
EXAMPLE WEDDING CEREMONY

Situation

Purpose: This ceremony is for a mature couple, one a Catholic man who has never been married before and the other a divorced Spiritualist woman. They can't get married in a Catholic church and don't want to anyway.

Location: Exotic beach location.

Props: A simple altar consisting of a crucifix, drift wood, seashells etc.

Music: Sounds of shamanic flutes and drums, welcoming the Ancestors, Angels and Spirit Guides of the Bride and Groom.

The Ceremony

Welcome and opening

Minister: In place at the ocean front and guests are seated waiting with the sounds of the sea and shamanic flute.

Arrival of the couple: Gentle drums and flute Arrival of the couple, individually, from either side of the beach, the groom first followed by the bride. They stand facing each other before the minister, and either side of the altar. Introductions and welcome

Minister: As we stand in front of this vast ocean we welcome, Ancestors, Angels and Spirit Guides of the Bride and Groom and of course we welcome all of you to this beautiful location on this most special occasion. On behalf of Emma and Christopher I would like to thank each and every one of you for making your way out here to share in this celebration of their love and commitment to each other. A moment of silence

Ocean inspired reading: Words about love and commitment.

Minister: Emma and Christopher, God has brought you here as your love and faith came softly upon each other's hearts, and as the sea foam lies softly before us on this glorious day, and just as there will never be a morning without the ocean's flow, may there never be a day without your love for each other. As the tides ebb and flow, so too do the fortunes of life. Footprints in the sand are washed away, driftwood moves on its endless quest for a peaceful harbour and only a deep and abiding love can withstand the tides of change in two lives. The love you have for each other is enduring and profound and your friends and family both on earth and in spirit are gathered here to witness this love and the vows you will make to each other.

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The couple's story – told by school friend, Justine.

Justine: Well I don't think any of us are surprised that this day has finally come, because Christopher has been chasing Emma for 41 years, and he must be tired. From back in primary school, we all saw that spark that Christopher had for Emma but Emma took a little longer to see it. Life took them on separate journeys as both travel the world for adventure and knowledge, finding love and losing love only to be brought back to England by the gentle hands of Spirit whom from the beginning of their existence had destined that these two Souls were to be together forever. But what you all didn't know is that even from the moment of their birth they actually lived just around the corner from each other.

So after 17 years of hearsay stories about each other and no contact whatsoever, the first ever Maida Vale High School reunion party brought them back together again, both older, wiser, with hearts open and ready for TRUE LOVE. We are all so happy to be here to share this day with such a wonderful couple who really deserve each other and we would all like to offer you both Emma and Christopher this heart felt prayer. If everyone can join me with the Native American Prayer please.

Reading read by all friends and family.

Native American Wedding Prayer

Now you will feel no rain,
For each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold,
For each of you will be warmth to the other.
Now there is no more loneliness,
For each of you will be companion to the other.
Now you are two bodies,
But there is one life before you.
May beauty surround you both in the journey ahead.
and through all the years.
May happiness be your companion and your days together
be good and long upon the earth.
So go now to your dwelling place,
to enter into the days of your togetherness.

Minister: Thank you for those beautiful words.

Moment of silence.

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The couple's promises

Minister: Emma, in the light of the Divine what are the words in your heart for your groom?

Bride, turning to groom says: God has given me a second chance at happiness. You have helped me let go of the past, and to embrace the future with trust and an open heart. With strength from the Divine, I promise to wipe away your tears with my laughter, and your pain with my caring and my compassion. Let us wipe out the old canvases of our lives, and fill them with new colour, harmony and beauty. I come today to give you my love, to give you my heart in the light of the Divine for our future together. I promise to bring you joy, to be at home with your spirit and to learn to love you more each day, Bless you for taking my hand as we begin anew.

Minister: Christopher in the light of the Divine, what are the words in your heart for your bride?

Groom, turning to Bride says: You have been my friend since my heart began to beat. I have loved you since you entered into my conscious thought. I wish to be your guiding light that reflects the love in your heart to be near you this day until I draw my last breath. I choose you, my beautiful BRIDE, to be my wife. To lift you up above all others and to be the ember that burns brightly in your heart. With strength from the Divine, I promise to love you, care for you, to share laughter with you and to sleep in your warm embrace. I promise to keep myself open to you, to let you see through the window of my world into my innermost fears and feelings. To be at home with your spirit and to learn to love you more each day, bless you for taking my hand as we begin anew.

Minister: Let us all join in song with the couple, their favourite hymn

Lord of All Hopefulness

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
Your hands swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

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Exchange of rings

Minister: A circle is the symbol of the sun and the earth and the Universe. In these rings it is the symbol of unity, in which your lives are joined in one unbroken circle, in which, wherever you go, you will always return to one another and to your togetherness.

Minister: Do you have the rings?

Rings bought in by young bridesmaid

Minister: These eternity rings are a symbol of the unbroken circle of love. Love freely given has no beginning and no end. May these rings always remind you of the promises you have made today.

Minister to the Groom: Christopher, please place the ring on Emma's left hand and repeat after me: "I Christopher, give you, Emma, this ring as a symbol of my love and commitment to you, as powerful and endless as the sea".

Groom: I give you Emma, this ring as a symbol of my love and commitment to you, as powerful and endless as the sea.

Minister to the Bride, please place the ring on Christopher's left hand and repeat after me: "I Emma, give you, Christopher, this ring as a symbol of my love and commitment to you, as powerful and endless as the sea".

Bride: I Emma, give you Christopher, this ring as a symbol of my commitment to you, as powerful and endless as the sea.

Minister: May God, continue to guide you on this journey of reunion, May your love always be as constant and unchanging as these never-ending waves that break before us, flowing endlessly from the depths of the sea.

Meaningful symbolic act, sand ceremony

Minister: Emma and Christopher, you have just sealed your relationship by the giving and receiving of rings. This beautiful union is symbolized through the combining of these two individual containers of sand. The sand closest to BRIDE represents Emma and her personality, individuality, values and all of her life experiences that have made her the woman that stands before you. The sand nearest GROOM represents Christopher and his ideals, thoughts, passion and life trials that have made him the man that stands before you.

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Each container holds its own unique beauty, strength, and character. They can stand on their own and be whole, without need of anything else. However when these two are blended together they create a new and extraordinarily more intricate entity, a firmer foundation. Each grain of sand brings to the mixture a lasting beauty that forever enriches the combination.

Please pour the sand into this common container to symbolize the union of your two lives.

Just as these grains of sand can never be separated, so will your marriage be a moulding of two individual personalities, bonded together forming one heart and one love.

Just as these waters nourish the earth and sustain life, may your constant love nourish and sustain each other until the end of time.

I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss.

High energy, uplifting shamanic drums and flutes.

Closing and departure

Everyone gets up and sings, on the beach, *One Love* by Bob Marley.

Source: Heather McDonald