

## Formal Wedding Celebration Ashley and David

All Rise! (As Bride Enters escorted by Father)

### Greeting

Good evening my name is Rev Doug and on behalf of David, Ashley and their families I welcome you. We ask you to join together in celebrating, acknowledging, and honoring this day and the vows that they will be making. By your presence, you witness and affirm the truth of their love and commitment to each other.

No one gets married in a vacuum. Each person lives in the context of their culture and community, and most importantly, within a special network of family members and close friends

For Ashley and David, *you* are these people. By birth or good fortune, you have had a significant place in sharing, affirming and shaping their lives, and they yours. Your cherished connections endure, despite the distances that separate you, your busy lives, and all the changes that life takes you through. Their wedding has brought all of you to one place –and that is an event in itself!

This is a wonderful thing for you, since you may never have a better opportunity to develop connections with so many good people. You'll be sharing the evening with some of the best people around, hand-picked by the happy couple.

### Opening Prayer

Let us pray:

Creator, as you join us today, we ask for your blessings upon this couple as they unite in marriage. Let all their days together be happy and all their words to each other be sweet. Though their paths are intertwined, let them be aware of each other's separateness. Continue to bless their home and keep it a place of joy and serenity.

Remin

d them to nurture each other's body with mutual love, honor and respect. Let their spirits dwell within. As they continue to learn from one another, may they grow stronger as individuals and closer as a couple.

Amen

Please be seated!

## **Support from Family**

Who brings this woman to be married to this man?

Brides' Father replies "I do"

## **Charge to Couple**

David and Ashley by coming here today, you have taken the initial step in what will be a wonderful and lasting life together. Understand, that a union between two people takes work and it needs constant nurturing. Some of the, most important work in a marriage involves developing the essential traits necessary for maintaining a strong marriage.

David and Ashley, I know that you enjoy spending time together hunting and fishing. As it happens, some of the same traits that make a hunter successful also make for a successful marriage.

Namely Honesty, Patience, Respect, Persistence, Humility and a Sense of Humor.

I was always taught to be honest and not to make up "fish stories" even if it hurts my pride to be truthful. I learned quick that being patient, having a plan, and sticking with it, puts you in a much better position to succeed. A hunter must be respectful of the game they are pursuing or risk having nothing to pursue. Persistence is that "stick-to-it-iveness" that gets us back up after a defeat or in the face of difficult odds. It never hurts to be humble; even when we bag a ten-point buck! And finally, you must have a Sense of Humor. A great hunter will stay upbeat, positive, and be able to laugh off whatever error they just made.

Likewise, for a Marriage to be successful you must be completely honest with each other. Remain patient and kind when times become challenging. Always give respect to one another even when you disagree; it is better to be together than apart. You must remain persistent in your commitment to each other humbly recognizing the special gift of love that brought you together. And finally, you must laugh often and hard. A good sense of humor will carry you through most, if not all, of what life throws at you.

Your engagement set into motion the interweaving of your lives - and we hope that you will continue to grow closer throughout your years together. None of us knows what the future will bring. Yet your love for one another, and trust in the strength of your union makes possible the act of faith you are making today.

Ashley and David, as you exchange the vows, which will start you on your journey together, know that our love and support go with you. As you make your promises to each other, we will remember promises we too have made and take this opportunity to make new our own.

**Declaration of Consent** Please face each other and hold hands!

David, do you desire to have this woman as your wife, to live together in the covenant of marriage? Do you intend to love her, comfort her, honor her, and keep her in sickness and in health and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her so long as you both shall live? If so, answer, "I do."

*Ashley*, do you desire to have this man to be your husband, to live together in the covenant of marriage? Do you intend to love him, comfort him, honor and keep him in sickness and in health and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him so long as you both shall live? If so, answer, "I do."

**Words of Love**

I would now like to read "The Blessing of the Hands" the Author is unknown.

These are the hands of your partner, young and strong and full of love, holding your hands as you promise to love each other, today, tomorrow, and forever. These are the hands that will work along side yours as you build your future. These are the hands that will hold you and comfort you in grief and uncertainty. These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes, tears of sorrow and of joy. These are the hands that will hold your family as one. These are the hands that will give you strength. And these are the hands that even, when wrinkled and aged, will still be reaching for yours, still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch.

**The Marriage Vows**

Having consented you will now express your vows of love and devotion.

David, repeat this vow to Ashley after me: I, David, take you, Ashley, to be my wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do us part.

Likewise, Ashley, repeat this vow to David after me: I, Ashley, take you, David, to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do us part.

Continued next page...

## **Rings**

David and Ashley have chosen to exchange rings as the sign and seal of the vows they are making today. May I have the rings.

Though small in size, these rings are very large in significance. Made of precious metal, they remind us that love is not cheap nor common; indeed, love may cost us dearly. Made in a circle, their design tells us that love must never come to an end; we must keep it continuous. As you wear these rings, whether together or apart for a moment, may they be constant reminders of these glad promises you are making today.

David, you will take your ring and place it upon the third finger of Ashley's left hand, and repeat after me this promise, saying:

"Ashley, I give you this ring, wear it with love and joy. I choose you to be my wife. I pledge my love and commitment, and to be your faithful and loving husband."

Ashley, you will take your ring and place it upon the third finger of David's left hand and repeat after me this promise saying:

"David, I give you this ring, wear it with love and joy. I choose you to be my husband. I pledge my love and commitment, to be your faithful and loving wife."

## **Concluding Blessing**

All Rise! Let us pray.

Creator, we come today as family, friends, those who are physically present and those whom we love who are now with you, asking your blessing upon these two lives and their home. You have made us so that we are incomplete without the other so that we yearn for someone whom we can love and whose love we can receive. We pray that your love will be the shield and stay for Ashley and David. When joy comes, may they share it together. When sorrow threatens, may they bear it together. In gladness or in tears, in sunshine or shadow. Grant them patience, gentleness, forbearance, and understanding. Protect their home from those forces that would break it apart. We ask for health, for long life, for the fulfillment of every good dream. May their love continue through life and, finally, blend into the life eternal.

Amen.

## **Marriage Pronouncement**

David and Ashley, you have each chosen to be joined in marriage today. In my presence and in the presence of your family and friends, you have exchanged vows and made promises. You have opened your hearts to one another, declared your love and friendship, and have united yourself with the exchanging of rings.

Therefore, it is my pleasure to now pronounce you husband and wife!

David you may now kiss the bride!

## **Presentation**

Ladies and gentlemen, family and friends: I have the pleasure to present to you, Mr. and Mrs. David Shaw