

Processional:

Welcome:

Simone - We are gathered here today to witness the union of Bride and Groom. They stand under this chuppah, a symbol of the new home that they will build together. The ancient rabbis compared the chuppah to the tent of Abraham and Sarah, the patriarch and matriarch of the Jewish people. Abraham and Sarah were famed for their hospitality; their tent had entrances on all four sides so that travelers coming from any direction would have a door to enter. The sides of the canopy also remain open to symbolize the importance of the couple's involvement in their general community and with their family and friends.

This chuppah, the covering of which is a tallit Bride brought back from Israel, is also seen as representing the protective blanket of God, and the love and presence of special people who are no longer with us. We take a moment in silence to remember Bride's grandparents... and Groom's grandparents...

****After a moment of silence****

I would like to offer the following quote from Shakespeare's Sonnet 116.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken.

Unity candle ceremony:

Simone: Today the bride and groom come here from two different families, two different heritages. The traditions each brings to this marriage will continue to be an important element in their lives, but now will be shared between them.

A beautiful way to symbolize these two families becoming one, is to invite the parents of Bride and Groom to come forward and light the individual candles, which represent their two separate families. When their two individual flames are merged into one, it will symbolize the union of their two families in this marriage.

From now on Bride and Groom will grow together as a new family and will create a rich heritage all their own.

Simone: It is a Jewish custom to bless the wedding couple with the words of Numbers 6:24-26, also known as the Priestly Benediction. I will recite the Hebrew and Groom and Bride parents will recite the English. At the conclusion, all of us will say "Amen."

Priestly Benediction:

Simone: *Y'varehch'cha Adonai v'yishm'rehcha.*

Parents: May God bless you and keep you.

Simone: *Yaeir Adonai pana eilehcha vichunehka.*

Parents: May God look kindly upon you, and be gracious unto you.

Simone: *Yisa Adonai panav eilehcha v'yaseim l'cha shalom.*

Parents: May God bestow his favor unto you, and grant you peace.

Simone: *Cain y'he ratzon.* May this be God's will. And let us all say:

Everyone: Amen

Declaration of Intent/Ketubah Signing:

Simone: It is my pleasure to invite forward Bride brother... and Groom's sister... to serve as witnesses of the signing of the Ketubah.

The Ketubah is the traditional Jewish wedding contract. Bride and Groom's Ketubah is an example of a modern Ketubah which is also a personalized work of art which they will hang in their home as a reminder of the commitment they are making here today in front of their family and friends. They have chosen their own egalitarian language rather than the traditional language of the Ketubah which states that the man acquires the woman. The text of modern ketubot have been adapted to fit better the modern understanding of marriage as a partnership based in love and commitment, not legality. It is a custom to read the Ketubah aloud so that all present may also hear the commitment Bride and Groom are making to one another.

****Read Ketubah****

Simone: Having acknowledged the deep value of marriage, and recognizing marriage as the convergence of your individual and joint desires, do you both choose to marry, to speak the words that will bind you as husband and wife, allowing you to become most fully yourself in each other's presence for the rest of your days?

Bride and Groom: We do.

Simone: Then, here in front of your family and friends, please affix your signatures to the document before you, consecrating the sacred promises you have made to each other this day to live together as Husband and Wife.

****Have each person sign****

Simone: In Jewish tradition, there is no verbal exchange of vows because the ketubah serves as a written statement of the vows exchanged between the couple. When two witnesses sign the ketubah, the marriage is in effect. But, in Christian tradition, language involving promises of fidelity and loyalty are necessary for the wedding to be complete. The vows must be heard by at least two people for the marriage to take effect. Bride and Groom will now exchange the vows they have written with one another followed by an exchange of rings.

Vows:

Bride to Groom: Groom, I take you as you are, loving who you are now and who you are yet to become. I promise to listen to you and learn from you, to support you and accept your support. I will celebrate your triumphs and mourn your losses as though they were my own. I will love you and have faith in your love for me, through all our years and all that life may bring us.

Groom to Bride: Bride, I take you as you are, loving who you are now and who you are yet to become. I promise to listen to you and learn from you, to support you and accept your support. I will celebrate your triumphs and mourn your losses as though they were my own. I will love you and have faith in your love for me, through all our years and all that life may bring us.

Ring Ceremony:

Simone: May I have the rings please? [Best Man]

Simone prompts Bride: Groom, I give you this ring, as a symbol of our marriage, for today and tomorrow, and for all the days to come. Wear it as a sign of what we have promised on this day and know that my love is present, even when I am not.

Simone: Ze do'di, v'ze ray-i [song of songs 5:16]

Bride: This is my beloved and this is my friend.

Simone prompts Groom: Bride, I give you this ring, as a symbol of our marriage, for today and tomorrow, and for all the days to come. Wear it as a sign of what we have promised on this day and know that my love is present, even when I am not.

Simone: Ze do'di, v'ze ray-i

Groom: This is my beloved and this is my friend.

Simone speaks

Seven Blessings:

Simone: It is a tradition towards the end of the Jewish wedding ceremony to recite seven blessings over the couple after the couple shares vows and exchange rings. The words of the seven blessings are recited with themes that include the creation of the world and humankind, the importance of marriage, and the hope for harmony in the world. Bride and Groom have chosen to create their own seven blessings as a symbol of their joining together of two individuals, from two different faiths, coming together to form one family.

1. May your marriage enrich your lives and the lives of everyone around you.
2. May you work together to build a relationship of substance and quality.
3. May the honesty of your communication build a foundation of understanding, connection, and trust.
4. May you respect each other's individual personality and philosophy, and give each other room to grow and fulfill each other's dreams.
5. May your sense of humor and playful spirit continue to enliven your relationship.
6. May you understand that neither of you is perfect: you are both subject to human frailties: and may your love strengthen when you fall short of each other's expectations.
7. May you be "best friends", better together than either of you are apart.

Glass Breaking:

Simone: A glass is a beautiful object. It requires great skill and care to create, and it can be broken beyond all hope of repair in a few mindless seconds. A marriage is like the glass: it takes constant care and attention, and it can be broken in a second. So you

do this old ritual to remind yourselves to pay close attention, not only to one another but also to the marriage you're making tonight. [To the guests] As the groom breaks the glass, I invite everyone to shout, "Mazel Tov" which means "Congratulations and Good Luck!"

Groom breaks the glass. Bride and Groom kiss!!!

Recessional: