

# A Civil Union Ceremony

## Performed at St. Luke's

**Processional**  
Please stand.

### The Gathering

*Officiant:*

Dear friends and family, we have come together in the presence of God to witness and bless the Covenant of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in a life-long commitment of love. This calling is a gift from God, in whose image we are created, and by whom we are called to love, to reason, to work, to play and to live in harmony with God and one another.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are here to bear witness to their love for each other and to publicly acknowledge their Covenant with each other for a life-long commitment and union. We are now called to share in their happiness and to witness this exchange of vows because we believe God sees into their hearts and both accepts and blesses their offering.

The union of two people in heart, body and mind is intended by God for their mutual healing and joy, for the help and comfort given to one another at all times, and for the manifestation of love in the lives of all whom they encounter. Therefore, this commitment is to be undertaken and affirmed seriously, reverently, deliberately and in accordance with God's intention for us.

### The Declaration of Intent

*Officiant:* \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, you have come here so that God may confirm and strengthen your love in the presence of this company. Therefore I ask you to declare the firm intention of your Covenant. Do you believe God has called you to live together in love?

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_: We do.

*Officiant:* Will you remain faithful to each other, never allowing any other relationship to come before the one you are now to affirm?

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_: We will.

*Officiant:* Will you nurture each other's ability to grow in maturity and wisdom within this relationship?

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_: We will.

*Officiant:* Will you do all in your power to make your life together a witness to the love of God in the world?

\_\_\_\_\_ *and* \_\_\_\_\_: We will.

*Officiant:* \_\_\_\_\_, will you take \_\_\_\_\_ to live together in a covenant of love as long as you both shall live?

\_\_\_\_\_: I will.

*Officiant:* \_\_\_\_\_, will you take \_\_\_\_\_ to live together in a covenant of love as long as you both shall live?

\_\_\_\_\_: I will.

*Bridesmaids come to the altar and stand next to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Officiant:* We are here today to express the love, hope and joy we feel for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as they make sacramental, and give public recognition to, their commitment and love for each other. Let me therefore ask those of you who have gathered here today this: Do you who know and care for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ give them your blessings now as they enter into a new stage of their relationship, and do you promise to give them your deepest love, understanding, and support during both good times and bad?

*All:* We will.

*Bridesmaids sit. Readers walk to podium for readings.  
(Book of Corinthians 13:4-8a & Wedding Prayer)*

## **The Readings**

*Reader 1:* A reading from the Book of Corinthians.

Love is patient and kind;  
love is not jealous or boastful;  
it is not arrogant or rude.

Love does not insist on its own way;  
it is not irritable or resentful;  
it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends.

*Reader 2:* A wedding prayer by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Lord, behold our family here assembled.  
We thank you for this place in which we dwell,  
for the love that unites us,  
for the peace accorded us this day,  
for the hope with which we expect the morrow,  
for the health, the work, the food,  
and the bright skies that make our lives delightful;  
for our friends in all parts of the earth.

*All:* Amen.

### **Exchanging of the Vows**

*Officiant to* \_\_\_\_\_ *and* \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, will you please join hands.

*Officiant to* \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_ please repeat after me: I, \_\_\_\_\_ take you \_\_\_\_\_ from this day forward as my partner and best friend. I give to you my unending love and devotion. I promise to be true to you, to cherish you, and to share my thoughts, hopes and dreams with you. I look forward to spending the rest of my life with you, my best friend.

*Officiant to* \_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_ please repeat after me: I, \_\_\_\_\_ take you \_\_\_\_\_ from this day forward as my partner and best friend. I give to you my unending love and devotion. I promise to be true to you, to cherish you, and to share my thoughts, hopes and dreams with you. I look forward to spending the rest of my life with you, my best friend.

\_\_\_\_\_ *and* \_\_\_\_\_ *release each others hands.*

### **Blessing of the Rings**

*Ring bearer brings the rings to Officiant.*

*Ring bearer unties the rings from the pillow while Officiant blesses the rings.*

*Officiant:* Love is a state in which two people come together and create a union that is greater than the mere sum of two individuals. It is difficult to express in words the profound relationship that these two people share.

*Rings are handed to Officiant.*

*Officiant:* From the beginning of time, the circle of metal has been an emblem of the sincerity and permanence of a couple's love and regard for one another and their union. God, bless these rings as signs of \_\_\_\_\_ 's and \_\_\_\_\_ 's vows, by which they have bound themselves to each other in love.

All: Amen.

### Exchanging of the Rings

\_\_\_\_\_ places the ring on the ring-finger of \_\_\_\_\_'s hand and says:

\_\_\_\_\_, I give you this ring in token and in pledge of my constant faith and abiding love.

\_\_\_\_\_ places the ring on the ring-finger of \_\_\_\_\_'s hand and says:

\_\_\_\_\_, I give you this ring in token and in pledge of my constant faith and abiding love.

### Lighting of the Unity Candle

*Officiant:* \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ would like to thank their parents for all the love and support that they have given them throughout their lives. At this time, I would like to invite their mothers to come forward and light the individual candles to show their continued love and support of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_'s separate lives becoming one.

*Mothers come to the altar and light the two side candles from the already lit candle then retake their seats.*

*Officiant:* \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, the two lighted candles symbolize your separate lives and your separate families. I ask that you each take one candle and that together you light the center candle. The individual candles represent your individual lives before today. Lighting the center candle represents that your two lives are now joined in one light.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ go onto the altar and light the unity candle.

*Musical Solo*

### "I Could Not Ask For More"

Looking in your eyes  
Seeing all I need  
Everything you are is everything in me  
These are the moments  
I know heaven must exist  
And these are the moments  
I know all I need is this

I've found all I've waited for, yeah  
And I could not ask for more

These are the moments I thank God that I'm alive  
And these are the moments I'll remember all my life  
I've found all I've waited for  
And I could not ask for more

### **Final Blessing**

*Officiant:* Now that \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have given themselves to each other in this affirmation of love and commitment, with the exchanging of rings, and declaration of vows, I hereby declare that they are now legally united. You may now kiss your bride.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ *kiss.*

*Officiant:* Go into the world and fulfill your lives. Hold fast to your ideals. Give one another new experiences of joy. Challenge one another so that you may grow, remembering always to be each others best friend.

Lord, we ask your blessing on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Strengthen them with the experience of your love and guidance. Help them to fulfill the vows they have now taken.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

*All:* Amen.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ *exit down aisle to their left (when facing the pews).*