



Civil Marriage Services

The Municipality of Grey Highlands
 206 Toronto Street South, Box 409
 Markdale, ON N0C 1H0
 519-986-1216

Requirements	A valid Province of Ontario marriage licence is required. Marriage licences can be obtained at the Clerk's Office and are available from most local municipalities in Ontario.
Witnesses	Couples must provide two witnesses (one for each partner) who must be present at the ceremony, as indicated in Section 25 of the <i>Marriage Act</i> .
The Service	Civil Marriage Services will be provided by the Clerk's Office and officiated by the Clerk or a Clerk Designate. Due to the civil nature of the service, there cannot be any religious connotation to the ceremony.
Language	Ceremonies are available in English language only.
Fees	<p>\$60.00 plus HST - Payment is due at the time of booking a wedding ceremony in order to hold the time. The remaining \$240 plus HST is due at the consultation or at least 1 week prior to the ceremony.</p> <p>Note: The \$60.00 administration fee shall be retained by the Municipality should the scheduled ceremony be cancelled by the applicants after the wedding booking.</p> <p>Mileage may be calculated from the officiant's place of residence or from the Municipal Office, whichever is closer and shall be charged as per the current CRA mileage rate.</p> <p>Should you request the attendance of the Officiant at a rehearsal, there is an additional fee of \$50 plus mileage.</p>
Marriage Ineligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or both parties are under physical or mental duress • One or both parties fail to meet the age requirements (both parties must be at least 18 years old to get married in Ontario. Parties who are 16 or 17 years old may marry only if they have the consent in writing of both parents) • The parties are related as grandparent, parent, child, grandchild, brother or sister • One or both parties are currently married • One or both parties are mentally ill or under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs and incapable of understanding the nature of the marriage contract and the duties, obligations and responsibilities that result from marriage.

Civil Marriage Ceremonies Guidelines and Procedures

Applicant information

	Name	Email	Daytime Telephone Number
Applicant			
Joint Applicant			

Ceremony information

Planned date of ceremony	Preferred time of ceremony <input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM
Type of ceremony selected (Choose from the different ceremony types on the following pages.)	Introduction or reference <i>(for use in ceremony)</i> <input type="radio"/> Husband/wife <input type="radio"/> Partner <input type="radio"/> Spouse
Number of rings <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> No rings	Location of Ceremony

Applicant and Joint Applicant Consent

- The celebrants for the civil marriage ceremony do hereby consent to defend and indemnify the Municipality of Grey Highlands for any loss or damages incurred.
- The celebrants acknowledge that the date shall only be held upon payment of the \$60 administration fee. All fees shall be paid in advance of the date.
- The celebrants acknowledge and agree that the Officiant will arrive to the location at least 15 minutes prior to the ceremony time. Ceremonies that start late shall be invoiced a charge of \$15 for each additional 10 minutes delay of start.
- The Municipal Facility will be available for a maximum of one hour only. Minimal decorating, i.e. flowers, balloons, etc., is permitted, however, must be approved by the Officiant in advance of the ceremony. Decorating is allowed 15 minutes prior to the ceremony and taken down within 15 minutes afterwards. No decorations, confetti, bubbles, candles or incense are allowed in or on the grounds.
- A wedding booking is not confirmed until this agreement is completed and returned to the Clerk's office with payment and availability confirmed by the Municipality.

NOTE: The \$60.00 administration fee shall be retained by the Municipality should the scheduled ceremony be cancelled by the applicants. If the Municipality has no availability, the \$60 fee will be returned.

Signature of applicant _____

_____ Date

Signature of joint applicant _____

_____ Date

Municipal Use Only

Ceremony paid <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Marriage licence purchased <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Notes	Officiant allocated: Name: _____
Date of ceremony	Time of ceremony <input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM		

Ceremony 1

This couple has come here today to be joined in marriage, which is the voluntary union of two persons to the exclusion of all others. If any person can show just cause why they may not be lawfully joined together, let them speak now or forever hold their peace.

Marriage Officiate to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I {Applicant 1} do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 2}."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I {Applicant 2} do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 1}."

Marriage is not a single event but rather a developing process, which is not to be undertaken recklessly or irresponsibly but maturely and honestly. Marriage is the faithful union between two persons, the result of which is the formation of a family unit whose members shall help, support and enjoy each other in good times and otherwise. It is this relationship which these two persons wish to have declared and celebrated.

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons, here present, to witness that I, {Applicant 1} do take you {Applicant 2} to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons, here present, to witness that I, {Applicant 2} do take you {Applicant 1} to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Have you a ring? This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and of your life together. Please place it on the third finger of {Applicant 2 first name}'s left hand saying after me: "With this ring, I thee wed. I shall love, honor and cherish thee and this ring shall be the symbol of my love."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Have you a ring? This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and of your life together. Please place it on the third finger of {Applicant 1 first name}'s left hand saying after me: "With this ring, I thee wed. I shall love, honor and cherish thee and this ring shall be the symbol of my love."

Marriage Officiant:

I _____ by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, do hereby pronounce you {Applicant 1} and {Applicant 2} to be married.

Ceremony 2 – No ring(s)

We are gathered at this place to witness the formal joining in the legal state of matrimony of this couple, according to the order and the custom prevailing, and under the authority given and provided by the Government of the Province of Ontario.

The state of matrimony, as understood by us, is a state ennobled and enriched by a long and honourable tradition of devotion, set in the basis of the law of the land, assuring each participant an equality before the law, and supporting the common rights of each party to the marriage.

Marriage is therefore not to be entered upon thoughtlessly or irresponsibly, but with a due and serious understanding and appreciation of the ends for which it is contracted, and of the material, intellectual and emotional factors which will govern its fulfillment.

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 2} ."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 1} ."

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, {Applicant 1} do take you to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, {Applicant 2} do take you to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

Before introducing you for the first time as a married couple, I would like us to reflect upon these words:

Let your home be your haven of peace in the midst of a busy and businesslike world; let your relationship be one of complete truth and understanding between you both; respect the confidences of your partner in this marriage, and by growing together in love, it is possible to share not only the joys of life, but the burdens of sorrow as well.

May you enjoy length of days, fulfillment of hopes and peace and contentment of mind, as you day by day live and fulfill the terms of this covenant you have made with one another.

Marriage Officiant:

I _____ by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, do hereby pronounce you {Applicant 1} and {Applicant 2} to be married.

Ceremony 3

We are gathered at this place to witness the formal joining in the legal state of matrimony of this couple, according to the order and the custom prevailing, and under the authority given and provided by the Government of the Province of Ontario.

The state of matrimony, as understood by us, is a state ennobled and enriched by a long and honourable tradition of devotion, set in the basis of the law of the land, assuring each participant an equality before the law, and supporting the common rights of each party to the marriage.

Marriage is therefore not to be entered upon thoughtlessly or irresponsibly, but with a due and serious understanding and appreciation of the ends for which it is contracted, and of the material, intellectual and emotional factors which will govern its fulfillment.

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I do solemnly declare, that I do not know, of any lawful impediment, why I may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 2}."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I do solemnly declare, that I do not know, of any lawful impediment, why I may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 1}."

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, {Applicant 1} do take you {Applicant 2} to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}. To laugh with you in joy. - To grieve with you in sorrow. - To grow with you in love. - To be faithful to you alone. As long as we both shall live.

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Do you accept? ("I do" – 2nd person responds)

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons here present, to witness that I, {Applicant 2} do take you {Applicant 1} to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}. To laugh with you in joy. - To grieve with you in sorrow. - To grow with you in love. - To be faithful to you alone. As long as we both shall live.

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Do you accept? ("I do" – 1st person responds)

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Have you a ring? This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and of your life together. Please place it on the third finger of {Applicant 2 first name}'s left hand saying after me: "This ring is my precious gift to you as a measure of my love and as a sign that from this day forward your every breath shall be surrounded by my love."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Have you a ring? This ring is a symbol of your marriage and a symbol of your love and of your life together. Please place it on the third finger of {Applicant 1 first name}'s left hand saying after me:

“This ring is my precious gift to you as a measure of my love and as a sign that from this day forward your every breath shall be surrounded by my love.”

Marriage Officiant:

I _____ by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, do hereby pronounce you {Applicant 1} and {Applicant 2} to be married.

Ceremony 4

We are meeting here today in the presence of these witnesses to formally join, in the legal state of matrimony, this couple, according to the customs and laws of the Province of Ontario.

Marriage is intended to solemnize the voluntary union between two persons, to create a relationship of mutual help, love and devotion, in good times and otherwise.

Therefore, if there is any one present who can show just cause why these two persons may not be lawfully joined together in matrimony, they should now declare it, or hereafter remain silent.

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

repeat after me please. "I do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I {Applicant 1} may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 2}."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I {Applicant 2} may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 1}."

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons, here present, to witness, that I {Applicant 1} do take you {Applicant 2} to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons, here present, to witness, that I {Applicant 2} do take you {Applicant 1} to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

Marriage Officiant to the 1st person:

Have you a ring? Place the ring on the third finger of {Applicant 2 first name}'s left hand saying after me: "This ring I give you in token of the covenant made this day between us."

Marriage Officiant to the 2nd person

Have you a ring? Place the ring on the third finger of {Applicant 1 first name}'s left hand saying after me: "This ring I give you in token of the covenant made this day between us."

Marriage Officiant:

I _____ by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, do hereby pronounce you {Applicant 1} and {Applicant 2} to be married.

Ceremony 5 (no rings)

Officiant:

We are gathered together to witness the formal joining in the legal state of matrimony of this couple according to the custom and law prevailing by the Government of the Province of Ontario.

Marriage is the promise of hope between two people who love each other sincerely, who honour each other as individuals, and who wish to unite their lives and share the future together.

In this ceremony, {Applicant 1} and {Applicant 2} dedicate themselves to the happiness and well-being of each other, in the new life they now undertake.

{Applicant 1} and {Applicant 2} may you pledge to each other to be loving friends and partners in marriage. To talk and to listen, to trust and appreciate one another; to respect and cherish each other's uniqueness, and to support, comfort, and strengthen each other through life's joys and sorrows. May you promise to share hopes, thoughts, and dreams as you build your lives together. May your lives be ever intertwined, your love keeping you together. May you build a home that is compassionate to all, full of respect and honour for others and for each other.

Officiant to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I {Applicant 1} may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 2}."

Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I do solemnly declare that I do now know of any lawful impediment why I {Applicant 2} may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant 1}."

Officiant to the 1st person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons, here present, to witness, that I {Applicant 1} do take you {Applicant 2} to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

Officiant to the 2nd person:

Repeat after me please. "I call upon these persons, here present, to witness, that I {Applicant 2} do take you {Applicant 1} to be my lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

Officiant:

I _____ by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, do hereby pronounce you {Applicant 1} and {Applicant 2} to be married.

Ceremony 6

Officiant

Good evening everyone!

From this place, we take ourselves out of the usual routines of daily living to witness a unique moment in the lives of _____ and _____. Today they join their lives in the union of marriage.

To all their guests, they are happy to share this moment with you. They have known most of you for many years. You watched them grow up, you went to school with them, or you worked with them. Because you are the ones who have supported them and known them so well, it is only fitting that you are the ones to share this once-in-a-lifetime moment with them.

A wedding day is often a day when couples miss family members no longer with them. For _____ and _____, there are family members whose memories they hold dear.

And so it is that _____ and _____ present themselves to be married today...surrounded by the people they love the most.

Officiant:

As _____ and _____ prepared for the ceremony part of this wedding celebration, they reflected on what it is that they love about each other. And this was the easiest part of planning this wedding! Before we go any further, we must get the legal aspect out of the way. Is there anyone here present who knows of any reason why these two shall not be married?

Officiant To Both:

Please repeat after me together:

*I do solemnly declare
that I do not know of any lawful impediment
why we may not be joined in matrimony

Officiant to Applicant 1:

_____ (Applicant 1 name), _____ (Applicant 2 name) loves that you blend in so comfortably with her family. She sees in you a funny, kind, and sweet man. She loves that you think she is funny and that you always find a way to compliment her.

She loves that you always want to be close to her. You remember details of the stories she tells. You want to be part of her family and circle of friends. You help her around the house.

Most importantly, you are so close that even when she is at her worst, you have never made her feel like you want anything but to be closer to her.

Officiant to Applicant 2:

_____ (Applicant 2 name), _____ (Applicant 1 name) loves that you _____ (fill in the blank). He loves your brain, your smile, and your beauty. He appreciates that you are "low maintenance." He likes that you can be really silly. He loves your jokes and texts. He loves your cooking. He loves your kisses. He just really loves you!

Officiant to Both:

You both look to a shared future that includes raising a happy & healthy family. That future also includes a richly lived life together...going out to restaurants, hanging out with family, relaxing at home in front of the TV, singing and dancing...Applicant 2 will do the singing, and Applicant 1 will do the dancing.

The years will come and go...you won't take each other for granted, you will laugh a lot, you will be

the best parents you can be, you will grow older and wiser together. It's a good story, and the ending is not in sight!

MARRIAGE VOWS:

Officiant:

We come now to the words _____ and _____ want to hear the most today...the words that take them across the threshold from being engaged to being married.

A marriage, as most of us understand it, is a voluntary and full commitment. It is made in the deepest sense to the exclusion of all others, and it is entered into with the desire and hope that it will last for life.

Before you declare your vows to one another, I want to hear you confirm that it is indeed your intention to be married today.

Officiant to Applicant 1:

_____, do you come here freely and without reservation to give yourself to _____ in marriage? If so, answer "I do."

Applicant 1:

I do.

Officiant to Applicant 2:

_____, do you come here freely and without reservation to give yourself to _____ in marriage? If so, answer "I do."

Applicant 2:

I do.

Officiant:

_____ and _____, having heard that it is your intention to be married to each other, I now ask you to declare your marriage vows.

Please face each other and hold hands.

Officiant to Applicant 1:

Applicant 1, please repeat after me...

*I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded wife.

I will share my life with yours,
and build our dreams together,
Support you through times of trouble,
and rejoice with you in times of happiness.

I promise to give you
respect, love and loyalty.

This commitment is made in love,
kept in faith,
lived in hope,

and made new every day of our lives.

Officiant to Applicant 2:

Applicant 2, please repeat after me...

*I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, _____ do take you, _____ to be my lawful wedded husband.

I will share my life with yours,

Build our dreams together,
Support you through times of trouble,
and rejoice with you in times of happiness.
I promise to give you
respect, love and loyalty.
This commitment is made in love,
kept in faith,
lived in hope,
and made new every day of our lives.

EXCHANGE WEDDING RINGS

Officiant:

Your wedding ring are the outward and visible sign of the inward and invisible bond which already unites you two hearts in love.

[Applicant 1], place the ring on Applicant 2's finger and repeat after me....

I give you this ring.

Wear it with love and joy.

As this ring has no end,

My love is also forever.

[Applicant 2], place the ring on Applicant 1's finger and repeat after me....

I give you this ring.

Wear it with love and joy.

As this ring has no end,

My love is also forever.

May the wedding rings you exchanged today remind you always that you are surrounded by enduring love.

Officiant:

Everyone has advice for newlyweds. _____ and _____, I offer these good wishes to you on this special day.

May your life together be blessed with prosperity and good health. May you always share open and honest communication between each other. May you respect each other's individual talents and gifts and give full support to each other's professional and personal pursuits.

May you cherish the home and family you will create together. May all the years to come be filled with moments to celebrate and renew your love. May your love be a life-long source of excitement, contentment, affection, respect, and devotion for one another.

DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE

Officiant:

And so now I, _____, by virtue of the power vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, delight to declare and pronounce you to be [husband and wife/married partners, married spouses/ married]. You may seal this declaration with a kiss.

Officiant:

I am pleased to present the newlyweds, Mr. and Mrs. _____!

We will now go forward and sign the register.

Ceremony 7

Officiant:

We are gathered together on this day to witness and celebrate the marriage of _____ & _____. We come together not to mark the start of a relationship, but to acknowledge and strengthen a bond that already exists. This ceremony is a public affirmation of that bond and as their dearest family and friends, it is our honor and privilege to stand witness to this event.

This day is made possible not only because of your love for each other, but through the grace and support of your family and friends. It is our hope that your fulfillment and joy in each other will increase with each passing year.

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

OPENING PRAYER By Family Member (*Officiant will not provide the prayer as the services provided*):

Let us bow our heads in prayer. Lord, we thank you for gathering everyone here today. We ask that you help _____ and _____ to remember the strong love that they share. To work that love into practical things so that nothing can divide them. May their love always inspire them to be kind in their words, considerate of the other's feelings, and concerned for the other's needs and wishes. Increase their faith and trust in You. Bless their marriage with peace and happiness and make their Love fruitful for Your glory and their joy, both here and in eternity. Amen.

Officiant:

While the commitment begins with the two of you, its effect radiates outward. It touches your family and friends and ultimately all of society. When this commitment is seriously made and continuously fulfilled, it leads to the richest and most rewarding of human relationships.

Your relationship will take more than love. It will take trust, to know in your hearts that you want only the best for each other. Dedication, to stay open to one another, to learn and grow, even when it is difficult to do so. And faith, to go forward together without knowing what the future holds for you both. While love is our natural state of being, these other qualities are not as easy to come by. They are not a destination, but a journey. Marriage is a give and take between two personalities, a mingling of two endowments which diminishes neither, but enhances both.

Seeing that no moment is without meaning, we ask that you take this marriage as a beginning of your lives together. Today signifies the creation of a new home and a new family for you both. May you be fulfilled by each other's love and friendship. May you be overjoyed by the promises you are about to make and the life together you will create.

Remember that in every marriage, there are good times and bad, times of joy and times of sorrow. Marriage is a journey – a time of adventure and excitement enhanced by the love, trust, dedication and faith you share in one another.

May the promises you make to one another today, be lived out to the end of your lives. Tomorrow can bring you the greatest of joys, but today is the day it all begins.

Officiant to both:

_____ and _____, do you, with your family and friends as your witnesses, present yourselves willingly and of your own accord to be joined in marriage?

Both:

[We do]

Officiant to both:

*Do you verify that you do not know of any lawful impediment that would prevent you from marrying each other?

Both:

[We do]

Officiant to both:

Will you promise to care for each other in the joys and sorrows of life, come what may, and to share the responsibility for growth and enrichment of your life together?

Both:

[We will]

Officiant to Applicant 1:

Applicant 1, please repeat after me.

*I call upon these persons here
to witness that

I, _____, take you _____, to be my wedded wife/spouse/partner

I give to you in the presence of these witnesses
My promise to stay by your side,
In sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow,
As well as through the good times and the bad.
I promise to love you without reservation,
Comfort you in times of distress
Encourage you to achieve all of your goals,
Laugh with you and cry with you,
Grow with you in mind and spirit
Always be open and honest with you,
And cherish you for as long as we both shall live

Officiant to Applicant 2:

Applicant 2, please repeat after me

*I call upon these persons here present to witness

That I, _____, take you _____, to be my wedded husband/spouse/partner

I give to you in the presence of these witnesses
My promise to stay by your side,
In sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow,
As well as through the good times and the bad.
I promise to love you without reservation,
Comfort you in times of distress
Encourage you to achieve all of your goals,
Laugh with you and cry with you,
Grow with you in mind and spirit
Always be open and honest with you,
And cherish you for as long as we both shall live

EXCHANGING OF THE RINGS

Officiant:

Having this love in your hearts, you have chosen to seal your vows by exchanging rings. From the earliest times, the circle has been a sign of completeness. The rings that you have chosen to wear have neither beginning nor end, much like your love for one another. They are a symbol of the words that you speak today. May these rings be from this day forward, your most treasured adornment, and may the love they symbolize, be your most precious possession. As you wear these rings, may they be constant reminders of these glad promises you are making today.

_____, take this ring, place it on _____'s finger and repeat after me.

I give you this ring as a symbol
of my love and faithfulness to you.

_____, take this ring, place it on _____'s finger and repeat after me.

I give you this ring as a symbol
of my love and faithfulness to you.

_____ and _____ from this moment forward you will never be alone. You will carry with you the love of another person, giving you a completeness and renewed lightness. May your life together be immersed in love and excitement. May you strive to enrich each other in every possible way. And may you work to bring the peace you find to this world.

Officiant:

Having pledged their fidelity to one another, to love, honor and cherish one another in the presence of this gathering and by the authority vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, it is my honor to now pronounce you husband and wife/married. You may kiss the Applicant 2.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my honor to be the first to introduce you to: Mr. and Mrs.

_____.

Ceremony 8

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Officiant:

Welcome! _____ and _____ have brought us together here for an occasion of great joy and a cause for great celebration. Having found each other, they have built the kind of relationship that will serve them well as the foundation for their marriage. They have chosen each one of you to be here with them to witness their wedding vows as they join together as husband and wife/married partners.

Marriage is a bold step into an unknown future. It is risking who we are for the sake of who we can be. In marriage, two lives are intimately shared; and the blending of the two must not diminish either one. Rather, it should enhance the individuality of each partner.

Each of us knows that a marriage is not created by a law or a ceremony; rather it occurs in the hearts of two human beings. It grows out of loving, caring, and sharing ourselves with another. This ceremony is not magic, it will not create a relationship that does not already exist and has not already been celebrated in all the commitments _____ and _____ have made to each other, both large and small, in the days since they first met and recognized their connection to one another.

So, in witnessing this ceremony today, we are observing only an outward sign of an inward union that already exists between _____ and _____. This ceremony is a symbol of how far they have come together and a symbol of the promise that they will make to each other to continue to live their lives together and to love each other solely and above all others.

There are only two official witnesses at a wedding but each and every person here today will witness the words that they will speak to one another and the vows that they will make. You should take good care to remember these words; for a marriage needs the help of a community, of friends and family who will be there when needed and will do all that they can during hard times to stand by _____ and _____ and offer their support to them and the new family that they create today. May you always do all within your power to support the union that will be made here today and to nurture the bond between these two people whom you love.

If the old fairy-tale ending “and they lived happily ever after...” is taken to mean “They felt for the next fifty years exactly as they felt the day before they were married,” then it says what probably never was nor ever would be true, and would be highly undesirable if it were. Who could bear to live in that excitement for even five years? What would become of your work, your appetite, your sleep, and your friendships? But, of course, ceasing to be “in love” need not mean ceasing to love.

Love in this second sense—love as distinct from “being in love” and it is not merely a feeling. Love is a deep unity, maintained by the will and deliberately strengthened by habit; reinforced by the grace which both partners receive from God. They can have this love for each other even at those moments when they do not like each other; as you love yourself even when you do not like yourself. They can retain this love even when each could easily allow themselves to be “in love” with someone else. “Being in love” first moved them to promise fidelity but this quieter love enables them to keep the promise. It is on this love that the engine of marriage is run: being in love was the explosion that started it.

Officiant to Both:

But before we may move forward from that explosion, I must ask, Do either of you know of any lawful reason that you should not be joined in marriage?

Both:

No

Officiant to Both:

Good, then please repeat after me:

I do solemnly declare

that I do not know of any lawful impediment

why we may not be joined in matrimony

DECLARATION OF INTENT

Officiant:

A successful marriage is not something that just happens. It takes work, it takes patience, and it takes time. It takes a commitment from both of you... a commitment to do whatever it takes to make your relationship thrive and not just simply survive.

Officiant to Applicant 1:

_____, will you take _____ to be your lawfully wedded wife and travel the rest of life's road with her?

Will you love her, laugh with her, comfort her, honor and protect her, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

Applicant 1:

I do.

Officiant to Applicant 2:

_____, will you take _____ to be your lawfully wedded Husband and travel the rest of life's road with him? Will you love him, laugh with him, comfort him, honor and protect him, and forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

Applicant 2:

I do.

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

Officiant:

_____ and _____, the symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, "You know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed- well, I meant it all, every word." Before this moment you have been many things to one another- acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another in these last few years. Now you shall say a few words and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this – is my husband/partner/spouse, this – is my wife/partner/spouse.

Officiant to Applicant 1 (repeat):

I call upon these persons, here present,

to witness that I, {Applicant 1}

do take you {Applicant 2}

to be my lawful wedded wife/spouse/partner.

I, _____, choose you, _____

In the presence of our friends and families,

To be my wife and partner from this day forward;

To love you,

To be a comfort and safe haven in your life,

To hold you close,

To listen deeply when you speak,

To uphold you with my strength,
To weigh the effects of the words I speak
And the things I do,
To never take you for granted,
And to always give thanks
for your presence in my life.

Officiant to Applicant 2 (repeat):

I call upon these persons, here present,
to witness that I, {Applicant 2}
do take you {Applicant 1} to be my lawful wedded husband/spouse/partner.
I, _____, choose you, _____
In the presence of our friends and families,
To be my husband and partner
From this day forward;
To love you,
To be a comfort and safe haven in your life,
To hold you close,
To listen deeply when you speak,
To uphold you with my strength,
To weigh the effects of the words I speak
And the things I do,
To never take you for granted,
And to always give thanks
For your presence in my life.

RING EXCHANGE

Officiant:

This is the point in the ceremony when people talk about the wedding bands being a perfect circle, having no beginning and no end. But we all know that these rings have a beginning. Rock is dug up from the earth. Metals are liquefied in a furnace at a thousand degrees. The hot metal is forged, cooled, and then painstakingly polished. Something beautiful made from raw elements.

Love is like that. It comes from humble beginnings, made by imperfect beings. It is the process of making something beautiful where there was once nothing at all.

The promises which you have spoken to each other today are inscribed forever in your minds, in your hearts. But words are fleeting so let these rings serve as a reminder of the feelings you have in your hearts at this very moment.

Now, Repeat after me:

Officiant to Applicant 1:

with this ring I am giving you my promise/
to always love you/
cherish you/
honor you and comfort you.
I promise that I will love you/
and keep my heart open to you/
all the days of my life.

Officiant to Applicant 2:

with this ring I am giving you my promise/
to always love you/
cherish you/
honor you and comfort you.
I promise that I will love you/
and keep my heart open to you
/all the days of my life.

Officiant:

_____ and _____, no one but you can declare yourselves married. You have begun it here today in speaking your vows before your family and friends and you will do it again in the days and years to come, standing by each other, sharing all that is sweet and bitter in life. Each tender act, each loving word will be the declaration of what was made here today.

*Therefore, it is my joyful responsibility, that I _____, by the virtue of the power vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario to officially acknowledge your union as "Husband and Wife/Married Partners". You may now seal your marriage with a kiss.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my privilege to present to you for the very first time as husband and wife/married partners/, _____.

Ceremony 9 (Personal Vows)

INTRODUCTION

Officiant:

Please be seated.

On behalf of _____ and _____, I would like to thank you all for being here this afternoon. For taking the time and making the journey, and for all the effort that it takes—not only to be a part of this day, but to be a part of each other's lives. _____ and _____ have invited you here to this beautiful place to show you a glimpse of an important piece of their love. To share with you trails, woodlands, marshes, and beaches, like the ones they've often explored during their years together.

Whenever we attend a wedding, we are given the opportunity to reflect on our own relationships. We might look at the couple before us and be tempted to compare their love to the quality of our own relationships. The truth is that every relationship is as unique as the individuals in it, but one thing holds true: For love to exist between two people, each person must allow the vulnerability of giving his or her love to the other, and each must be open to receiving the other's love in turn. Therefore each of us is a powerful creator of love. Each of us, every moment of every day, has the choice to dedicate ourselves to one another or to withhold our love and caring.

If you ask couples who have a strong and abiding love what they like most about their partners, many will say when they are with that person they don't have to pretend to be anything other than what they are. They are able to express themselves without fear of being judged or rejected. There is room in the relationship for both of them to be unique individuals. They are free to surrender to the vulnerability of true intimacy—to be known and loved unconditionally.

REMEMBRANCES AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Officiant:

At this time, _____ and _____ would like to take a moment to honor those loved ones who are not with us today.

Please take a moment of silence.

DECLARATIONS OF SUPPORT AND FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

Officiant:

_____ and _____ would like to invite you to participate in their wedding celebration through the ritual of the Friendship circle. Anyone who wishes to may now stand and share their thoughts and feelings. Messages may be literal or metaphorical, and about anything appropriate to the occasion—love, family, marriage, life. You may want to offer your blessing, or to share a story about them individually or as a couple. Anyone may stand and speak if so moved—if you would like to speak, please stand as the last person finishes.

INTRODUCTION TO VOWS

Officiant:

Throughout time countless millions of people from many cultures, religions, and societies have gathered among friends and families to celebrate their love for one and other and their commitment to each other. Each culture has symbols and rituals to celebrate marriage, from the Chinese tea ceremony to the Jewish tradition of breaking the glass, a rich tapestry of traditions from around the world combine to symbolize the meaning of marriage. Today we should try to remember that a wedding is a symbol, a heartfelt and meaningful symbol but a symbol nonetheless. This ceremony is not magic, it will not create a relationship that does not already exist and has not already been celebrated in all the commitments _____ and _____ have made to each other, both large and small, in the days since they first met. What we are celebrating today is not the beginning of a marriage, but a marriage-already-in-progress. This ceremony is a symbol of how far they have come together and a

symbol of the promises that they will continue to make to each other throughout live their lives together.

The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, "You know all those things we've promised and hoped and dreamed? Well, I meant it all, every word."

Look at one another and remember this moment in time.

Before this moment you have been many things to one another, But now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this—is my husband; this—is my wife.

Nothing is easier than standing here and saying these words, and nothing is more difficult than living them day to day. When you love someone, you do not love them all the time in exactly the same way. That is impossible. Yet that is what most of us expect. We forget the ebb and flow of life and of love and of relationships. We insist on permanence, on duration, on continuity. But in love, as in life, the only stability is in change, in growth, and in freedom. Therefore what you promise today must be renewed and reaffirmed tomorrow and all the tomorrows to come.

Before we begin, I must ask you to confirm that you do not know of any lawful impediment that you should not be legally joined in marriage. Please repeat after me together:

I do not know
of any lawful impediment
that would prevent us
from being legally joined in marriage.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Officiant:

Having considered all of these things, *[Applicant 1]*, do you promise to do your very best each day to create a loving, healthy, and happy marriage?

1: I do.

Do you call upon these persons, here present, to witness that you, {Applicant 1} do take {Applicant 2} to be your lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

1: I do

[Applicant 2], do you promise to do your very best each day to create a loving, healthy, and happy marriage?

2: I do.

Do you call upon these persons, here present, to witness that you, {Applicant 2} do take {Applicant 1} to be your lawful wedded {Intro/Reference}."

2: I do

Now, please declare your wedding vows to each other.

{Personal Vows}

INTRODUCTION TO RINGS

Officiant:

Please take hands. And all of you who love each other and are within the same bubble, please take each other's hands as well.

To reach out to someone and be acknowledged and loved is a human need. Taking the hand of one who loves you is a powerful symbol of that unspoken bond.

Please take a good look at your partner's hands, so you may see the gift that they are to you. These are the hands of your best friend, that are holding yours on your wedding day. These are the hands that will work alongside yours, as together you build your future. These are the hands that when wrinkled and aged will still be reaching for yours.

This is the point in the ceremony when people usually talk about the wedding bands being a perfect circle, having no beginning and no end. But we all know that these rings have a beginning. Rock is dug up from the earth. Metals are liquefied in a furnace at a thousand degrees. The hot metal is

forged, cooled, and then painstakingly polished. Something beautiful is made from raw elements. Love is like that. It comes from humble beginnings, made by imperfect beings. It is the process of making something beautiful where there was once nothing at all.

RING VOWS

Officiant:

[Applicant 1], please place this ring on [Applicant 2's] finger and repeat after me:

"I take you for now and for always, for always is always now."

1: "I take you for now and for always, for always is always now."

[Applicant 2], please place this ring on [Applicant 1's] finger and repeat after me:

"I take you for now and for always, for always is always now."

2: "I take you for now and for always, for always is always now."

BENEDICTION

Officiant:

No one but you can declare yourselves married. You have begun it here today in speaking your vows before your family and friends, and you will do it again in the days and years to come, standing by each other, sharing the highs and lows of life.

My hope for you is this:

May you have many long years to delight in each other's company,

and to love and be loved by the friends and family who have come here today to support you.

May you make a home together that is at once sheltering and welcoming.

May you each do meaningful, productive work at home and in the world, learning from your failures and growing in your accomplishments.

May life's challenges be met together with courage and optimism, and may your days be filled with laughter, imagination, trust, friendship, and love.

As goes an old Irish blessing:

May the road rise to meet you,

May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face, The rains fall soft upon your fields.

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

PRONOUNCEMENT AND KISS

Officiant:

It is now my honour and delight that I, _____, by the power vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, declare you married as husband and wife—you may seal your vows with a kiss!

Optional wording for openings:

1: _____ and _____ have come here today, to be joined in marriage under the authority given and provided for by the government of the Province of Ontario. They have invited us to share in this celebration, as they affirm their love before us and enter into the joys of marriage.

2: Marriage is a commitment to life. The best that two people can find and bring out in each other. It offers opportunities for sharing and growth that no other relationship can equal. It is a physical and an emotional joining that is promised for a lifetime. _____ and _____ have invited us to share in this celebration as they enter into marriage, to witness as they pledge their love and care for each other in marriage, as they make this promise to each other and join their hearts and souls in matrimony.

3: Welcome and thank-you for sharing in this special occasion as we witness the celebration of ____ and ____ in the unity of marriage. Love is one of the highest experiences we human beings can have and it can add depth and meaning to our lives. The day to day companionship, the pleasure in doing things together, or in doing separate things and exchanging those experiences, is a continuous and central part of what two people who love each other can share. Marriage was established so that two people might have life-long companionship, so that natural instincts and affections might be fulfilled in mutual love and so that the security of family, life, love and the home may be enjoyed.

4: _____ and _____ have come here today of their own free will to be joined in marriage. Marriage symbolizes the intimate sharing of two lives, yet this sharing must not diminish, but enhance the individuality of each partner. A happy marriage is one which is continually developing. While growing with and understanding each other and as you come into this marriage being united as spouses, and as you affirm your faith and love for one another, we ask that you always cherish each other as special and unique individuals and allow this marriage to be strengthened every day forward by your love and respect for each other.

Requirements for personalized Service:

Under the requirements of the Marriage Act, there are 3 phrases that must be included in each ceremony.

You are free to amend any of the samples provided or supply your own as long as they include the following:

- I {Applicant} do solemnly declare that I do not know of any lawful impediment why I may not be joined in matrimony to {Applicant}.
- I call upon these persons, here present, to witness that I, {Applicant} do take you {Applicant} to be my lawful wedded {husband/wife/spouse/partner}."
- I {Officiant name} by the virtue of the powers vested in me by the Marriage Act and the Province of Ontario, do hereby pronounce you {Applicant 1} and {Applicant 2} to be married.