

Below is an actual ceremony template from my collection of original templates. This is a non-religious ceremony. When working with me, you will have access to multiple non-religious ceremony templates as well as templates for Christian, non-denominational, Spanish and bilingual ceremonies.

My materials also include Build-It-Yourself ceremony templates that will allow you to select the readings and components of your ceremony.

Please complete my quote request form at www.myceremonyquote.com to receive a full description of my services and other templates that are relevant to your needs!

Non-Religious Ceremony Template 2

As with any of my template ceremonies, additional texts, unity traditions, cultural customs, etc. can be added if requested. Readings may also be done by friends or family members and personal vows may be added too. Please ask if you have any questions on how this existing ceremony may be altered!

Processional

No processional is scripted here. The couple may however utilize the below guidelines or schedule a rehearsal to create a processional of their own.

While the pattern of a processional is presented here in traditional terms, the couple can alter as much as desired the sequence and/or design of the processional to fit their needs, preferences and personalities. A custom processional can also be designed if the traditional format does not fit your needs.

- 1) Officiant and groom enter first, either through a side door or down the aisle, and wait at the altar. They can either enter together, or with the Officiant first, followed by the groom. One variation has the Officiant enter from the side and the groom walk down the aisle first in the procession. In this, groom may either enter alone, escort his mother to her seat, or escort both mothers to their seats, before taking his place.
- 2) The groomsmen and bridesmaids usually walk down the aisle in pairs, bridesmaid on the left either starting with the two who will stand farthest from the bride and groom, and ending with the Maid of Honor/Best Man, or starting with Best Man and Maid of Honor, working outwards. A modern alternative would be for the Officiant, groom, Best Man, and groomsmen to enter from a side door in a line, with the bridesmaids and Maid of Honor proceeding down the aisle unescorted.
 - a. Notes:
 - i. The bridesmaids walk on the left, the groomsmen or escorts on the right.

- 3) Ring bearer is next (if one will be present)
- 4) Flower girl is next (so that no one walks on the flower petals before the bride)
- 5) If the bride will be given away / escorted, the bride and her father, or other close family member come next
 - a. Notes:
 - i. The bride walks on the left side.
 - b. Options:
 - i. In simple form, escort leads the bride to the front of the aisle and then takes his seat.
 - ii. A popular traditional option is to have the bride's escort stand for a moment as the Officiant asks, "Who gives this woman to this man in marriage?" to which he responds, "I do," or "Her mother and I do," or other appropriate answer. Then, the bride steps forward as the escort takes his seat. The groom also takes a step forward, to meet her in the middle.
 - iii. The "Hand Off"- This is an option where the escort, after answering the question, actually "hands" the bride to the groom. In the simplest form, the escort, with his right hand, takes the bride's *right* hand from his left arm and places it in the groom's *left* hand. A more elaborate hand off has the escort shake the hand of the groom first, kiss the bride on the cheek second, then hand off the bride to the groom.
- 6) Hand off of bouquet: Following the hand off, the bride usually passes her bouquet to the Maid of Honor
- 7) The bride faces the groom and places her left hand in his right *OR* the bride and groom face the Officiant, turning later in the ceremony to face each other.
- 8) Ceremony begins

Introductory Poem

Officiant: "Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself. But if you love and must needs have desires, let these be your desires:

To melt and be like a running brook that sings its melody to the night.

To know the pain of too much tenderness.

To be wounded by your own understanding of love; and to bleed willingly and joyfully.

To wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of loving;

To rest at the noon hour and meditate love's ecstasy;

To return home at eventide with gratitude;

Then to sleep with a prayer for the beloved in your heart and a song of praise upon your lips."

Opening

Officiant: "Friends and family, thank you for being here today on this special occasion. We have been brought together not to witness the beginning of what will be, but rather what already is!"

The purpose of this ceremony is not to create this marriage because that is something which this couple itself is accomplishing. Those of us here can and do, however, genuinely celebrate with _____ and _____ the wondrous and joyful occurrence that has already taken place in their lives, and we recognize the commitment that they make today."

Reading for the Couple

Officiant: " _____ and _____, true marriage is more than joining the bonds of marriage of two persons; it is the union of two hearts. It lives on the love you give each other and never grows old, but thrives on the joy of each new day. Marriage is love.

Remember to treat yourselves and each other with respect, and remind yourselves often of what brought you together.

Take responsibility for making the other feel safe, and give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your connection deserves.

When frustration, difficulty and fear assail your relationship, as they threaten all relationships at some time or another, remember to focus on what is right between you, not just the part that seems wrong.

In this way, you can survive the times when clouds drift across the face of the sun in your lives, remembering that, just because you may lose sight of it for a moment, does not mean the sun has gone away.

And, if by fulfilling these words each of you takes responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be a life marked by abundance and delight."

Exchange of Vows

Officiant: " _____ and _____, we will now recite your vows. Please repeat after me."

Officiant (with _____ repeating): "I, _____, take you _____ to be my (wife/husband) my constant friend my faithful partner and my love from this day forward."

Officiant (with _____ repeating): "I, _____, take you _____ to be my (wife/husband) my constant friend my faithful partner and my love from this day forward."

Exchange of Rings

Officiant: "Please bring the rings forward."

(The rings are brought by the ring bearer)

Officiant: "You have for each other rings made of precious elements – symbols that love is the most precious element in your life together. As a circle, the ring has no beginning and no ending, which symbolizes that the love between you will never cease."

You place these rings upon each others fingers as a visible sign of your vows this day, which will make you husband and wife."

Officiant: "Please exchange your rings with the words, 'With this ring, I thee wed.'"

Concluding Words

Officiant: "_____ and _____, the strength to continue our lifelong commitment to one another in marriage as well as the lifetime of happiness that accompanies such an ever deepening relationship are both available to us. As you go forward in your relationship with one another, take these timeless words of wisdom as assistants. By following them, may you find added joy and peace in your married life."

Seek from within yourselves the serenity to accept the things that you cannot change, the courage to change the things that you must, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Live each day, one day at a time, enjoying your time together, one moment at a time.

Seek the wisdom of experience, learning all that you can from each other.

Accept hardships as the building blocks of experience, realizing that accepting both the good and bad are simply a part of being alive.

Strive to make as many things right as is humanly possible in your life together that you may be reasonably happy in the life you share from this day forward.

Know that perfection is not the goal, and that a successful marriage does not only mean finding the right partner. It also means being the right partner."

Declaration of Marriage

Officiant: "And now, by the vows that you have taken here today, I hereby declare you husband and wife / officially married. You may now kiss your bride / You may now kiss."

Then the First Kiss and introduction of the newly joined couple to the attendees:

"Family and friends, I present to you for the first time _____."