

Weddings In Paradise™

CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN CEREMONY

(Opening Statement)

As we begin, I'd like you to be aware of your surroundings. You've chosen a very special place to get married, and in the excitement of the moment, I wouldn't want you to miss the beauty of the location. I also want you to be aware, that all the events, and all the experiences in your lives, have led you to this moment. From the beginning of time, all of life, heaven and earth have unfolded for us to be here now. It's no accident that we're here. I want you to be assured, that the paths you are on have brought you together, have led you here, and you are in the right place, and doing the right thing.

(Reading - Marriage is a Promise of Love by Edmund O'Neill)

Marriage is a commitment to life—to the best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth no other human relationship can equal, a physical and emotional joining that is promised for a lifetime

Within the circle of love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships. A wife and a husband are each other's best friend, confidant, lover, teacher, listener, and counselor.

Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life. Happiness is fuller, memories are fresher, and commitment is stronger.

Marriage understands and forgives the mistakes life is unable to avoid. It encourages and nurtures new life, new experiences, and new ways of expressing love through the seasons of life.

When two people pledge to love and care for each other in marriage, they create a spirit unique to themselves, which binds them closer than any spoken or written words. Marriage is a promise, a potential, made in the hearts of two people who love, which takes a lifetime to fulfill.

(Gathering)

We are gathered together here in the sight of God and these witnesses to join you two in holy matrimony. It is an honorable estate, instituted of God It is therefore not to be entered into unadvisedly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God. Into this holy estate these two people have come to be joined, and it

is my obligation to ask that if any person here present can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, they must speak now or forever hold their peace.

(Prayer)

O gracious and ever-living God, you have created us male and female in your image. Look mercifully upon this man and this woman who come to you seeking your blessing, and assist them with your grace that with true fidelity and steadfast love they may honor and keep the promises and vows they make. Amen.

(Declaration of Consent)

(Groom), will you have this woman to be your wife, and be faithful to her alone?

(Bride), will you have this man to be your husband, and be faithful to him alone?

(Vows)

I, (groom), take you (bride), to be my wedded wife. To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better or worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, and there I pledge myself, truly, with all my heart.

I (bride), take you (groom), to be my wedded husband. To have and to hold, from this day forward, for better or worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, and there I pledge myself, truly, with all my heart.

(Exchange of Rings)

The ring is a symbol of the love you have for each other. Its unending circle represents the eternal quality of your love, and the gold represents the purity of that love. It serves as a seal of the vows you have made before each other, and finally, is a ceaseless reminder of this time and place.

(Groom places ring on brides finger and repeats) "I give you this ring as a sign of my love and faithfulness."

(Bride places ring on grooms finger and repeats) "I give you this ring as a sign of my love and faithfulness."

(Native American Wedding Blessing)

Now you will feel no rain, for each of you will be shelter to each other. Now you will feel no cold, for each of you will be warmth to each other. Now there is no more loneliness for you, for each of you will be companion to the other. Now you are two persons, but there is one life before you. Go now to your dwelling place, to enter into the days of your togetherness, and may your days be good, and long upon the earth.

(Declaration of Marriage)

Having heard your vows to each other, witnessed by God and these persons here present, by the power vested in me by the Territorial Court of the United States Virgin Islands, and more importantly by the Highest Power that rules the land and the seas, I now pronounce you husband and wife.

(Kiss)

(...and then you live happily ever after.)