

The Drawing Together of Two Separate Lives

Minister:

Dear Friends, we are gathered today to witness and to celebrate the drawing together of two separate lives. We have come so that this man, _____, and this woman, _____, may be joined in marriage. It is not to be entered into lightly but with assurance and mutual respect. Love, the shining light of human emotion, reduces our selfishness, fulfills our need to share, and reinforces our virtues.

Kahlil Gibran echoed these sentiments in The Prophet:

"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.
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."

Minister:

Out of chaos, let us pledge our unity, never losing sight of the individuality that has spawned and rejuvenated this love. Today's celebration of human affection is the outward sign of commitment, which religion may consecrate and society may formalize, but neither of which guarantees happiness. For in this fold must exist two minds full of loving purpose, willing to grow and not recede in the face of change. Beneath the benevolent spirit of affection and sharing, these two people stand before us. Will you now clasp your right hands?

Minister to Groom:

Do you, _____, take _____, to be the wife of your days, to love and to cherish, to honor and to comfort, in sorrow or in joy, in hardship or in ease, to have and to hold from this day forth?

Groom:

I do.

Minister to Bride:

Do you, _____, take _____ to be the husband of your days, to love and to cherish, to honor and to comfort, in sorrow or in joy, in hardship or in ease, to have and to hold from this day forth?

Bride:

I do.

Best man hands the rings to the groom, who presents them to the minister, or to his wife directly, placing hers on her finger and his on his own finger.

Minister:

May this couple, just married, draw strength from their agreement. Understanding, even in moments of despair, the virtues found in each other. Solace under fire, encouragement when life becomes a trial, sharing one another's joy and pain. Welcoming life's mysteries through the optimism found in their love. Growing wise instead of old, accepting the unwanted stranger that no one knows. Sharing today's inspiration, beyond the present, may this union only add to the goodness and joy of life.

I now pronounce you husband and wife.

You may kiss the bride.