

Handfasting Ceremony Script

It's All About The Ceremony!
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Good afternoon and welcome!

As this may be the first time that some of you are attending a handfasting our Bride and Groom thought you might be interested in the symbolism of what you will see today. Much of which are familiar in all but their context.

The circle in which you all stand is symbolic of the cycles of life, a sacred place created for divine interaction, in which any negativity from the mundane world can be left outside and all the love and joy we feel for Bride and Groom contained within. We celebrate the divinity within each of us and how we are all interconnected.

The circle in which you all stand is a sacred space for a sacred event to take place. Much of the symbolism of the huppa and the wedding hold true in the circle. It is often thought of as the sacred womb from which the two are born again as one and the symbol of eternity.

Although for many the sacred and the mundane meet and coexist as often as is humanly possible, marriage is very much a sacred union, for it is a union of souls in which the bride and groom pledge unto one another their highest selves and all that is divine within themselves.

You will also hear an elemental blessing. All the world's religions still parallel the agricultural calendar, because the natural world speaks its lessons softly and constantly. In the blessing we simply

ask to understand and be able to see the how the attributes of each element can help us on our journey

Almost all cultures and faiths have a sacred meal of communion with the divine. During a wedding it has the added meaning of feeding on and drinking in of the promises that a couple has made. Those of you who have been to a Greek Orthodox ceremony will undoubtedly recognize the symbolic binding of the hands at the end of the service that inspired the terms “Bonds of Holy Matrimony” and to “Tie the knot” This custom has also been known the world over, through many different periods in history. During the Middle Ages to be seen in public holding hands was a sign that a couple were exclusive to one another. And while rings were for the very rings, love knows no bounds and a simple cord would do just fine.

Those of you who are fans of the Renaissance period will be happy to see the jumping of broom at the closing of the ceremony which symbolically sweeps clean the past reminding our Bride and Groom that the power to create the future ahead and the quality of life that they both so richly deserve is their own. Groom, if you will now join me your beautiful Bride awaits!

Welcoming of the Guests

Bride and Groom would like to take a moment to thank you all for being here with them today. They know that making the journey took considerable effort for a good many of you and for this they are deeply grateful. All of you are the most important people in their lives. All of the time and conversations that you have had with Bride and Groom before they even met helped to make them who they needed to be to find first themselves and then each other. You have shared in their best and their worst days, and you are an irreplaceable part of their yesterdays, their today and all of their

tomorrows. So as you can see although many of you don't live right around the corner you are never far from their hearts.

I look out at you now and I see a rich and diverse weave of differing beliefs, lifestyles, ages and viewpoints. Yet you are all here celebrating your love for bride and Groom, wishing for them all that they would want for themselves, rather than what our own hopes many have been. It sounds more like an ideal but it isn't, and it is in part what makes their life together a thing of such great beauty. There are many reasons that we share in life's celebrations with those we love. Ritual itself is designed to cause a change in our lives. The promises that a couple makes must be practical promises that when lived by will actually help them to safeguard their future. Another important aspect of ritual is that in being here we somehow feel closer to the couple by being allowed a peek into their innermost thoughts and feelings at this intensely personal moment of their lives. It reminds the couples here of when it was their special day and the promises they once made, and allows us all to somehow feel closer to one another as the community of family and friends that we truly are.

There is a term that we hear often at events such as this with very little explanation. The term is "Perfect Love and Perfect Trust" or "Unconditional Love" In the case of a marriage, and in the case of all loving, caring, committed relationships the ideal that this speaks of is not about perfection, but of expecting and accepting imperfection and human frailty. It means that a couple must say to one another: 'I accept and I expect that on occasion you will anger me as I will anger you, and that you will hurt me as I will hurt you; But I know in my heart that between us there is love and affection and friendship that is stronger; And I trust that no pain is caused out ill will, or malice, or pettiness, just as I trust that we are together for a reason and that we will never throw each other away.

I trust that at our best we will live together in love and joy and harmony and at our worst we will fight, with and for and beside each other, for the greater good without fear of abandonment. For the divinely inspired desire to be together for a lifetime in indeed something well worthy of fighting for. And these dear friends are the promises that you have been invited to bear witness to this day.

Elemental Blessing

Since ancient times, people have communed with nature to learn more about themselves by example. Since it is within nature that we all do abide, we ask for Bride and Groom the blessings of Nature's Elements, Air, Fire, Water and Earth. We do this that they may fully come to understand the lessons each element has to offer. The attributes of which are examples of those aspects they mirror not only within divinity but within ourselves as well.

We ask the spirits of Air to keep open the lines of communication between this couple. May their future be as bright as the dawn on the horizon. As Air flows freely to and from and through us all, may their hearts and minds and souls come to know the world and each other in this manner. Seeing not only with their eyes, may they together grow wise with wisdom.

Spirits of Fire, we ask that Bride and Groom's passion for each other and for life itself remain ever strong and vital, fortifying each day with a vibrancy rooted in boldness, and courage. As Fire clears the way for new growth, may they know that this power is theirs: to create change and bring about the richness and quality that comes with a true love of life.

We ask the Spirits of Water, that their love for each other and the comfort of loved ones, like the serenity of the deep blue ocean, be

the oasis that forever surrounds our Bride and Groom. May they be well loved, and love well, letting the surety with which Water makes its journey to the sea, flowing over rocks or around trees, even turning into vapor and riding a cloud, ever serve as a reminder that with love all is well and will endure.

Spirits of Earth, we ask that you give unto those you see standing before you this day, the rock solid place to stand and fulfill his destiny. May their journey mirror the vast plains and fertile fields, expansive and alive. May they find the right seeds to sow to ensure a bountiful harvest. And when they look up at the Northern Star, may they know that it is as bright and constant as their love for each other as well as the love of the divine is for them.

Father, Mother, Divine Spirit whose presence is felt in all things and at all times we ask your continued blessings upon this couple, upon their union and upon their family and friends who have gathered here to celebrate this joyous event with them. May they become one in truth and forever revel in the magik that is love.

Drawing Down the God and Goddess

In the drawing down of the God and Goddess into Bride and Groom, it connects them with the divinity within themselves, reminding us that in marriage it is our higher selves and the best that we have to give, that we offer to one another. As a sacred spiritual union to become the embodiment of the God and Goddess serves as a reminder that as above, so below, honoring the God and Goddess within themselves and their mate.

Bride bows head

BRIDE

Lady Bride, I ask you to call upon
all that is divine within you,
Let it come forth and shine.
In you dwells the essence of the Great Mother
and the divine feminine principle of the Universe
You are She who has been worshiped and adored
for centuries and throughout the ages
You are wife, mother, lover, friend,
prophet, and confidant
In you is everything that any one
could ever aspire to be and more.
In you is strength and wisdom, perfection and peace.
Shine dear one and show your true nature as Goddess.

Groom bows head

Lord Groom, I ask you to call upon
all that is divine within you,
Let it come forth and shine.
In you lives the essence of the Gods
The active force that has sparked and powered all life
You are He who has been worshiped and adored
for centuries and throughout the ages
You are husband, healer, protector,
visionary, friend, and confidant
In you is everything that any one
could ever aspire to be and more.
In you is strength and wisdom, perfection and peace.
Shine mighty one and show to all the God within.

BRIDE

Queen most Secret, touch with your grace and fill this woman with your beauty and strength in the unending cycles of growth and change that are the years and seasons of lives spent together in love and wonder. Share with her your fertile nature from which all abundance flows.

GROOM

Lord of light and life, touch with your power and fill this man with your knowledge and wisdom to guide him in this divine alchemy which is the union of two souls. Share with him the secret union of heart and mind upon which this union known as marriage must be based.

Blessing of the Rings

Best Man and Maid of Honor will you now hold out the rings entrusted to you by Bride and Groom? Your hands beneath serve as a symbol of how Bride and Groom and their marriage are supported upon this earth by the love of their friends and family as blessed from above.”

Best Man and Maid of Honor hold out the wedding bands in the palm of their hands Celebrant continues:

Lord and Lady, guardians of all that is seen and unseen,
Bless these rings and this couple who shall wear them.
Keep them safe through adversity forever supported
by your eternal blessing.

Celebrant takes rings

“The ring finger of the left hand, the side of the body that holds the heart, has been used for the wedding band because for centuries people believed that there was a vein that ran directly from that finger to the heart. They also believed that the words that were spoken during the placing of the ring would resonate over and over, like the circumference of the band itself, through to the heart and soul of both giver and receiver of the most monumental promise of all, the promise of a lifetime as husband and wife.”

Sword, Chalice and Ring Exchange*

**Adapted from Ed Fitch's "Rights from the Crystal Well"*

“Lord Groom, if it is truly thy desire to become one with this woman: Then present unto her a symbol of thy pledge, and a token of thy love.”

Groom drops to one knee, and presents Sword with ring on it

Lady Bride, you are the most gracious and lovely one that Groom has ever seen, for he understands the essence of thy true self. The beauty which radiates around thee can only be rivaled by the beauty which radiates from within thee. The pledge of his sword is as the pledge of his soul. It is his prowess, his fire, his passion, his strength & courage, His ability to protect, defend and care for thee. With the strength of his blade and the endurance of its steel to represent what is in his heart, take from him now, as his beloved, the ring that rests upon it, and choose him to be your own.

Bride takes ring from Sword

BRIDE: “I accept the pledge of thy blade and the eternal promise of this wedding band.”

Bride takes sword from Groom and places the blade from left shoulder to right shoulder to the top of his head. The motion, as in bestowing knighthood upon him while saying:

BRIDE: “For the boy thou were, For the man thee art, And for the Husband thou shall be to me, I do choose you to be mine own.”

Bride returns sword

BRIDE: “If thou wilt now place this ring upon mine finger, I shall from this day forth, ‘till beyond the end of time, Take thee to be mine own.”

Bride opens hand presenting Groom with the ring which he then places upon her finger

GROOM: With this ring I thee wed. I take you as my friend, my lover, my wife from this day forth and into the fullness of time where we will meet and remember and love again.

Lady Bride, if it is truly your desire to become one with this man: Then present unto him a symbol of thy pledge and a token of thy love.

Bride bows before Groom and presents Chalice with ring inside

Lord Groom, in the eyes of this woman thou art the only man in the world. Yours is the voice of sound reason and unwavering support. You the spark to the bonfire of her passions and yours are the arms in which she would have lay down to rest. The pledge of her chalice is the pledge of all that is within her, Her felicity and devotion. The

place in her heart where two souls can be sheltered and nourished, that they may grow together, ever closer, and flourish as the leaves on the trees and the fruits of the vine. As the depth and bounty of her chalice foretell the richness of your future together, take from her now the band that lies there within, and do choose her as thy own.

Groom takes ring from chalice, Bride still holding chalice

Groom: I accept the pledge of your chalice and the eternal promise of this wedding band.

Groom pours wine into chalice then takes it from his Bride

Groom: For the girl thou were, For the woman thou art
And for the wife that thee shall be to me, I toast and drink to thee!
And do choose you to be mine own

Groom makes toasting gesture, drinks and returns chalice to Bride

Groom: "If thou will now place this ring upon my finger,
I shall from this day forth, 'till beyond the end of time, Take you to
be mine own.

*Groom opens hand presenting Bride with the ring
which she then places upon his finger*

Bride: With this ring I thee wed. I take you as my friend, my lover,
my husband from this day forth and into the fullness of time where
we will meet and remember and love again.

Cakes and Ale

“As the Lord and Lady are separate yet one. so have your pledges made you. Drink now of one another’s love and know that you will never again thirst in your heart or in mind, for what each of you lacks the other has to give and the wellspring of love flows eternally for those who drink often of it’s waters.

Bride and Groom sip from chalice

As food and drink nourish the body, so does love feed the soul of marriage. Feed now one another, feed forevermore the spirit of your union and be filled always.

Bride and Groom feed one another of the cake

Handfasting

Is it also your wish today that your hands be fasted in the ways of old?

Bride and Groom: It is.

Remember then as your hands are fasted, these are not the ties that bind.

Cords are held aloft

“The role already taken by the song your hearts share shall be now be strengthened by the vows you take. All things of the material world eventually return to the Earth unlike the bond and the connection your spirits share which is destined to ascend to the heavens.

May you be forever as one in the passion and fire of you

Bride and Groom's hands are bound

You are now as your hearts have always known you to be, Husband and Wife.

You may kiss the bride!

The Broom and Sword

Brooms are used for cleaning and sweeping. Therefore that they are used to symbolize the sweeping away the remnants of the past which no longer serve us is appropriate. The sword symbolizes the wielding of power and personal responsibility. As the Bride and Groom jump they are reminded that remaining vigilant over these aspects of the day to day shall help them to achieve the quality of life that they aspire to. Maid of Honor and Best Man will you now lay down the Sword and Broom.”

Maid of Honor lays down Broom

Best Man crosses it with the sword

Now putting the past behind you, and remembering always that the power to create the future ahead of you is your own, jump together into your common future!

The couple jumps, kisses again, and exits to greet their guests as the circle is quietly broken down.

I do not claim to be the original author of this script. I am sharing it like this to make it easier for anyone to use.