

On behalf of Groom and Bride , I welcome you and thank you all for gathering here on this beautiful day to witness the joining of their two lives into one. Many of you have given them much happiness, love, warmth, and guidance through the various stages of their lives. They would like to sincerely thank you all for being here to celebrate their big day.

I have also been asked by Groom and Bride to thank their parents for the wonderful lives they have given them, for the hard work and guidance they have provided, for their everlasting love, support, and encouragement. It is from them that they have learned the true meaning of love, friendship and family.

We would also like to honor those who have passed on but whose spirit remains alive and strong in our hearts, and to especially acknowledge Groom' grandmother Carol, would be here today if heaven was not so far away. Her spirit & love is with us today and carries on in her children and grandchildren.

The marriage between Groom and Bride does not mark the beginning of a new relationship; rather, it is an acknowledgement and celebration, of a relationship that has been flourishing since they met.

And, Bride and Groom have chosen this day to engage in a traditional handfasting ceremony to commemorate their entering, together, into the union of marriage. From the Mayans of South America to the Hindu Vedic (Vay-dic) community of the Middle East to the Celtic culture of Scotland, tying of the hands is one of the oldest matrimonial traditions. In ancient Celtic handfastings, the couple would link hands to form an infinite circle and their hands or wrists would be bound, symbolizing the binding together of their two lives into one. Modern expressions such as "tying the knot", "bonds of matrimony", and "hand in marriage", arose from this ancient practice. Today, Bride and Groom will bind their hands with a cloth bearing the tartan pattern of the McEwens, Groom' ancestral clan.

Bride and Groom, would you please hold hands. (Tie ribbon on.)

Marriage forms eternal and sacred bonds. The promises made today bind your lives together in a union of love and trust .

Are you willing now and always to make this commitment to each other? We are.

Will you stand side by side for the rest of your days together? We will.

Will you honor and respect one another? (We will)

Will you support and assist each other in times of pain and sorrow? (We will)

Will you be present in challenging times so that you may grow strong in this union? (We will)

Will you bring fun, laughter, joy and happiness to your relationship? (We will).

Is it your intention to bring peace and harmony into your everyday ways of communicating? (We will)

And when you falter, will you have the courage and commitment to remember these promises and take a step back towards one another with an open heart? (We will).

And as the years pass and your hands become aged and wrinkled, will you reach out and be there for each other? We will.

Bride and Groom, this ribbon is a symbol of the lives you have chosen to lead together. This ribbon represents the marital bond. It is strong enough to hold you together during hard times yet flexible enough to allow personal growth. The knots of this binding are not formed by this cord, but by your promises. You hold in your hands and hearts the making or breaking of this union. Up until this moment, you have been separate in thought, word, and action. As your hands are bound together by this cord, so too, shall your lives be bound as one. May you forever be one, sharing in all things, in love and loyalty, for all time to come.

(We slip our hands out of the ribbon, then proceed with ring portion.)

The rings please: A ring is an unbroken circle, a symbol of unity and love, representative of the greater circle of life of which we all are a part of. Having neither beginning nor end, but a continuous cycle of which you are an element. It begins with the gift of life, and will continue through the end of time. Your wedding rings are an outward symbol to the world of your unity as well as a reminder of the promises that you made here today and the joy and love shared here today.

Groom/Bride please take Bride's/Groom' left hand in your left hand. And as you place her/his wedding ring upon her finger please repeat after me:

I give you this ring as the pledge of my love and as the symbol of our unity.

We'll now conclude with the signing of the marriage license and a Celtic Blessing:

A piece of paper cannot make a marriage, therefore the piece of paper that is signed here today, simply confirms to the world the union that has been made here today.

Groom and Bride

May you know nothing but happiness from this day forward.

May the road rise to meet you

May the wind be always at your back

May the warm rays of sun fall upon your home

And may the hand of a friend always be near.

May green be the grass you walk on,

May blue be the skies above you,

May pure be the joys that surround you,

May true be the hearts that love you.

By the power vested in me, etc. Groom, you may kiss your bride.