

Thurrock Register Office

Example marriage ceremony

What is marriage?

To the whole wedding party:

Ladies and gentlemen, my name is _____ the Superintendent Registrar and with me is _____ the Registrar.

The place in which you are now met has been duly sanctioned, according to law, for the celebration of marriage.

On behalf of _____ and _____, I would like to welcome you all here today to share with them in this wedding ceremony. Through their vows they are making a commitment to each other, and through your presence here you are expressing your support for them.

However, if any person here present knows of any lawful impediment to this marriage then he or she should declare it now.

Marriage is a desire by two people to share themselves and their experiences with each other, and a willingness to accept each other for who they are.

Marriage means making a commitment to developing co-operation, friendship and mutual respect. It calls for honesty, patience, and of course humour! Marriage is where each partner cares for the other and supports them in all that they do.

It demands courage – the courage to be open, the courage to grow and change, and the courage to sort out together the tasks of everyday living.

Marriage requires closeness and distance – closeness for a couple growing together and enough distance to allow each partner to be individual. A good partner in such a marriage will be loving, caring, and above all a best friend.

It is in this spirit that _____ and _____ are now before us. In each other's company they have found happiness, fulfilment and love. They now wish to affirm their relationship with this marriage.

_____ and _____, we celebrate with you today. We are glad to join with you in the solemnisation of your marriage, to witness your vows and to support you in your intentions for your future life together.

Before you are joined in matrimony it is my duty to remind you of the solemn and binding character of the vows you are about to make. Marriage in this country means the union of two people, voluntarily entered into for life, to the exclusion of all others.

I am now going to ask each of you to declare that you know of no lawful reason why you may not be joined in matrimony to each other.

To party one:

Please repeat after me:

**I do solemnly declare
that I know not
of any lawful impediment
why I, _____,
may not be joined in matrimony
to _____.**

To party two:

Please repeat after me:

**I do solemnly declare
that I know not
of any lawful impediment
why I, _____,
may not be joined in matrimony
to _____.**

A family member or friend may now read poetry or prose.

Now the solemn moment has come for this couple to make their marriage contract with each other.

Ladies and gentlemen, will you all please stand.

To party one:

Please repeat after me:

**I call upon these persons here present
to witness that I, _____,
do take thee, _____,
to be my lawful wedded wife/husband
to love, respect, and cherish,
as long as we both shall live.**

To party two:

Please repeat after me:

**I call upon these persons here present
to witness that I, _____,
do take thee, _____,
to be my lawful wedded wife/husband
to love, respect, and cherish,
as long as we both shall live.**

To the couple:

_____ and _____, a Wedding ring is the ancient and traditional way of sealing the contract you have just made. It is an unbroken circle, which symbolises unending and everlasting love, and is the outward sign of the lifelong promise you have just made to each other.

To party one:

Please repeat after me:

**_____, I give you this ring,
as a symbol of my love and affection.
Wear it with happiness and pride,
now and always.**

To party two:

Please repeat after me:

**_____, I give you this ring,
as a symbol of my love and affection.
Wear it with happiness and pride,
now and always.**

To the couple:

_____ and _____, you have both now made the declarations required by law, and you have made solemn promises to one another in the presence of your family and friends gathered here today.

Let everyone now recognise that you are husband / wife and wife / husband. May you treasure this trust and responsibility, may no failure or misfortune ever part you and may you live full and rich lives together.

Congratulations, you may now kiss your bride / groom.

A family member or friend may now read poetry or prose.

Now ladies and gentlemen, please be seated while the register is completed. As you have witnessed a civil marriage is a brief, simple ceremony but you are legally and solemnly joined together in matrimony and I would like to be the first to congratulate you both.