

I. Prelude (played by the bride)

Music: Bach, Prelude in C Major
Beethoven, Menuett
Schubert: Scherzo
Chopin, Waltz in C# Minor
Puccini, *O Mio Babbino Caro*
Pachelbel, Canon in D

II. Processional

Poem: Solveig von Schoultz, "My Eyes Want..."
Music: Handel, Hornpipe
Beethoven, "Ode to Joy"
"Amazing Grace"

[Wedding party enters starting with second groomsman, second bridesmaid, first groomsman, etc. through groom. Sprinkling of petals, then bride.]

III. Opening

We have gathered here today to witness and celebrate the first steps of the uniting the lives of **bride & groom**.

The ability and desire for one human being to love another is perhaps the most precious and fulfilling gift that has been entrusted to us. It is an all-consuming task, a lifelong endeavor—the journey we've been preparing for all of our lives.

Marriage is a sanctuary where we can safely evolve as we are in the presence of another. Like the harmony with the melody, marriage weaves two lives together, creating a deeper and richer song. We are honoured that **Bride & Groom** are sharing some of their beautiful music with us on this day.

Loving someone is a reason to stretch beyond our limits, to become for the sake of the other. It is to look into the soul of your beloved and accept what you see. Loving is the ultimate commitment which challenges humans to become all that we are meant to be.

Bride & Groom welcomes that challenge for the sake of a happier life when it is shared with the right person.

A marriage brings together two lives, sometimes two families, two unique story lines, so that a new chapter in their lives can begin to unfold.

Before we proceed, it is traditional to ask is anyone may have any objection to the union of **Bride & Groom**.

[No objections: proceed to next section.

Objections: Determine if the objections present a legal impediment to marriage. If not, ask the couple if they wish to proceed.]

Bride & Groom, by coming here today, you have now taken the initial step in what hopefully will be a wonderful and lasting life together.

Understand that a union between two people takes work. Just as a child does not learn to walk in a day, neither is a relationship ever perfected in a moment. It needs nurturing and dedication.

A good marriage is one that fosters respect, a devoted love, and a willingness to make sacrifices for each other.

These are the foundation stones of a newly formed union. Symbolically, you have been brought together as one, yet are still two separate entities with unique ideas, talents and ways of being. Respect and value those differences, and your relationship flourish.

IV. Music & Poetry Section #1

Music: “We’ve Only Just Begun”, Music by Roger Nichols, Lyrics by Paul Williams

Poem: Shakespeare Sonnet LXXV

Music: “(Everything I Do) I Do It for You”, Music & Lyrics by Bryan Adams, R.J. Lange, M. Kamen

V. Candle Ceremony

[Couple takes up candles and groomsmen light them (or they light them from any decorative candles around).]

As you light your separate candles, you honour your separate selves: your uniqueness and your autonomy. This candle represents the light of your being: your special talents, needs, visions and gifts—all that makes you who you are, you honour with this flame.

As you blend your flames to light the third candle, you celebrate the power of separate lights to ignite a common flame of passion and commitment, and to come together as one.

Bride & Groom, together as you light this candle of unity, you symbolize the flame of your own individual selves joining to ignite the partnership of marriage.

You also bring the warmth, strength and wisdom of your family’s fire as kindling for your own.

As **Bride & Groom**, your flames are separate, yet they feed the same fire.

[Light small candles. Audio plays:

Is a cliché just a cliché, really? What if your dream becomes true when you least expect it? What if just as you let go that life-long dream of happily-ever-after when the person you have been waiting for stands before your eyes? What if you feel the spark the first moment you meet, yet you take things slowly, become friends first, while longing for more and ever wondering if the other may or may not feel the same. What if before you ever kiss each other you get to know each other deeply and you learn to love that person? What if everything happens just like in that imaginary “big-book-of-life-and-love” and it all unfolds right before your eyes. What if you experience the very magic of fairy tales? What if you get to know someone deeply and fall in love deeply before even your first kiss? So, is a cliché just a cliché, really? What if you experience the “when you see it, you know it”? What if when you finally kiss, you see it, you know it; you know it without a doubt... and you even dare to take the leap of faith into happiness? What if you do have that happily-ever-after-dream turning into reality? What if you make a

choice to pledge yourself to each other? That is the beginning of the story of our love. Light central candle together.]

From this day forward, may you bask in the beauty of the light of your love, may its light shine bright and steady upon your path together, and may its heat keep you warm through all the days of your lives.

VI. Music & Poetry Section #2

Music: "The Vows Go Unbroken", Music & Lyrics by Gary Burr and Eric Kaz

Poetry: Robert James Waller, "Though neither of us..."

The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, "We are the dupes..."

Jalalu'ddin Rumi, "Lovers don't finally meet..."

Heather Holden, *Summer Poem*

Marc Shagall, "...In our life..."

Johanne Wolfgang von Goethe, "It is the true..."

Music: "I Swear", Music & Lyrics by Gary Baker and Frank Myers

VII. Vows (Bride & Groom)

Bride & Groom have vows they have written for each other that they'd like to say now.

[Groom first, then Bride.]

VIII. Music & Poetry Section #3

Music: "The Rose", Music & Lyrics by Amanda McBroom

IX. Ring Ceremony

We are here today to celebrate the love which **Bride & Groom** have for each other, and to give social recognition to their decision to commit their lives to each other.

Groom, do you take **Bride** to be your lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, so long as you both shall live.

I do.

Bride, do you take **Groom** to be your lawfully wedded husband, to have and to hold, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, so long as you both shall live.

I do.

Do we have the rings?

The circular shape of the ring is a symbol of eternity and it is used as a symbol of the love and commitment shared between those entering into the bonds of marriage.

The ring, like the circle, is a reminder of the perfection and endurance of **Bride & Groom's** devotion and love for one another.

Groom, as you place the ring on her finger, repeat after me:
This ring I give you is a symbol of my love.
I pledge to share with you my heart, my home, and all my soul.
With this ring, I thee wed.

Bride, as you place the ring on his finger, repeat after me:
This ring I give you is a symbol of my love.
I pledge to share with you my heart, my home and all my soul.
With this ring, I thee wed.

X. Music & Poetry Section #4

Music: "I Only Have Eyes for You", Music by Harry Warren, Lyrics by Al Dubin

Poetry: Ellen Sue Stern, "The need to surrender..."

Poetry: Helen Hayes, "The truth..."

Music: "To Me" Music & Lyrics by Mack David and Mike Reid

XI. Pronouncement & Presentation

It was love that brought you here today. It's love that makes yours a glorious union. And it will be love that makes your marriage endure.

Love has given you wings and your journey. Wherever the wind may carry you, you will stay by each other's side.

I therefore join with everyone here gathered in extending to you our love and support, and our wish for your relationship to flourish and grow throughout a long and happy life together.

Throughout this ceremony, **Bride & Groom** have vowed, in our presence, to be loyal and loving towards each other. They have formalized the existence of the bond between them with words spoken and with the giving and receiving of rings.

Therefore, it is my pleasure, according to the laws of the state of Ohio, to now pronounce them husband and wife.

You may kiss your bride!

The bride's name after marriage will remain **Bride Full Name**, and the groom's name will remain **Thomas Full Name**. Ladies and gentlemen, for those of you have come to witness this union, it is my pleasure to present the newly united couple.

XII. Processional

Schubert, "*Ave Maria*"

Handel

Bach, Cantata Excerpt

Beethoven, Sonata in F Major

McDowell, "The Rose"

Beethoven, "*Für Elise*"

[Wedding party exits in reverse order of entrance.]