

Today is a celebration. A celebration of love, of commitment, of friendship, of family, and of two people, Bride and Groom, who are in it for forever.

You don't have to have a ceremony to have a marriage although the marriage ceremony has been an important feature across nearly every culture, religion, generation, and society. We have thousands of important moments that happen throughout our lives, but this one is regarded as one so critical, we acknowledge its special status by sharing it with others. Why this moment?

Because despite all of our differences, love is what we all share. It's the great unifier - our one universal truth. That no matter who we are, where we've come from, what we believe, we know this one thing: love is what we're doing right. We have all loved in our lifetimes, and in this moment, we're reminded that the ability to love is the very best part of our humanity.

Bride and Groom, your family and friends are here to hope with you, to support you, to be proud of you, and to remind you that love isn't always happily ever after, but love is the experience of writing your story. It's not one moment - not even this moment. It's every moment. Big ones like saying "I love you," getting engaged - but mostly a million little ones that come in between the big moments. Falling asleep next to one another, making dinner together, spending holidays with your families, *binge-watching Netflix shows*, getting a big hug when you get home from work... These everyday moments fuse together into one big experience that is uniquely your own.

I'd like for the two of you to now face each other and join hands as a symbol of the love you share and your union today. I'd like for you to think about the hands that you are holding.

These are the hands of your best friend holding your hands on your wedding day, Promising to love you and to work together as you build your future.

These are the hands that will give you:

Strength when you need strength,

Tenderness when you need tenderness,

And love when you need love.

These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief fills your mind.

These are the hands that will love you and cherish you through the years.

These are the hands that years from now will still be searching for your hands, seeking the love, encouragement, and support that each of you receives from the other.

You're about to make promises to each other that you intend to keep. You're going to vow to take care of each other, to stand up for one another, and find happiness in the other. There's a simple premise to each of these promises: you're vowing to be there. You're teaming up and saying to the other, "Every experience I am going to have, I want you to be a part of."

Will you, Groom, keep Bride as your favorite person - to laugh with her, go on adventures with her, support her through life's tough moments, be proud of her, grow old with her, and find new reasons to love her every day?

Groom: I will.

Will you, Bride, keep Groom as your favorite person - to laugh with him, go on adventures with him, support him through life's tough moments, be proud of him, grow old with him, and find new reasons to love him every day?

Groom: I will.

Wedding rings are unbroken circles, symbols of eternity, with neither beginning nor end. They are to remind you not only of the love you have for one another this day, but of the precious gift of trust, honesty and commitment that you place in one another for all of your tomorrows. From this day forward you will wear these rings as a sign that no matter where you go and whatever you do, there is someone in this world who loves you more than anything else, who is always by your side.

Groom, please place the ring on Bride's finger and repeat these words:

Bride, with this ring I take you as my wife.

Bride, please place the ring on Groom's finger and repeat these words:

Groom, with this ring I take you as my husband.

May your marriage bring you all the excitement a marriage should bring.  
May you look for things to praise and say, "I love you!" out loud and every day.  
May you have happiness, and may you find it making one another happy.  
May you have love, and may you find it loving one another.

And now for the moment you've been waiting for...Groom and Bride, it is my honor and privilege to declare that you are husband and wife! You may seal your promises with a kiss!