

## Romantic Ceremony - When Love Beckons

We are gathered here today to witness the coming together of two people, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, whose hearts and spirits are entwined as one. They now desire to profess before all the world their intention henceforth to walk the road of life together.

To these two young people, this marriage signifies the birth of a new spirit, a spirit which is a part of each of us, yet not of any one of us alone. This "birth of spirit" reminds us of spring, the season when all life is reborn and looms again. It is appropriate, therefore, that this wedding of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ be in the spring, and that it be under the open sky, where we are close to the earth and to the unity of life, the totality of living things of which we are part.

The beliefs and thoughts about love which motivate these two people are perhaps best expressed in the words of poet Kahlil Gibran:

"You were born to be together, and together you shall be forevermore.  
You shall be together when the wings of death scatter your days.  
Ay, you shall be together even in your silent memory.  
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,  
And let the winds of the heaven dance between you.  
Love one another, but make not a bondage 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 of the same loaf.  
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each 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 shadow."

Do you \_\_\_\_\_, knowing this man's love for you and returning it, realizing his strengths and learning from them, recognizing his weaknesses and helping him to overcome them, take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your lawfully wedded husband?

Bride answers "I do."

Place the ring on his finger.

Do you \_\_\_\_\_, knowing this woman's love for you and returning it, realizing her strengths and learning from them, recognizing her weaknesses and helping her to overcome them, take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your lawfully wedded wife?

Groom answers "I do."

Place the ring on her finger. Let these rings serve as locks—not binding you together—but as keys, unlocking the secrets of your hearts for each other to know, and thus bringing you closer together forever.

And now \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, seeking the fulfillment of love and marriage, find again that the poet Gibran speaks for them:

"Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself.

To wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks to another day of loving.

To rest at the noon hour and meditate love's ecstasy;

To return home eventide with gratitude, and then sleep with a prayer

For the beloved in your heart and a song of praise upon your lips."

I now pronounce you husband and wife.