



Rev. Ann Fuller

I tell couples, if at all possible, give no thought whatsoever to how long your ceremony is likely to last. Odds are your ceremony will be anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes in length. Anything you add or take away from your ceremony will not add or subtract more than a minute or two to the overall length. If you focus on choosing elements that are meaningful to you, than your wedding ceremony will be exactly the length it's meant to be. Do not be tempted to put readings, music, and rituals into your ceremony that do not touch you in some way just to pad out time. Your guests will know it's a poor fit and consequently will be instantly disengaged. Not what you want!

The following wedding is one in which the couple chose several additional elements, but because they found them meaningful and they fit their personalities there wasn't a squirmy backside or dry eye in the place.

- Words of Welcome / Greeting
- Blessing of the Ceremony
- Affirmation of Marriage
- Exchange of Vows
- Blessing of the Hands
- Blessing of the Rings
- Exchange of Rings
- Wine and Letter Box
- Blessing of the Marriage
- Declaration of Marriage
- Butterfly Release
- Introduction of the Couple

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

Words of Welcome / Greeting

Welcome to this place, made holy by the presence of love. (Groom) and (Bride) are so very grateful for the guidance and support they have received from their families and their friends. They wish you to share in the dedication they make to one another this day and the future they face together, hand in hand, heart to heart. Today they pledge their love and respect to one another, but also express their shared commitment to a circle of care and concern that has enabled them to become the two people in the world each holds most dear. Thank you for sharing in their celebration of life and love. Please take a moment to greet those seated nearest you, for these people, like you, are important in (Groom) and (Bride's) lives.

<Bride and Groom hugged their parents while guests shook hands with people near them.>



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Blessing of the Ceremony

Let us enter into the spirit of prayer and give thanks for this beautiful day when we are blessed to witness the union of (Bride) and (Groom). The desire of their hearts to be together in this life has been fulfilled. May this wedding service be blessed and joy, peace and contentment dwell within them as they live together in unity, and may all who enter the home they create this day experience the strength of kindness, humility, compassion and love. Amen.

Affirmation of Marriage

(Groom) and (Bride) when I asked your vision of being married to the other you both mentioned love, of course, but then one of you said commitment and the other dedication. I could not be more thrilled. This speaks of a maturity that bodes well for your future. Love alone does not inspire us to live lives full of compassion and service to one another. It requires dedication, commitment, trust and faith.

We derive the strength to nurture this love in the context of the marriage bond and our community. Therefore, I remind your friends and family here today that they too play an important role in supporting you as you face the challenges every marriage encounters over time.

(Groom) and (Bride), marriage is a voluntary partnership that will indeed constantly challenge and test the depth of your commitment. Love brought you together and will make your marriage richer and sweeter. It is a mutual dedication and a willingness to trust that each of you is committed to the health and success of your relationship that will make your marriage endure.

Exchange of Vows

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

*(Groom), I love you. You are my best friend.
Today I, (Bride), commit myself to you.
I promise to encourage and inspire you,
to laugh with you and comfort you.
I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad,
when life seems easy and when it seems hard.
When our love is simple, and when it is an effort.
I promise to cherish you,
and to always hold you in highest regard.
These things I give to you now and forever.*



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(Groom), please look into (Bride)'s eyes repeating after me:

*(Bride), I love you. You are my best friend.
Today I, (Groom), commit myself to you.
I promise to encourage and inspire you,
to laugh with you and comfort you.
I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad,
when life seems easy and when it seems hard.
When our love is simple, and when it is an effort.
I promise to cherish you,
and to always hold you in highest regard.
These things I give to you now and forever.*

Blessing of the Hands

(Bride) and (Groom), please look at your hands and see the gifts they are to you. These are the hands that will work together as you build your future, giving you strength, supporting and encouraging you in all your endeavors. These are the cherished hands helping you 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. They will cradle your children in their loving embrace, helping keep your family warm and secure. May these hands we see before us this day be blessed and forever hold on to one another, remaining tender and gentle. May these hands help create a relationship founded in love, rich in caring and devoted to one another. May these hands that will hold your rings, forever be ready to reach out to one another in the glory of your love serving one another as healer, shelter, protector and guide.

Blessing of the Rings

Do we have the rings?

(Bride) and (Groom) are about to exchange and the rings of (Groom's ancestor) and (Bride's ancestor). They represent the continuation of love down through the generations as well as the uniting of these two families with their hopes for a new generation nurtured by this love.

May these rings forever remind (Groom) and (Bride) of their covenant with one another, as well as the circle of love they have publicly created here today. May their regard for one another be like these rings, with no beginning and no end. May the precious metal remind them of their precious commitment, and if either begins to tarnish, may they joyfully undertake the sacred duty to make it shine brightly again. May these rings always belong to their hands, and their love reside in each other's hearts from this day forward.



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Exchange of Rings

(Groom), do you give this ring, symbol of your eternal love to (Bride) with everything you are and everything you will become? ~ *I do.*

Then in remembrance of this hour, please place the ring on (Bride's) finger saying, "with this ring I marry you."

(Bride), do you give this ring, symbol of your eternal love to (Groom) with everything you are and everything you will become? ~ *I do.*

Then in remembrance of this hour, please place the ring on (Groom's) finger saying, "with this ring I marry you."

Wine and Letter Box

(Bride) and (Groom) have a view of marriage 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.

This box contains a bottle of wine and a love letter from each to the other. The letters describe the good qualities they find in one another, the reasons they fell in love, and their reasons for choosing to marry. The letters are sealed in individual envelopes and they have not seen what the other has written.

(Bride) and (Groom), should you ever find your marriage enduring serious hardships, you are to open this box, sit and drink the wine together, then separate and read the letters you wrote to one another when you were first united as a couple. By reading these love letters you will reflect upon the reasons you fell in love and chose to marry each other this day.

Our hope is, however, you will never have reason to open this box. If this is the case, you are to open this box to share and enjoy on your tenth anniversary. Please seal the box.

<couple seals the box>

Our prayer for you today, is you shall have no cause to open it until (date of tenth anniversary)!



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Blessing of the Marriage

Our hearts are filled with great happiness on (Bride) and (Groom)'s wedding day, as they pledge their hearts and lives to one another. Grant that they may be ever true and loving, living together in such a way as to never bring shame or heartbreak into their marriage. Temper their hearts with kindness and understanding, rid them of all pretense of jealousy. Help them to remember to be each other's sweetheart, helpmate, friend and guide, so that 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.

Declaration of Marriage

What love has brought together, let no one break asunder. For as much as you, (Groom) and (Bride), have pledged to live together in the holy state of matrimony, symbolized your intent with the giving and receiving of rings, it is my privilege as a minister in the state of Florida to hereby pronounce you are husband and wife. You may kiss your bride.

Butterfly Release

According to an old legend, for a wish to come true, you must first capture a butterfly and whisper to it your sincere and heartfelt wish. The butterfly symbolizes new beginnings, freedom and happiness. Take a moment to consider the gifts (Bride) and (Groom) bring to one another and the shared potential of their life together. Make a wish, say a prayer, think a special thought or simply feel the love we celebrate this day.

I invite you to now release your butterfly. As they escape to the light, may the promise of (Groom) and (Bride's) tomorrows always be bright. Let them carry your hopes for what the future may bring and your love uplifted on these butterfly wings. May (Groom) and (Bride's) marriage last as long as the offspring of these butterflies which shall endure in grace, beauty and liberty.

Introduction of the Couple

It is my joy and honor to introduce for the first time, (Groom) and (Bride) Surname!