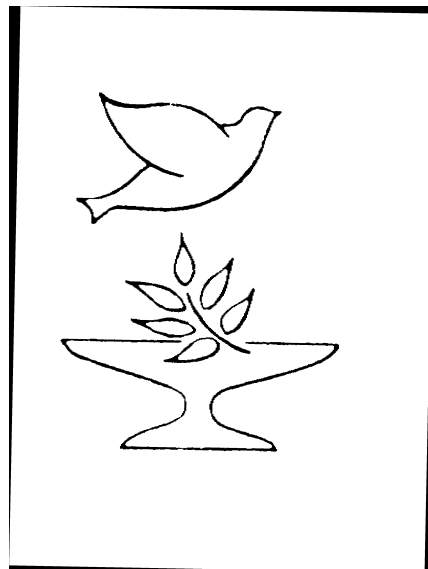


Getting Married

A Guide to the Wedding Service
at the
Unitarian Church of Edmonton

10804 119 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T5H 3P2
780-454-8073
email: chadmin@uce.ca



INTRODUCTION

The wedding ceremony at the Unitarian Church of Edmonton is primarily designed for its own members, but is available to non-members for a fee. In the pages which follow, all aspects of the arrangements are fully described. Please read this booklet carefully and discuss it together before coming in to talk to the minister or chaplain.

The circumstances under which persons are contemplating marriage vary considerably. A couple may each have been living until now in the families in which they grew up, or they may have been living for some time entirely on their own. They may have been living together for a period of time before deciding to marry. They may have been through the hurt and disillusionment that accompany separation and divorce, or a previous happy marriage may have been ended by the death of the partner. Whatever the circumstances, entering upon a marriage relationship is a serious step and is treated so at the Unitarian Church.

It is normally a social occasion; in all times and cultures it has been a time for the gathering of families and clans, though in this age of mobility people are far more scattered than was once the case. Wherever possible it is desirable that a couple exchange their vows amid the good wishes of family and friends.

A Unitarian ceremony, based as it is upon the personal integrity of the participants rather than upon institutional forms, may provide a suitable meeting place for people coming from different religious, ethical or cultural traditions. We try to be inclusive rather than exclusive. Where differences can pose a hazard to the success of the marriage, as is sometimes the case, this fact needs to be faced frankly and openly, but the hazards should not be magnified out of their true proportions. All living is risk-taking, and no marriage can have its success guaranteed in advance.

A close relationship like that of marriage needs to be continually reinforced by those who have entered into it, with the support of others. Some books on marriage are recommended below, but where a couple finds difficulties in the relationship beyond their ability to resolve for themselves, they should not be ashamed to seek outside help while the problems are still manageable. Too often it is not until the situation is at or beyond the point of no return that counselling is sought.

The Unitarian Church of Edmonton does not require or offer marriage preparation courses or pre-marital counselling. However the minister or chaplains may be able to recommend such courses if there is a need or interest.

Naturally, it is our hope that a couple getting married in a Unitarian ceremony will wish to find a place within the fellowship of the congregation, where they can find the community support which all of us need in cultivating deep and meaningful relationships in life. But it is entirely contrary to our principles to put pressure on anyone to become a member.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Marriage Licence

A marriage license is required for a legally valid ceremony. A marriage licence may be obtained from any authorized office for the issue of marriage licences in the province. In Edmonton, marriage licences can be obtained from any registry agent located in all major centres in Alberta. Both individuals must appear to obtain the licence.

Service of Union

In most cases the wedding includes a legal commitment and the creation of a civil contract. In some services where a legal marriage is not possible (e.g. a gay and lesbian couples) or not required (a couple already married in another jurisdiction) the church can perform a service of union. Such a service can be identical to a wedding except a minister or chaplain will acknowledge that it is not legally binding.

Marriage Certificates

Marriage certificates can be obtained directly from the provincial division of Vital Statistics if required once the marriage has been registered.

Music

The church owns a grand piano which is available for use. Couples are welcome to arrange for their own musician. Sometimes the church can be of assistance.

The church also lends itself well to the use of a wide variety of musical instruments. In addition, there is a system for the playing of recorded music from cassettes and C.D.'s. This arrangement requires a competent operator for the sound system.

Services of a vocal soloist may also be available through the church office.



Fees

No charge is made for the use of the building for a wedding or for the services of the minister where one of the parties to the marriage, or the supporting parents of one of the parties, are voting members of the congregation in good standing or are contributing regularly through annual pledges to the church in the same way.

For marriage of persons outside the congregation, charges are made to meet the costs of buildings and staff for the period of time involved in the planning and conducting of the ceremony. The minimum charges are shown on the enclosed schedule; any donations towards the work of the church over and above these are welcome and are tax deductible.

Sobriety

No members of the wedding party or ushers should drink before the service. By law, the service cannot proceed if, in the opinion of the person officiating, either the bride or groom is under the influence of liquor or drugs.

Prohibition Of Confetti and Rice

The use of confetti or rice in the church building or grounds is prohibited. Guests should be so informed.

Photographs

Photographs may be taken at the service only under the following conditions.

- a) flash cameras may be used for photographs of the bride arriving at the church, for the signing of the registers, and for a photograph from the rear of the church of the recessional after the register has been signed;
- b) photographs during the service may be taken only with permission of the officiant;
- c) professional photographers should be informed of these stipulations.

Taping and Videotaping

There is no problem with the use of tape recorder or the videotaping of the ceremony, as long as the equipment is used unobtrusively in a way that does not detract from the overall atmosphere.

Two Cautionary Notes

The ceremony cannot begin unless the minister has the licence. It should be sent in ahead of time.

Sometimes there may be a number of weddings in one day. Promptness is essential, since under no circumstances will a subsequent wedding be delayed on account of late arrival at an earlier one.



PROCEDURE FOR A FORMAL WEDDING

1. The ushers should be at the church half an hour before the service is due to begin. The practice of seating guests according to which "side" they are on is less observed nowadays, but if this is to be followed, then the bridegroom's family and friends should be seated on the right-hand side, the bride's on the left-hand side.
2. The bride's mother is seated in the front row on the left-hand side. A space is left at her side for the father to take his place after he has completed his part of the ceremony. The bridegroom's parents sit in the front pew on the right-hand side.
3. The bridegroom and the best man arrive fifteen minutes before the announced time of the service, and come to the minister's vestry, located in the main church office.
4. If she chooses, the bride may use the green room for preparations.
5. The bridal party does not move forward into the church until the wedding march begins.
6. The bride is on the right arm of her escort, and will normally be preceded by her attendant(s).
7. When prompted by the officiant, the bride should pass her flowers for the maid of honour to hold. The best man or ring bearer should have the ring ready to hand to the officiant, without any container. The officiant will take the ring in the palm of his or her hand at the appropriate point in the ceremony and the bridegroom will take it from there and place it on the bride's finger. If two rings are to be used, it is usually convenient for the best man to have both, though sometimes it is the bride's wish that the maid of honour should hold the ring for the groom.
8. At the close of the ceremony the groom, bride, two witnesses (usually the maid of honour and best man), and officiant sign the registers in the church itself (on the right-hand side of the front). An alternative procedure is to sign the registers in the vestry.
9. After the signing of the registers, the bride is paired with the groom, the maid of honour with the best man, any other bridesmaids with ushers, and in this order they leave the church.
10. The car in which the bride and groom will leave should by this point be waiting in the passenger zone in front of the church.

PROCEDURE FOR AN INFORMAL WEDDING

An informal wedding may be held in the church, patio, or away from the church in a home or other location. The service selected is usually very similar to the words selected for a formal service. The setting, clothing and music are usually less elaborate than for a formal wedding.

The wedding party all enter at the same time and take up the positions indicated in the preceding section. For a service in on the patio it is possible for the bridal party to be segregated beforehand and come in separately.

As with a formal service, the marriage register may be signed either in the same room as the ceremony or in a separate room. In either case, this will be done immediately at the close of the ceremony.

A wedding at home follows much the same procedure. The essentials are a large room for the ceremony itself and (if desired) a small room nearby with a desk or table for the signing of the register. The same provisions with regard to photographers apply as at the church. Precautions should be taken against the ceremony being disturbed by a telephone ringing.

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

Introduction

It is important that the ceremony be as meaningful as possible. The following materials are offered as helpful suggestions. You may choose from them either as they stand or with some modification, or you may wish to write your own ceremony. Please discuss which selections you wish to choose before your interview with the person who will be officiating at your ceremony.

One selection from each section makes a full wedding service. It is not essential to make a selection from each section and more than one selection can be made from some sections.

OPENING WORDS

1. What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined together to strengthen each other in all labour, to minister to each other in all sorrow, to share with each other in all gladness, to be one with each other in the silent unspoken memories.

George Eliot

2. Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments. Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds, Or bends with the remover to remove:

O no! It is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his being sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks
But bears it out even to the age of doom.
If this be error and upon me prov'd,
I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.

William Shakespeare: Sonnet 116

3. The most wonderful of all things in life is the discovery of another human being with whom one's relationship has a growing depth, beauty and joy as the years increase. This inner progressiveness of love between two human beings is a most marvellous thing; it cannot be found by looking for it or by passionately wishing for it. It is a sort of Divine accident, and the most wonderful of all things in life. Hugh Walpole

4. Love consists in this, that two solitudes protect and touch and greet each other.

Rainer Maria Rilke

5. When love beckons to you, follow him,
Though his ways are hard and steep,
And when his wings enfold you yield to him,
Though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you.
And when he speaks to you believe in him,
Though his voice may shatter your dreams as the north wind lays waste the garden.
Love gives naught but itself and takes naught but from itself.
Love possesses not nor would it be possessed;
For love is sufficient unto love.

Kahlil Gibran from *The Prophet*

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

(A short address by the person officiating to those gathered together.)

1.

To the congregation

We have gathered together to celebrate with _____ and _____ the marriage in which they are now to be united. From the earliest times, marriage has been recognized as a natural relationship, solemnized by the observances of religion and consecrated by the men and women in all ages who have brought its beauty to flower. It is not therefore to be entered upon inadvisedly or lightly, but with deliberation and reverence.

The celebration in which we join today is the outward symbol of this inward relationship, recognized by human society but made real and living only within the lives of those who share it. Into this sacred union ____ and ____ desire to enter.

To the bride and groom

You have freely decided to commit yourselves to each other in a close and continuing relationship in which your lives will be intertwined.

In the presence of these witnesses you will exchange your pledge of that commitment, affirming your intention to strengthen and cherish the relationship you are building together and to find through the sharing of your lives with each other a unity that will take you out of the loneliness of the isolated self.

2. _____ and _____, you have invited us to be with you today as witnesses to your affirmation of the happiness you have found together, and to the pledge through which you publicly express your personal commitment to one another.

The ceremony in which we now join marks neither a beginning nor an end in your relationship, but one step in a continuing process of change and growth. Growth is an essential part of marriage as it is an essential part of life. Your relationship must keep unfolding into new dimensions, but if you can keep in step as you go forward together, your marriage will remain a source of new strength and insight.

Inevitably there will be mistakes; inevitably there will be times of tension and conflict.

But if these are openly acknowledged and faced, they can be turned from problems into opportunities, and you will find new meanings and richness in your shared life together.

3. We who gather here today share with _____ and _____ their celebration of a memorable moment in their lives. The marriage between them is not created by you or by me. It is created by themselves, through the mutual love and commitment they already share, and will now put into words in the presence of all of us.

It is good that their relatives and friends should be present to rejoice with them; to hear their vows; to extend good wishes; and to be reminded of the loves and commitments that are a part of their own lives as well.

THE PRESENTATION

Traditionally, her father has presented the bride. There can be many variations on this theme, including one in which the father simply brings the bride down the aisle into place beside the groom and then takes his place in the congregation.

1. Minister: Who brings this woman to be wedded to this man?
Response: I do.
2. Minister: Who brings this woman to be wedded to this man?
Response: Her mother and I do.
3. Minister: Who presents the bride in marriage?
Response: I do.
4. Minister: Who stands with this couple to express the good wishes of their families and friends?
Response: I do.
5. Minister: As our sons and daughters find partners and found the homes of the next generation each family is enlarged. Do you, who have nurtured these two, give your blessing to their union and their home?
Response: We do.

THE DECLARATIONS

To the man: _____, do you now declare your willingness to take _____ to be your wife.

Response: I do.

To the woman: _____, do you now declare your willingness to take _____ to be your husband.

Response: I do.

COMMITMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

Will the congregation please stand.

Minister: A marriage is above all else an intimate relationship between two persons. But it also has its wider ramifications into the lives of relatives and friends, and of the community at large. Do you who are here assembled pledge your support to _____ and _____ in the commitment that they celebrate today?

Response: We do.

PREFACE TO THE VOWS

The vows through which you accept each other as husband and wife have no hidden power within themselves. Only to the extent that they express in words your continuing intention and commitment do they have meaning.

In a world where the pressures pushing people apart often seem stronger than those drawing people together, your commitment to each other will need to be re-expressed in many different ways in the coming days and years. The expression in today's vows is simply a visible milestone in your journey together.

I invite you now to join hands as you repeat your vows. The hand offered by each of you is an extension of self, just as is your mutual love. Cherish the touch, for you touch not only your own, but another life. Be sensitive to its pulse. Seek always to understand and respect its rhythm.

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

The couple now join hands (usually both hands) and the groom repeats the vows line by line after the minister. If desired, the vows can be learned and spoken without being repeated after the minister. The bride then repeats the vows in her turn. The vows may be repeated either facing the minister or facing each other. Of the forms which follow the first is the simplest of all; the sixth is designed for couples who wish to express in the ceremony that they have been living together for a period of time prior to the marriage. Any combination of the wording of the various suggested forms may be used, if it flows smoothly.

1. I, _____ now take you, _____ to be my wife/husband.

2. In the presence of these witnesses I, _____ now take you, _____ to be my wife/husband
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,

in sorrow or in joy,
to love and to cherish
as long as we both shall live.

3. _____, I take you to be my wife/husband, to be the mother/father of my children, to be the companion of my days. We shall bear together whatever of sorrow and adversity life may lay upon us. We shall share together whatever of joy and fulfilment life may hold in store.

4. In the sight of God and in the presence of this company here assembled, I, _____ do take thee, _____, to be my wedded wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward till death do us part.

5. From this day forward, _____, you shall be my wife/husband, together to love, to work and to share, to grow and to understand, to discover a deeper, fuller life.

6. In reaffirming the relationship we have been building together, I _____ now take you, to be my wife/husband.

RECOGNITION OF CHILDREN

Where one or both of the partners has children by a previous marriage who are to be part of the family, they may take the child or children by the hand and repeat:
_____, we want you to share in the life and love of our family home.

THE RING CEREMONY

The best man and/or the maid of honour or the ring bearer now gives the ring(s) to the minister.

1. A circle is the symbol of the sun and the earth and the universe. It represents wholeness and peace. In the form of a ring it is the accepted token of marriage. By the use of this ring you express in visible form the unbroken circle of your love, in which wherever you go you will always return to your shared life together.

2. You have had these rings crafted as special symbols of what you intend that your love and your marriage will mean to you. As you wear them, may your commitment to that ideal be fulfilled abundantly.

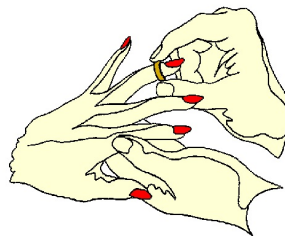
3. May your ring be always the symbol of the unbroken circle of love. Love freely given has no beginning and no end. Love freely given has no separate giver and receiver. You are each the giver and each the receiver. May your ring always call to mind the freedom and the power of this love.

4. Everything the "power of the world" does is done in a circle. The sky is round and I have heard that the earth is round like a ball, and so are the stars. The wind, in its

greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing and always come back again to where they were. Life is a circle from childhood to childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves.
Black Elk, Oglala Sioux

The one giving the ring repeats after the minister:

1. _____ I give you this ring to wear upon your hand as a symbol of our love.
2. _____ I give you this ring in token of the commitment we celebrate today.



THE READING

One or more of the following may be used:

**“On Marriage”
by Kahlil Gibran
from *The Prophet***

You are joined together and together you shall be forevermore.
You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days,
Aye, 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.

“On Love”
by Thomas a Kempis
from *Imitatio Christi*, 15th Century

Love is a mighty power, a great and complete good. Love alone lightens every burden, and makes the rough places smooth. It bears every hardship as though it were nothing, and renders all bitterness sweet and acceptable. Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing wider, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller or better in heaven or earth; for love is born of God.

Love flies, runs and leaps for joy. It is free and unrestrained. Love knows no limits, but ardently transcends all bounds. Love feels no burden, takes no account of toil, attempts things beyond its strength; love sees nothing as impossible, for it feels able to achieve all things. Love therefore does great things; it is strange and effective; while those who lack love faint and fall.

Love is not fickle and sentimental, nor is it intent on vanities. Like a living flame and a burning torch, it surges upward and surely surmounts every obstacle.

“On Love”
by Paul the Apostle
(This is the traditional rendering of *1 Corinthians 13*
from the King James version of the Bible, with minor modifications from the English
revised version)

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, happiness
you have found together, and to the pledge through which you I am become as
sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal.
And though I have the gift of prophecy,
And understand all mysteries and all knowledge;
And though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains,
But have not love, I am nothing.
And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,
And though I give my body to be burned,
But have not love, it profiteth me nothing.
Love suffereth long, and is kind;
Love envieth not, love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.
Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own,
Is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth in the truth;
Beareth all things, believeth all things,
Hopeth all things, endureth all things,
And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three;
But the greatest of these is love.

“On Love”

by Paul the Apostle

(This is the modern translation of the
New English Bible)

I may speak in tongues of men or of angels, but if I am without love,
I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal.
I may have the gift of prophecy,
and know every hidden truth;
I may have faith strong enough to move mountains;
But if I have no love, I am nothing.
I may dole out all I possess,
Or even seek glory by self-sacrifice,
But if I have no love, I am none the better.
Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one.
Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude;
Never selfish, nor quick to take offence.
Love keeps no score of wrongs,
Does not gloat over other people's shortcomings,
But delights in the truth.
There is nothing love cannot face;
There is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance.
There are three things that last forever: faith, hope and love;
But the greatest of them all is love.

“The Rhythm of Free Partners”

by Anne Morrow

from *Gift of the Sea*

A good relationship has a pattern like a dance and is built on some of the same rules. The partners do not need to hold on tightly, because they move confidently in the same pattern, intricate but gay and swift and free, like a country dance of Mozart's. To touch heavily would be to arrest the pattern and freeze the movement, to check the endlessly changing beauty of its unfolding. There is no place here for the possessive clutch, the clinging arm, the heavy hand; only the barest touch in passing. Now arm in arm, now face to face, now back to back - it does not matter which. Because they know they are partners moving to the same rhythm, creating a pattern together, and being invisibly nourished by it. The joy of such a pattern is not only the joy of creation or the joy of participation, it is also the joy of loving in the moment. Lightness of touch and living in the moment are inter-twined. When both partners love so completely that they have forgotten to ask themselves whether or not they are loved in return; when they only know that they love and are moving to its music - then, and then only, are two people able to dance perfectly in tune to the same rhythm.

“Come Travel With Me”
by Walt Whitman
from *Song of the Open Road*

Listen! I will be honest with you,
I do not offer the old smooth prizes,
 but offer rough new prizes.
These are the days that must happen to you:
You shall not heap up what is called riches,
You shall scatter with lavish hand all
 that you earn or achieve.
Come, we must not stop here,
However sweet these laid-up stores,
However convenient this dwelling,
However sheltered this port and however calm these waters,
We must not anchor here,
However welcome the hospitality that surrounds us,
We are permitted to receive it but a little while.
Come, I give you my hand.
I give you my love more precious than money,
I give you myself before preaching or law;
Will you give me yourself?
Will you come travel with me?
Shall we stick by each other as long as
 we live?

“A Marriage Blessing”
Salish Indian

Now for you there is no rain
For one is shelter to the other.
Now for you the sun shall not burn
For one is shelter to the other.
Now for you nothing is hard or bad,
For the hardness and the badness is taken by one for the other.
Now for you there is no night,
For one is light to the other.
Now for you the snow has ended always.
It is that way, from now on, from now on.
Now it is good and there is always food,
And now there is always drink
And now there is comfort.
Now there is no loneliness.
Now forever - forever, there is no loneliness.

“Respect For One Another”
by Albert Schweitzer
from *Memories of Childhood and Youth*

To know one another cannot mean to know everything about each other; it means to feel mutual affection and confidence, and to believe in one another. We must not try to force our way into the personality of another. No one has a right to say to another: "because we belong to each other as we do, I have a right to know all your thoughts." All demands of this sort are foolish and unwholesome. In this matter giving is the only valuable process; it is only giving that stimulates. Impart as much as you can of your spiritual being to those who are on the road with you, and accept as something precious what comes back to you from them.

WINE CUP CEREMONY

The use of the wine cup at a wedding is an ancient Jewish tradition. It is particularly appropriate at a marriage where the background of one or both parties is in that tradition. It is occasionally used by others who also find it significant.

1. This cup of wine is symbolic of the cup of life. As you share the cup of wine, you undertake to share all that the future may bring. All the sweetness life's cup may hold for you will be the sweeter because you drink it together. Whatever drops of bitterness it may contain will be less bitter because you share them.
(The bride and groom drink from the cup.)

2. The years of our lives are a cup of wine poured out for us to drink.
The grapes when they are pressed give forth their good juices for the wine.
Under the wine press of time our lives give forth their labour and honour and love.
Many days you will sit at the same table and eat and drink together.
Drink now, and may the cup of your lives be sweet and full to running over.
(The bride and groom drink from the cup.)

CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

The ritual of lighting a new family candle is followed at some of our weddings. When used at the start of the service members of the bride's and groom's families light their respective family candles. Then at an appropriate time in the service the bride and groom each take a lighted candle and together light the larger candle before returning their own candles unextinguished to the table.

Minister: Let the light you have kindled together illumine your lives and the lives of others through both sunshine and shadow in the days to come.

PRAYER OF ASPIRATION

Unitarian views concerning the nature and form of prayer vary considerably. Some couples may wish a prayer to be announced here, some to have the expression of hopes for their future added to the pronouncement, some to omit this section altogether.

1. We pray that the holy spirit of love may deepen and enrich the lives of those who here become husband and wife; that each may be enabled to see life from the other's point of view, that they may be tolerant and large-minded, sympathetic and kind, considerate of weakness and forgiving of faults. May the relationship which today has been given public expression continue to develop richly in the days to come; and whatever changes time may bring, let what has been said and done here remain as a treasured memory and a guide to life. Amen

2. In this hour, rich with meaning and hope and promise, we pray that the spirit of trust, understanding and love may be with _____ and _____ through all the years that lie ahead. May their trust bring them strength and confidence, whatever trials and adversities they may meet; may their understanding support an acceptance of each other amid all life's uncertainties; may their love be an avenue of insight into the deepest realities of our being. In the tomorrows which _____ and _____ will enter together may they find far more in life than either would have found alone. May they find tolerance for the prejudices, reverence for the beauties and respect for the truths they will encounter as they go forward together. Amen

3. We cannot know what the future may bring into the lives of _____ and _____ but we pray that together they may be equal to the demands of all their tomorrows. May their marriage always be a shared adventure, rich with moments of serenity as well as excitement, vital with problems that test as well as achievements that lift, marked by a sense of personal freedom as well as mutual responsibility. May they find in each other companionship as well as love, understanding as well as compassion, challenge as well as agreement. May their friends and kinsfolk, those present today and those unable to be present, continue to rejoice in the love that has united them. May the home they build together shed its peace on them and on all who find shelter within its walls. May it be a place where personal preoccupations do not tower over concern for others, and where the warmth of humour puts both crisis and dullness into perspective. From their life together may they draw patience in time of strain, strength in time of weakness, courage in time of discouragement, vision in time of doubt, and above all, a growing love which radiates into the world around them. Amen

4. May the love which has brought you together continue to grow and enrich your lives, bringing peace and inspiration to each of you and to those who know you. May you meet with courage any problems that arise to challenge you; may you meet with strength whatever troubles may beset you. May your marriage be one of ever-growing depth and meaning, because of the sympathy, understanding, and love you give to one another in the life you share. Amen

THE PRONOUNCEMENT

1. Since _____ and _____ have joined themselves, each to the other, in marriage, and have signified their commitment to each other in the joining of hands and the giving and receiving of a ring, they are now and henceforward husband and wife.
2. Since you, _____ and you, _____ have joined yourselves in marriage and have signified your commitment to each other in the joining of hands and exchanging of rings, you are now and henceforward husband and wife.

CLOSING WORDS

Go now to walk the ways of the world together, and may your days be good; and long upon the earth.

THE WEDDING KISS

At many weddings, the exchange of a kiss between the groom and the bride is part of the ceremony. If this is to be included, it comes at the close of the ceremony before the couple turn to leave.

Where the bride has been escorted in by her father at the beginning of the ceremony, she may wish to part from him with a kiss at the time of the presentation of the bride.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The suggestions above indicate the kind of ceremony which is possible. Those in search of other suggestions may wish to consult such books as *Great Occasions* (Carl Seaburg, editor), or *The New Wedding* by Khoren Arisian. These are available from public libraries or the church library. We have on file materials for ceremonies of public commitment between a couple which do not constitute a marriage ceremony under the meaning of the Marriage Act, and other specialized types of ceremony. Information regarding these is available on request.

The charges on the enclosed schedule are all-inclusive, covering the preliminary consultations with the minister or chaplain, secretarial and custodial work and everything attendant on the ceremony itself.

