

Model alternative wedding

influenced by various European
traditional practices

This model is offered with the idea that other couples will use elements of it. You are welcome to borrow from this model as you wish. I would appreciate acknowledgement in any written version.

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Hannah and Jeremy were married in an outdoor ceremony, standing with the celebrant beside a table in the centre of the gathering of their family and friends. On the table were the rings (including one on a ribbon to go around the neck of their daughter), a flask of wine and two goblets, and the documents to be signed. Beside the table were a basket of flowers and a basket of smooth river stones.

Celebrant:

Today we celebrate the love shared by Jeremy and Hannah in the past, the love they share today, and the love they will share in the future.

This is the beginning of their eighth year together. They have lived most of those years as though married, and the last three, since being blessed with their daughter, Jenna, as a family.

Though every day they have been together has been cause for celebration, they have seldom publicly celebrated their love, except in the embodiment of their beautiful daughter, Jenna.

Today they wish to express their love and their commitment to loving each other in the future by sharing the experience of their wedding with you, their family and friends. Hannah and Jeremy will now place flowers on the table for those who cannot be here today.

Jeremy and Hannah placed flowers, one by one, on the table, declaring aloud the name of the person represented by each flower. They concluded with flowers for grandparents who had died.

Now Jeremy and Hannah are making a circle, symbolic of their relationship.

With the stones they made a small circle on the ground, large enough for them to stand together within.

They step together into the circle of their love.

Taking hands the couple step into the circle.

Jeremy, led by the celebrant:

You are around me,
My life,
My love,
My home
Encircling me.

Hannah, led by the celebrant:

You are around me,
My life,
My love,
My home,
Encircling me.

This was followed by four readings, from Jeremy's mother, from Hannah's father, and from two close friends. Then the celebrant said:

We gather this day to bind Jeremy and Hannah in a ritual of love.
Let all who stand here be witness and share in it.

Jeremy, following celebrant:

My most beloved,
You are part of me.
With you I share my innermost self, my mind and my heart.
I love you and am loved by you.
With you I am understood,
I am home.
These are my vows to you,
In this, a marriage of equals:
I vow to thee my service,
I vow to thee my friendship,

I vow to thee my love,
I vow to thee my soul.
I ask you to accept me as your loving and lawful partner in marriage.

Hannah:

I do.

Hannah, following celebrant:

I, Hannah Fields,
accept you, Jeremy Young,
as my loving and lawful partner in marriage.

My most beloved,
You are part of me.
With you I share my innermost self,
my mind and my heart.
I love you and am loved by you.
With you I am understood,
I am home.

These are my vows to you, Jeremy,
in this, a marriage of equals.

I vow to thee my service,
I vow to thee my friendship,
I vow to thee my love,
I vow to thee my soul.

I ask you to accept me as your loving and lawful partner in marriage.

Jeremy:

I do.

Jeremy, following celebrant:

I, Jeremy Young,
accept you, Hannah Fields,
as my loving and lawful partner in marriage.

Celebrant:

By entering into this partnership you are joining in an ancient and eternal way with this person who you most cherish. I ask you to toast one and other.

The celebrant filled the two goblets with wine, and passed one each to Jeremy and Hannah.

Drink to the love you've shared in the past.

They drank and then swapped goblets.

Drink to your love in the present, on this your wedding day.

They drank and swapped goblets again.

And drink to your love in the future and forever more.

They drank and handed back the goblets.

Then the celebrant held up the rings and said:

A circle is the symbol of your love
And of its endlessness.
You stand today in a circle
And these circles reflect that circle.
Let them be a constant reminder of your love and of your vows.

The celebrant passed the rings to their daughter, Jenna, one at a time to give to Jeremy and Hannah.

Hannah, following the celebrant:

I give you this ring.
Wear it with my love.

Jeremy, following the celebrant:

I give you this ring.
Wear it with my love.

Celebrant:

In acknowledgement of the significance of their daughter in their life together, their love for her and the circle of their family, Hannah and Jeremy also have a ring for Jenna.

The celebrant handed the ring on ribbon to the parents and they put it around Jenna's neck.

The celebrant then held up a length of white cord, and with it tied Jeremy's right hand to Hannah's left, saying:

In the ancient rite of handfasting,
with this cord we bind together Jeremy and Hannah.
Let their fates and futures be so bound.
May they hold fast to each other, as they are now held fast.

You are now wed.

The couple kissed.

May their union continue to know great joy.
Grant them harmony and beauty in their lives.

As Hannah and Jeremy step from the circle,
we ask of the sky, of the air we breathe,
we ask of the earth, of the ground on which we stand,
we ask of the water, of the rivers and the sea,
we ask of the fire, and of the sun that warms us,
that this couple be encircled and surrounded with love.
protect them today and everyday,
as they stand together in unity.

*The couple stepped from the circle, their friends and family congratulated them, and
a little later the documents were signed.*

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