. _____!

SPIRITUAL BEACH CEREMONY

Presentation of the Bride

Who presents this woman at her wedding this day? ~ *Escort responds*

(Bride) and (Groom), please turn towards one another, join your hands and in so doing, join your hearts.

Words of Welcome

Please gather around as we come together in the presence of this company to join these two in marriage. If life has meaning to us at all, it possesses it because of love. It is that which ennobles our human experience. It is the basis for the peace of family and the peace of all humanity. The greatest gift bestowed upon humans is the gift not of demanding, but of giving love between two persons.

Our setting at the beach today serves as a beautiful metaphor for marriage. Just as the conditions on the sea range from a blissful calm to a raging storm, so our relationships change through time. The shore absorbs the pounding of the surf as our love endures the pressures of change and growth. (Bride) and (Groom) have chosen to exchange their vows beside the sea because like the wonder of nature, their love for one another can never be contained within four walls. They invite you to take a moment to enjoy the sound of the roaring surf, the warmth of the sun, the smell of the fresh salt air and the feel of the sand between your toes. These are the kinds of simple pleasures in life they wish to bring joy and wonder to their union. Thank you for standing with them at their hour of commitment.

Declaration of Intent

The sacred covenant of marriage is one that can be entered into only by persons who are free to offer themselves to each other. Therefore, I ask you to state your intention. (Bride) and (Groom), have you come here joyfully and without reservation to give yourselves to one another in holy matrimony? ~ *We have.*



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Blessing of the Parents

From time immemorial, weddings such as this have been public occasions where family and friends gather to express the joy and approval they feel for the new couple. Let me therefore ask the parents: Do you, who have raised and nurtured these two, give your blessings to them as they enter into this new relationship, and do you aspire in the days and years ahead to give them your deepest love, understanding, and support during both good times and bad? If so, please say, "We do."

Reading

At this time I would like to invite _____ to come forward to read from "A Gift from the Sea" by Anne Morrow Lindbergh

One recognizes the truth of Saint Exupery's line: Love does not consist in gazing at each other. But in looking outward together in the same direction. For in fact, man and woman are not only looking outward in the same direction, they are working outward. Here one forms ties, roots, a firm base....Here one makes oneself part of the community of men, of human society. Here the bonds of marriage are formed. For marriage, which is always spoken of as a bond, becomes actually, in this stage, many bonds, many strands, of different texture and strength, making up a web that is taut and firm. The web is fashioned of love. Yes, but many kinds of love: romantic love first, then a slow-growing devotion and, playing through these, a constantly rippling companionship. It is made of loyalties, and interdependencies, and shared experiences. It is woven of memories of meetings and conflicts; of triumphs and disappointments. It is a web of communication, a common language, and the acceptance of lack of language too, a knowledge of likes and dislikes, of habits and reactions, both physical and mental. It is a web of instincts and intuitions, and known and unknown exchanges. The web of marriage is made by propinquity, in the day to day living side by side, looking outward and working outward in the same direction. It is woven in space and in time of the substance of life itself.

Affirmation of the Couple

(Groom) and (Bride), your wedding today is the public and legal joining of your souls that have already been united as one in your hearts. Marriage will allow you a new environment to share your lives together, to face life and the world, hand-in-hand. Your union will expand you as individuals, define you as a couple, and deepen your love for one another.

You have shared with me a view of marriage that is realistic as well as romantic. For it is a bond founded in love and the most intimate friendship two people can create. It is dependent upon the trust, loyalty and lifetime commitment you recognize as important if your union is to endure throughout eternity. But bear in mind eternity is something other than endless time. It is outside of time. It is not the past and not the future, but now, this moment. But as soon as we contemplate the moment it is gone. That is eternity. So if one seeks a relationship of love throughout eternity, it must be a continual process of the here and the now.



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(Groom) and (Bride), remember to hold each other as special and unique individuals. Do not let grudges take root, but instead be forgiving and compassionate. From this day forward you shall be each other's home and refuge. Guard it well. Build strength through the beauty of love. This is the core of your marriage and why you have come to make the pledges to one another you are about to exchange. Your marriage requires dedication and the ability to remain open to change--to learn and grow together. Have faith that even though you know not what the future may bring, you go face it together. Hold true to the journey you vow today to share forever.

Exchange of Vows

(Bride) and (Groom), I remind you that the vows you are about to exchange belong entirely to you. Only you, by the integrity and diligence of your lives, can make these vows last. So it is not to lofty words or institutions that we appeal at this hour of commitment, but to the resources which you draw from deep within yourselves, the deep well of human need, the need to live united and loving and complete in an imperfect world.

(Bride), please look into (Groom)'s eyes as you repeat after me.

*(Groom), you are my one true love, my best friend, my soul mate.
You complete my spirit and compliment my soul.
Today, before our family, our friends and the heavens,
I pledge my love to you and promise to share the rest of my life with you.*

(Groom), please look into (Bride)'s eyes as you repeat after me.

*(Bride), you are my one true love, my best friend, my soul mate.
You complete my spirit and compliment my soul.
Today, before our family, our friends and the heavens,
I pledge my love to you and promise to share the rest of my life with you.*

(Bride), do you take (Groom) to be your husband? Do you promise to stand by his side in both times of loss as well as times of gain? Trust, respect and celebrate him? Grow together by unselfishly encouraging, appreciating, nurturing and supporting him? Laugh, play and enjoy the simple pleasures together? Be there and comfort him always? And pledge your fidelity as long as you both shall live? ~ *I do.*

(Groom), do you take (Bride) to be your wife? Do you promise to stand by her side in both times of loss as well as times of gain? Trust, respect and celebrate her? Grow together by unselfishly encouraging, appreciating, nurturing and supporting her? Laugh, play and enjoy the simple pleasures together? Be there and comfort him always? And pledge your fidelity as long as you both shall live? ~ *I do.*



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Blessing of the Hands

(Bride) and (Groom), please hold one another's hands with the palms facing up and see the gifts they are to you. These are the hands that work together as you build your future. These are the hands that give you strength, supporting and encouraging you in all your endeavors, the cherished hands that help you to express your love, compassion and desire. These are the hands always there to wipe the tears from your eyes, tears of sorrow and tears of joy, and will cradle your children in their nurturing embrace. May these hands we see before us this day be blessed. May they long be held by wonder another, remaining tender and gentle. May they help to create a relationship founded in love, rich in caring and devoted to one another always. May these hands that hold your rings, forever be ready to reach out to one another in the glory of your love always serving one another as healer, protector, shelter and guide.

Blessing of the Rings

May I have the rings please?

Marriage is a state in which two people come together and create a union greater than the sum of its parts. It is difficult to express in words the profound relationship that is love. The ring has long been a symbol of the sincerity and permanence of a couple's love for one another and regard for their marriage. As the circle can begin anew at any point, so a good marriage can pick any point to renew itself. Let us bless these rings. These circles, symbols that remind us of the sun that shines above us, the Earth holding the sand beneath our feet and the cycle of the tides before us that rise and fall against this beach. In this moment, bring blessings to these rings to be symbols of unity, commitment and renewal. May the love (Bride) and (Groom) feel for each other this day reside always in their hearts.

Exchange of Rings

(Groom), please look into your beloved's eyes, placing the ring, a symbol of your love for (Bride) on her hand as you repeat after me.

*I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and faithfulness.
As I place it on your finger, I commit my heart and soul to you.
I ask you to wear this ring as a reminder of the vows
we have spoken today, our wedding day.*

(Bride), please look into your beloved's eyes, placing the ring, a symbol of your love for (Groom) on his hand as you repeat after me.

*I give you this ring as a symbol of my love and faithfulness.
As I place it on your finger, I commit my heart and soul to you.
I ask you to wear this ring as a reminder of the vows
we have spoken today, our wedding day.*



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Sand Ceremony

(Bride) and (Groom), you have just sealed your relationship by the giving and receiving of rings. Today this relationship is further symbolized through the pouring of these two individual containers of sand. One, representing you, (Bride), and all you were, all you are and all you will ever be. The other, representing you, (Groom), and all you were, all you are and all you will ever be.

As you now pour your two containers of sand into the third container, they are joined together as one. As the sand is blends, we see it flow together in a lovely pattern allowing us to see the individual colors while appreciating the creation of something new and beautiful—just as you encourage and support one another’s individuality in the context of a strong union. Our prayer for you today is that your lives together be longer than the time it would take to separate the individual grains of sand.

Blessing of the Marriage

May (Bride) and (Groom) be blessed with an abundance of resources and comforts, and be helpful to one another in all ways. May they be strong and complement one another. May they have a happy life surrounded by those they love and who love them. May they live in harmony, true to their personal values and their joint promises. May they always be the best of friends and their love for one another deepen over the years.

Declaration of Marriage

What love has brought together, let no one break asunder. For as much as you, (Groom) and (Bride) have consented to live together in marriage and have pledged yourselves to one another, declaring the same by the giving and receiving of rings, with great pleasure and by the authority vested in me as a Minister in the state of Florida I do hereby pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss your bride!

CHRISTIAN BEACH CEREMONY

Declaration of Intent

(Bride) and (Groom), please turn towards one another, join your hands and in so doing, join your hearts.

The bond and covenant of marriage was established by God and therefore is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted. (Bride) and (Groom), have you come here joyfully and without reservation to be united as one in holy matrimony for the rest of your days? ~ We have.



Ron Ann Fuller

Words of Welcome

Dearly beloved, (Bride) and (Groom) bid you welcome and express their gratitude for your presence as they pledge their love and fidelity in the holy estate of matrimony on this joyful day. We gather on this beach where the pounding of the surf, the light of the sun and the glory that is nature represent the strength, power and grandeur they wish to bring to their union. The strength of their commitment, the power of their spirits and the wonder of their love bring us to this hour. May they always feel the depth of these emotions like the depths of these waters and their marriage endure in beauty and in faith.

At joyous occasions such as these, it is right and fitting to remember those who are important in (Bride's) and (Groom's) lives but are unable to be with us this day. We hold their absent loved ones fondly in our hearts at this hour of commitment.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray. Dear Lord, our hearts are filled with great happiness on (Bride's) and (Groom's) wedding day, as they come before you pledging their hearts and lives to one another. Grant that they may be ever true and loving; living together is such a way as to never bring shame or heartbreak into their marriage. Temper their hearts with kindness and understanding and rid them of all pretense of jealousy. Help them to remember to be each other's sweetheart, helpmate, friend and guide, so together they may meet the cares and problems of life more bravely. And with the passage of time, may the home they are creating today, truly be a place of love and harmony, where your spirit is ever present. We ask these things in Jesus' name; Amen.

A Reading from Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (13:4-8)

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

Affirmation of the Couple

Our setting at the beach today reminds us of the inevitable changes life will bring to (Bride) and (Groom). Just as the shoreline changes shape from the forces of wind, water and sand, but this beach remains, they will inevitably change as individuals and as a couple from the forces of time and fortune, yet their marriage shall endure. Our blessings abound for (Bride) and (Groom) that they may be granted the beauty and strength we see around us today. (Bride) and (Groom) you have both shared with me that a generous spirit is one of the things you appreciate most about one another. You value your easy companionship, your open and honest communication and how willing you are to sacrifice for the other.



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Your mutual esteem is admirable, for the giving of yourself in love is difficult, for you must give of your love without total submission of yourself. Therefore, in your giving, give your joy, your sadness, your interest, your understanding, your knowledge -- all expressions that make up life. But in this giving, remember to preserve yourself -- your integrity, your individuality. This is the challenge of love within marriage. The union of husband and wife in heart, body and mind is intended by God for your mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity. Your devotion, joy and love can grow, only if you nurture them together. Stand fast in that hope and confidence, believing in your shared future just as strongly as you believe in yourselves and in each other this day. Only in this spirit, can you create a partnership that will strengthen and sustain you all the days of your lives.

Exchange of Vows

(Bride) and (Groom) this covenant is meant to be a beautiful and sacred expression of your love for each other. As you pledge your vows to each other, and as you commit your lives to each other, we ask that you do so in all seriousness, and yet with a sense of great joy; with the deep conviction you are committing yourselves to a growing relationship of trust, mutual support, and caring love.

(Bride), please look into (Groom's) eyes as I ask you;

As you stand here before your family and friends in the midst of God's eternal love, do you, (Bride), take (Groom) to be your wedded husband to have and to hold from this day forward, for better and for worse, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, according to God's holy ordinance; giving him everything within your heart, body and soul to give? ~ *I do.*

(Groom), please look into (Bride's) eyes as I ask you;

As you stand here before your family and friends in the midst of God's eternal love, do you, (Groom), take (Bride) to be your wedded wife to have and to hold from this day forward, for better and for worse, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, according to God's holy ordinance; giving her everything within your heart, body and soul to give? ~ *I do.*

Blessing of the Rings

May I have the rings please?

As circles have no beginning and no end, rings have naturally come to symbolize eternal love within the union of mind, body, and spirit that constitutes the sanctity of marriage. They are freely offered as gifts of faith and hope as visible signs of the promises given this day. Dear Lord, bless these rings. May their shine, like the reflective waters before us, mirror the sacred vows made between them. May their radiance, like the sun above us, grace their hands with a warm and nurturing presence. May their durability, like the ground below us, be a symbol of the strength of (Bride's) and (Groom's) eternal commitment, now and forever. Amen.



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Exchange of Rings

(Groom), please look into the eyes of your beloved, placing the ring upon (Bride's) finger as you repeat after me.

*With this Ring I thee wed,
with my Body I thee worship,
and with all my worldly Goods I thee endow:
In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

(Bride), please look into the eyes of your beloved, placing the ring upon (Groom's) finger as you repeat after me.

*With this Ring I thee wed,
with my Body I thee worship,
and with all my worldly Goods I thee endow:
In the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Reading

A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 4 Verses 9-12

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their effort. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to the person who is alone when he stumbles and has not a helpmate to lift him up. Again, if two lie together, they are warm; but how can one be warm alone? And though someone might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand any challenge.

Bell of Truce

(Bride) and (Groom) have a view of marriage that is as realistic as it is romantic and have chosen to demonstrate the strength of their commitment and dedication within the context of their wedding ceremony. They recognize their union will experience moments of distance and perhaps a little turmoil.

As bells have long been associated with weddings with their joyous tones announcing the good tidings, I present this bell to (Bride) and (Groom) and ask them to give it a hardy ring while thinking lovely thoughts about one another and their future life together.

(Bride) and (Groom), keep this bell in your home to remind you of your wedding day. When arguments arise, and they will, put this bell to its best use. One of you should ring the bell to call a truce. Its sound will remind you of your wedding vows, conjure up the happiest memories from this day and help you resolve our differences lovingly and compassionately.



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Blessing of the Marriage

Let us pray. Dear Lord, help (Groom) and (Bride) to follow and serve you with an ever growing commitment because of their union. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads. Guide them into greater love, compassion, forgiveness and sacrifice as they care for each other's needs, knowing you will care for them and may their mutual esteem in marriage be a radiant reflection of your love for all of us. Amen.

Declaration of Marriage

For as much as (Bride) and (Groom) have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have given and pledged their loyalty, each to the other, declaring the same by giving and receiving a ring, I pronounce that they are Husband and Wife, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

You may kiss your bride!