

A Celebration of the Marriage of

and

Key West, Conch Republic

the Rev. Dr. Randolph W. B. Becker, officiating

We are gathered here today to celebrate the marriage of _____ and _____. It is fitting and appropriate that you, their families and friends, be here to witness and to participate in their wedding, for the ideals, understanding, and mutual respect which they bring to their marriage have their roots in the love, friendship and guidance you have given them.

_____ and _____ know that you come here out of a sense of love and warmth of heart; as they turn to speak the words which express the unity of their lives, they will be mindful of your presence and know that in good days or bad, they will never be alone.

_____ and _____, you enter into a union which is most sacred and most serious, requiring of those who enter into it a complete and unreserved giving of self. It binds you together for life in a relationship so close and so intimate that it will profoundly affect your whole future.

That future, with its hopes and disappointments, its successes and failures, its pleasures and pains, is hidden from your eyes. Know, though, that love can make it easy and perfect love can make it a joy. May, then, this love with which you join your hands and hearts today never fail, but grow deeper and stronger as you go on.

Let me truly and wisely speak of connections. We all seek connection, but often do not understand that when we say connection we are speaking in four dimensions. For the word to have its fullest meaning, we must know and live these four dimensions.

First is the connection to self. If we do not fully and honestly connect to ourselves, there is no possibility we can connect with others. Once we are connected as the selves we are bringing together the many facets of our own spirits, then we are ready for the other dimensions of connection.

We are ready to make connections to find those places in our beings at which our spirits and the spirits of others match to form complements and fulfill us and them. Here is where hearts find companionship in life together. Then we can live in connection as two become a new one. Connections of lives in this way yields a new being which would never have been without such connection.

And finally, such enlivened connection finds a way to create connections. Freed of the limitations of a single spirit, we are blessedly opened to possibilities of connection we could not have known, beginning with that honest connection to self we open outward to first one then to us and then to All. And onto this blessed journey all are invited, but only the daringly loving proceed. For such a journey we give note this day and ask blessings to abide in that shared unfolding journey of love and connection.

(If other readings are desired, to be read by the minister or by others, they would come here.)

_____, do you invite _____ to be your partner, to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in good health, and forsaking all others, be faithful unto her as long as you both shall live? If so, please say, "I do."

_____: "I do."

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_____ and _____, in the days to come, remember that love is a respect for the preciousness and worth of a person. Love gives and love receives. Love cannot live in itself, but must be nurtured with a mutual and ultimate sharing, a giving and a taking. Love is the noblest passion a man or woman can feel for it surpasses all lesser desires. Love is precious because it is an ethical commitment to another, which honors the duties of the promises made here, not from a sense of obligation, but from the depths of the most divine sentiment a man or woman can enjoy.

Please join hands and repeat after me:

I, _____, accept you _____, as the partner of my days, to be the companion of my house; I pledge you my honesty, my caring, my energy, my respect, and my insights, so that the love which we share may enhance our lives without measure and without end.

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May I have the rings.

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

Each repeats: "May this ring be a symbol of our love and unity."

OPTIONS

(taking up the wedding cup:)

Life is poured out for us like wine, a mixture of the bitter and the sweet, brought to balance and delight with the passage of age. Many days you will eat and drink together, and share the sustenance and wonder of life. May your cup always be full to overflowing and may each know that in offer of life's cup to the other, you find its sweetness for yourself as well.

(The couple share the cup)

or

In your promises and commitments to each other, you pledge yourselves to create a new life together from the lives you have each enjoyed. You each bring to this relationship special talents, insights, skills, and understanding. As you share with each other, you enhance the common life that is yours together. Symbolic of this union of your shared life is this unity candle. From the two individual candles you will light a single flame which will burn stronger, brighter, and longer than either of your individuals candles would. As a sign of your commitment to a shared life in which you will enrich your life and the life of your beloved in this relationship , light this unity candle.

(the couple light the Unity Candle)

No two people ever form a marriage by themselves. All of our deepest relationship exist within a network of love and support which extend beyond time and space to link us with many others. Today that larger network of love and support for _____ and _____ is represented by you, the gathered congregation.

It is in our power, and through our power, that this marriage will have its deepest meaning. By our recognition and blessing, we make real what has been pledged in theory. So, now I invite you to join me in blessing this marriage - in response to the words I say, please respond with the phrase, "Blessed Be."

_____ and _____

Blessed Be

Each of you as individuals

Blessed Be

Now woven into a union of one

Blessed Be

Pledging your common future

Blessed Be

Promising care for Briana

Blessed Be

Committing to the evermore which is the nature of true marriage

Blessed Be

In all the times when we may stand with you, and in all the times when distance must let the winds carry our supportive energy

Blessed Be

Throughout all that may lie ahead

Blessed Be

Together

Blessed Be.

Blessed Be.



Awed by the many meanings of this hour and overjoyed by its promises, we pray the spirit of trust, understanding, and love may be with _____ and _____. Whatever trials and testings may come, may they trust each other wholly, for without such faith marriage is a mockery; may they understand each other, for without understanding there is neither acceptance nor forgiveness; and may they truly love each other, for without love marriage is only an empty shell from which the bird has flown.

As they build together a new home and a new life, may that home be bright with laughter and many friends; may it be a haven from the tensions of our time and a wellspring of strength; and in all the world may it be the one place they most want to be.

May this shining hour be an open door through which _____ and _____ will go forth to build that dearest of all relationships, a happy, harmonious marriage.

May the years deal gently with you;
walking together may you find far more in life than either would have found alone;
and even more fully may you come to know life as an abundant gift of your loving one another.

Now, having heard _____ and _____ declare their love for each other before this company through the taking of vows and the giving and receiving of rings, by the ancient authority of liberal religion invested in me, I invite you to join me in welcoming them as married.

Congratulations!