



Reverend Pamela L. Brehm, RHy, CtH

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Home

## Wedding Ceremony #6

Ceremonies

### Convocation

Packages

Testimonials  
and Photos

Contact Us

We are gathered here to celebrate the joining of Mary and John in marriage. This joyous event is an expression of commitments that men and women have made to each other throughout human history – commitments which have made possible the growth of relationships of deep love and personal fulfillment. This ceremony is but a symbol of that which is inner and real, a union of hearts which the state may make legal.

### Expression of Intent to Marry

Mary and John, Marriage is not only for happiness, but for the growth and enrichment of character. To this end there must be a dedication of each to the other and of both to a purposeful and compassionate life. Is it in this spirit that you have come to be joined together? **[It is.]**

John, will you have this woman to be your wife, to live together in marriage? Will you love her and give her your respect? Will you nurture and comfort her? Will you be present with her in sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow? Will you share with her your protecting strength, the depth of your passion, the solace of your embrace? Will you share with her your quiet, and your dreams, your moments of doubt and fears? Will you share friendship and devotion as well as courage to renew the fullness of your love? **[I will.]**

Mary, will you have this man to be your husband, to live together in marriage? Will you love him and give him your respect? Will you nurture and comfort him? Will you be present with him in sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow? Will you share with him your protecting strength, the depth of your passion, the solace of your embrace? Will you share with him your quiet, and your dreams, your moments of doubt and fears? Will you share friendship and devotion as well as courage to renew the fullness of your love? **[I will.]**

Let me speak then the words of a wonderful poet, Kahilil Gibran:

**Love one another, but make not a bond of love**

**Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.**

**Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.**

**Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.**

**Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone.**

**Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music,**

**Give your hearts, but not onto each other's keeping.**

**For only the hand of life can contain your hearts.**

**And stand together yet not too near together**

**For the pillars of the temple stand apart,**

**And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.**

**But let there be spaces in your togetherness,**

**And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.**

**Love one another, but make not a bond of love.**

### The Exchange of Vows

Please join hands, and Mary repeat after me:

I, Mary, take you, John, to be my husband  
and to share with me the many experiences of life.  
I will love you and respect you.  
I will honor you, cherish you,

and be a comfort to you.  
I will keep you in times of health, happiness, and prosperity,  
and in times of sickness and hardship,  
should they come our way.  
I acknowledge you to be my husband,  
my equal, my lover,  
and my closest friend.

John repeat after me:

I, John, take you, Mary, to be my wife  
and to share with me the many experiences of life.  
I will love you and respect you.  
I will honor you, cherish you,  
and be a comfort to you.  
I will keep you in times of health, happiness, and prosperity,  
and in times of sickness and hardship,  
should they come our way.  
I acknowledge you to be my wife,  
my equal, my lover,  
and my closest friend.

### **The Blessing and Exchange of Rings**

May I have the rings please. The circle symbolizes many precious hopes and joys. It is beyond beginnings, and without end. It is the outward sign of your marriage, it represents, too your inner completeness and wholeness. The rings you have chosen to wear are now joined, such that wherever you go, you will return again and again to each other.

Mary, please take John's rings and place it on his finger as you repeat after me:

**I give you this ring**

**as a symbol of my love for you**

**and the commitments we have made together.**

John, please take Mary's rings and place it on her finger as you repeat after me:

**I give you this ring**

**as a symbol of my love for you**

**and the commitments we have made together.**

### **The Pronouncement of Marriage**

For as much as John and Mary have chosen each other from many men and women on this earth, have declared their love and purpose before us, have made their vows to each other and have symbolized this by giving and receiving rings, now, therefore, by the authority vested in me by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I pronounce you husband and wife. Let us all honor them and the threshold of their home.

Congratulations, you may seal your marriage with a kiss.

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