



*Rev. Ann Fuller*

---

**My website gets a lot of visitors searching for Unitarian Universalist weddings or wedding vows. The first thing to appreciate is that there is no such thing as *the* Unitarian Universalist wedding. Because our religion is non-creedal, our membership includes people who hold a wide range of religious and spiritual beliefs. The most important thing about a UU wedding, or any wedding for that matter, is that it should capture what the bride and groom want to honor in the context of ritually transitioning from single to married. I recommend consulting with a member of the Unitarian Universalist clergy to create a wedding ritual meaningful to you.**

**The service below is offered as an example of a Unitarian Universalist wedding since the couple for whom it was written is active in a UU congregation. It includes the chalice lighting ritual present in most Unitarian Universalist. Their wedding adapted the Flower Ceremony celebrated in many UU congregations in the spring and demonstrates homage paid to the couple's philosophical and spiritual preferences.**

**The couple wanted to highlight their regard for marriage as a partnership of equals worthy of respect and dignity with responsibilities as a couple to the community at large.**

---

- Presentation of the Couple
- Chalice Lighting
- Opening Words with a Memorial Statement
- Responsive Reading *Make Not a Bond of Love Kahlil Gibran*
- Affirmation of Marriage
- Exchange of Vows
- Exchange of Rings
- Flower Ceremony
- Blessing
- Declaration of Marriage
- Extinguish the Chalice
- Introduction of the Couple

### **Presentation of the Couple**

Who presents this couple to be married?

*“We present ourselves freely, with respect to our parents.”*



*Rev. Ann Fuller*

---

## **Chalice Lighting**

Please read with me in unison from your Order of Service as (Bride) and (Groom) light our chalice.

*The sacred bond of matrimony  
is a gift of love and hope  
uniting two people in a relationship  
unique and blessed.  
We light our chalice in honor of the love  
that burns between (Bride) and (Groom).*

## **Words of Welcome**

Today we gather in community to witness (Groom) and (Bride) pledge a covenant of sacred matrimony. Marriage embodies all the precious values arising from human companionship and love. It symbolizes the ultimate intimacy between a man and a woman. Therefore, it is not to be entered into lightly, but with certainty, with mutual respect; and with a sense of reverence that does not preclude its beauty, humor and joy. Our celebration is the external sign of a sacred and internal commitment. Such a union can only be created by loving purpose, maintained by abiding will and renewed by human feelings and intentions.

(Bride) and (Groom) would also like to celebrate the people who are important in their lives, but are not able to be here today. We keep their absent loved ones, especially \_\_\_\_\_, in our hearts. Their blessings and support are present in spirit and loving memory.

(Groom) and (Bride) have found in one another the person each finds most dear in this world. They have recognized a kindred spirit with whom they intend to unite for the rest of their days. Such love is a cherished gift and not to be taken lightly. They have stated their intent to enter into marriage willingly and reverently. Do you, invited here to witness their matrimonial vows, pledge to support and affirm their union as a community committed to their spiritual and ethical well-being as a couple publicly affirmed as husband and wife? ~ Congregation Responds "*We do.*"

## **Responsive Reading**

At this time I invite \_\_\_\_\_ to come forward and lead us in the responsive reading, "Make Not a Bond of Love" Kahlil Gibran.

You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.  
You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.



*Rev. Ann Fuller*

---

*Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.  
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,  
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.*

Love one another, but make not a bond of love:  
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

*Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.  
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf*

Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone,  
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

*Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.  
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.*

And stand together yet not too near together:  
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,  
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

### **Affirmation of Marriage**

The simplicity of first love appears to be a self-enclosed world—two people listening to each other, making one world between them. There are no others in the perfect unity of that instant. It is free of ties or claims, unburdened by responsibilities, by worry about the future or debts to the past. As two people grow together and the bonds of marriage are formed a web is fashioned of love—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, knowing one another's likes and dislikes, 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 in the daily 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. As Unitarian Universalists we affirm and promote justice, equity and compassion in human relations. May your marriage be an active endeavor and public example of living these relational values.



*Rev. Ann Fuller*

---

## **Exchange of Vows**

(Bride) and (Groom) do you pledge to help each other develop and strengthen your hearts and minds, cultivating compassion, enthusiasm, patience, concentration and wisdom as you encounter the inevitable changes, expected and unexpected, welcome and unwelcome in your journey through life together? ~  
*We do.*

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

*I, (Bride) give to you, (Groom)  
my vow of sacred matrimony.  
I acknowledge our individuality  
and respect the natural space  
that will reside comfortably between us.  
I promise to bridge that space  
with open communication, silent understanding  
and heartfelt compassion.  
I promise to act loving so as to be loving.  
I promise to love passionately,  
argue fairly and support you unfailingly.  
I gladly accept the responsibilities  
that come with our relationship.  
I love you and pledge my fidelity  
all the days of our lives.*

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

*I, (Groom) give to you, (Bride)  
my vow of sacred matrimony.  
I acknowledge our individuality  
and respect the natural space  
that will reside comfortably between us.  
I promise to bridge that space  
with open communication, silent understanding  
and heartfelt compassion.  
I promise to act loving so as to be loving.  
I promise to love passionately,  
argue fairly and support you unfailingly.  
I gladly accept the responsibilities  
that come with our relationship.  
I love you and pledge my fidelity  
all the days of our lives.*



*Rev. Ann Fuller*

---

## **Exchange of Rings**

May I have the rings please?

The wedding ring serves as a symbol of the sacred covenant you have just affirmed. They are the outward and visible signs of the love which binds your lives together. As these rings are crafted of the finest of earth's materials, so your love is of the richest of spiritual values. These seamless rings have no beginning and no end, and therefore symbolize the perfection of a love that can always renew itself without end.

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

*I give you this ring  
as a symbol of my love,  
my faith in our strength together,  
and my covenant to learn and grow with you.*

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

*I give you this ring  
as a symbol of my love,  
my faith in our strength together,  
and my covenant to learn and grow with you.*

## **Flower Ceremony with Accompanying Music**

(Bride and Groom's) respective families, together with their friends, each represent a circle of love where members care for, and nurture each other, in times of joy and in times of sorrow. Today, they join their lives together to make a new circle of love, one that overlaps with, and is made stronger by those from which it has emerged.

(Groom) and (Bride) would like to symbolize the blessings of their beloved community with a flower ceremony. As we enjoy (*musical piece*) please bring the silk flower you selected when you entered the sanctuary, come forward and place it in this vase.

(Groom) and (Bride) intend to use this arrangement as the centerpiece of their family dining table to honor those who have brought them to this moment and will subsequently support and nourish their marriage in the days and years to come.



*Rev. Ann Fuller*

---

### **Blessing "Wedding Prayer" by Robert Lewis Stevenson**

Behold our family here assembled.  
We thank you for this place in which we dwell,  
for the love that unites us,  
for the peace accorded us this day,  
for the hope with which we expect the morrow,  
for the health, the work, the food,  
and the bright skies that make our lives delightful;  
for our friends in all parts of the earth.  
Amen

### **Declaration of Marriage**

What (Bride) and (Groom) have brought together in the bonds of love, let not these bonds be broken. For as much as you have exchanged vows of sacred matrimony and symbolized your intent with the giving and receiving of rings, it is my honor as a Minister in the state of Florida to pronounce you husband and wife. Please seal your marriage with a kiss.

### **Extinguish Chalice**

Please read with me from the Order of Service as (Bride) and (Groom) extinguish our chalice.

*We extinguish this flame,  
but not the fire of passion,  
the light of joy or the warmth of compassion.  
These we carry in our hearts  
as we surround (Groom) and (Bride)  
as a loving community supportive of their union.*

### **Introduction of the Couple**

Ladies and gentlemen, it is with great joy I introduce to you for the first time, Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_!