**(Draft)**

**THE WEDDING**

***Shirley and Michael***

***at***

Rainbow Room

Half Past Six in the evening

September 26, 2015

REVISIONS IN PLUM- HS 8/26/15

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***Officiant: Kevin Van Dyke (ordained)***

**WELCOME**

**Kevin (Celebrant), Michael (Groom), Zach (Best Man) walk down the aisle and stand in the front to the right of the alter facing the Guests.**

**Celebrant:**Greetings, and welcome everyone. On this beautiful 26th Day of September, we gather in happiness and joy to honor the unity of Shirley Madhere and Michael Edward Weil . The wedding has now begun.  My name is Kevin Van Dyke. I am an Ordained Interfaith Celebrant, duly authorized to solemnize this marriage according to the laws of the State of New York.

Please silence all devices and be truly present in the moment. This way the photographer will capture how it looks and you can capture how it feels in your hearts.

Giving honor to God the Source of all life, we dedicate this space to this sacred purpose: Shirley and Michael’s marriage.

**REVISED SECTION 1:**

Hello everyone and welcome. I am Kevin Van Dyke and I am an ordained Interfaith Celebrant, duly authorized to solemnize this marriage according to the laws of the State of New York. Today, September 26th, 2015, is an extraordinary day. The force and strength of true and abiding love has brought us together as we take this time to witness and honor the union of Shirley Madhere and Michael Edward Weil. Albert Camus said, “In the midst of winter I found within me an invincible summer.” I think we can all agree that love has a way of doing that for people. We are in the throes of autumn’s first dance but the feeling of joy and happiness that pervades this space transcends time and seasons. No matter the circumstances, we have all met in a very special place. This is truly a moment to be cherished. (**If you want to make a joke you can say**) Of course, although given the trends and proclivities of today’s technologically oriented society you might be compelled to preserve this special event for posterity, we cordially invite you to silence your devices, place them someplace and refrain from touching them… if you can…(**you can add**) … Let’s face it, you may want to grab a handkerchief or tissues instead…and **be present**. Truly **WITNESS** the joining of two beautiful spirits and experience a rite of passage for the ages. After all, that’s the best gift and it’s why you’re here.

**THE PROCESSIONAL**

**Music Selection/Wedding Party Entrance: *Somewhere Over The Rainbow*, by Israel Kamakawiwo’Ole**

**Wedding Party (enters in reverse order):**

***Guerda escorted by Sydney (usher) or Gregory Thybulle (father of Chloe)***

**Joanne Madhere (MOH)**

**Benjamin Bardach (Ring Bearer)**

**Mirelle Gaia (flower girl #2)**

**Maya Thybulle (flower girl #1)**

**USHERS WILL ASSIST WITH SEATING – What are the ages?**

***Chloe Thybulle: 16***

***Sydney Thybulle and Grace Thybulle: 14, 13***

**ENTRANCE OF THE BRIDE**

 **Music Cue: Pause in Music \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Celebrant (to Guests):**

Please stand to greet the Bride.

##### Music Selection/Bride’s Entrance: \*”*Arrival of the Queen of Sheba” by Handel or* *Instrumental of “A Thousand Years” by Christina Perri (piano and cello/violin)*

**BRIDE enters with Lesly (father of the bride). He stands to her right. They stop at first row.**

###### Music Cue: Song fades out

**PRESENTATION OF THE BRIDE**

Every wedding is a chance to reflect upon and remember the joy of being alive. It is our connections with family, friends and life itself that create a truly *beautiful* life. Indeed, we gather together in this *breathtaking* setting on this fall evening in celebration of that which we all know *to be of truest importance*: *love, family, friends, well being, and community.*

You come from as close as practically next-door and as far as across the Atlantic. All of you are here today as *cherished* witnesses and play *a vital* role of being a support system for Shirley and Michael as they officially begin their lives together.

Indeed, Shirley and Michael feel blessed and loved to be embraced by you -- the dearest people on earth to them. They thank you for joining them in this time of celebration -- their wedding day!

REVISED SECTION 2:

The Renaissance scholar Petrarch reminds us, “ Love is the crowning grace of humanity, the holiest right of the soul, the golden link which binds us to duty and truth, the redeeming principle that chiefly reconciles the heart to life, and is prophetic of eternal good.” It is a privilege to witness a wedding and it truly is the golden link that binds all of us- bride and groom, family, friends, partners and patrons. It is an affirmation of connection to each other and to life. It is a chance to reflect upon and experience the joy of being alive. The honor of being present brings with it the gift of acknowledgement. Each one of you is here because you love and are loved and that emotion bridges streets and cities and oceans. Some of you got here from as close as next door while others had to cross the Atlantic, but each one of you is a cherished and essential light in this breathtaking setting. Your commitment to being here and sharing this moment with Shirley and Michael is a gift that will not be forgotten. They feel blessed to be surrounded by so much love and to be embraced by each one of you- the dearest people to them on earth. As witnesses to this rite you have cemented your places in the lives of our bride and groom and your presence reinforces what we all know to be true- there is nothing more important in the world than the humanity of connection and love, family, friends, well being, and community… the most important aspects of life…. and for that they thank you from the bottom of their hearts.

*With this awareness, Michael is delighted to acknowledge the love and appreciation that he has for his family and friends, and to thank them for their encouragement and support as he created his own path in life.*

*Likewise, Shirley is elated to share this day with her loving and supportive parents, Mr. and Mrs. Madhere, along with her family and friends; and she honors her sister for her loving presence and in her life and friendship. Indeed, the bonds between sisters embody some of the most precious ties of our world. So today as a special gesture they recognize and acknowledge their love for their parents and each other during this sacred celebration.*

**The Celebrant turns to Lesly (father of the bride)**:

Mindful of these values, I now ask, ‘Who presents this woman to be married to this man?’

 **Mr. Lesly Madhere**: I do.

**Father kisses BRIDE. GROOM hugs/shakes hands with father of the bride. Father is then seated. GROOM and BRIDE take their place at the front of the gathering, facing each other.**

With dearest family and good friends, we celebrate the love and commitment that have brought Shirley and Michael to stand before us. Though we often go about our days planning to the last detail how our lives will be -- everything from what we'll eat for dinner to the never ending to-do lists at work and at home, love remains the mysterious factor, the unseen force that binds two people together, that allows them to support each other through good times *and through times of growth and learning, that calls them to declare their intention to build a life and a family. Shirley and Michael have been strengthening their love, trust, and connection since they declared their mutual commitment to each other. Love is kin to Divine precision, as many of us know, and so today,* we recognize that we are here by Divine appointment to celebrate this marriage aligned with God’s perfect timing. **And so it is.**

**REVISED SECTION 3**:

It is a blessing to see so many cherished family members and dear friends tonight, all united in a singular purpose. It is as our own special community, gathered expressly for this purpose, that we celebrate the love and commitment that have brought Shirley and Michael to this point. Although each one of us may pay attention to plotting and planning…. in an attempt at controlling the minutiae of life’s daily details, the truth is that love remains the rarest and most elusive element in the human condition. It is a mysterious, often unseen, almost magnetic force field that draws two people together, sometimes regardless of circumstance. It allows them to discover, within themselves and each other, patience and passion, humor and wisdom, empathy and intention. It is the foundation that provides the support for them as individuals and as an unbreakable unit and provides energy and purpose as they form a life and build their own unique family and future. Shirley and Michael have been devoted to each other and to strengthening their love, trust, and connection since they declared their mutual commitment. Love is kin to Divine precision, as many of us know, and so today, we recognize that we are here by Divine appointment to celebrate this marriage aligned with God’s perfect timing. **And so it is.**

As Maya Angelou said, “Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, and penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope.”

We are not meant to make it through life alone. Love is our super power. Love, the unseen, yet most powerful force in the universe, allows us to find greater peace than one ever could alone. Love sometimes relies on intuition, the generosity of an open heart and a second look, sensing a lightheartedness and depth in someone you meet for just a moment that somehow-- through God’s grace--becomes the meeting of the love of your life.

The author Thich Nhat Hanh wrote: "The Buddha spoke about four elements that constitute true love:

1. the capacity to be kind and offer happiness, maitri in Sanskrit, or compassion;
2. the capacity to relieve suffering, karuna;
3. the capacity to bring joy every day, mudita; and finally,
4. the capacity of nondiscrimination, upeksha.

When there is true love, there is nondiscrimination. The pain of the other is our own pain; the happiness of the other is our own happiness...To make our love meaningful, we need to nourish our bodhicitta, our mind of boundless love and compassion...First, we learn to love one person with all our understanding and insight; then we expand that love to embrace another person, and another, until our love is truly boundless."

-- On these solid foundations, Shirley and Michael begin their marriage.

**Monitum (warning of the legal bond)**

The ancient rite of Marriage, as most understand it,
Is the voluntary, deliberate and full commitment
Of two individuals to one another
To become partners for a lifetime
It is made in the deepest sense
To the exclusion of all *others’ influence*,
And it is entered into with the firm intention
That it will continue without end.

**READINGS**

**Celebrant:** At this time *I ask that the honored guests* recite the thoughtful readings that have been chosen by the couple:

*Shelley Schorsch:*

A reading from Rumi:

“A true Lover doesn't follow any one religion,

be sure of that.

Since in the religion of Love,

there is no irreverence or faith.

When in Love,

body, mind, heart and soul don't even exist.

Become this,

fall in Love,

and you will not be separated again.

My head is bursting

with the joy of the unknown.

My heart is expanding a thousand fold.

Every cell,

taking wings,

flies about the world.

All seek separately

the many faces of my love.

Love came,

and became like blood in my body.

It rushed through my veins and

encircled my heart.

Everywhere I looked,

I saw one thing.

Love's name written

on my limbs,

on my left palm,

on my forehead,

on the back of my neck,

on my right big toe…

Oh, my friend,

all that you see of me

is just a shell,

and the rest belongs to love.

Do you know what you are?

You are a manuscript of a divine letter.

You are a mirror reflecting a noble face.

This universe is not outside of you.

Look inside yourself;

everything that you want,

you are already that

This is a gathering of Lovers.

In this gathering

there is no high, no low,

no smart, no ignorant,

no special assembly,

no grand discourse,

no proper schooling required.

There is no master,

no disciple.

This gathering is more like a drunken party,

full of tricksters, fools,

mad men and mad women.

This is a gathering of Lovers.”

*Nicholas Schorsch, Sr.*

On marriage by Khalil Gibran:

“You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.

You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.

Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.

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:

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.”

*Joanne Madhère*

A poem by Mary Oliver to remember those who love us from beyond:

“To live in this world

you must be able to do three things:

to love what is mortal;

to hold it

against your bones knowing

your own life depends on it;

and, when the time comes to let it go,

to let it go.”

We remember our loved ones in this moment, knowing that they celebrate *joyfully* with us.

*The couple will sit and face the guests. We’ll have the ushers place chairs there for them.*

*Yes, please*

**Celebrant:**To honor the Quaker tradition, we ask that everyone return to silent worship before the bride and groom state their vows. Congregants and guests may stand to say a few heartfelt words or voice support for the couple. [This process should be limited to only if a minute or so (if no one speaks) or 5 minutes (if there are a few speakers).]

**THE ASKING
Celebrant:***Now I ask as you stand to face each other, please hold hands and recite your promises to each other.*    **Celebrant to the Groom:** *Michael,* will you take *Shirley*, to be your wife, your lifelong partner?
*Will you constantly seek to stay aware of your relationship with her, communicate with her, be sensitive to her needs, and nurture her success and happiness through all the years ahead?*
**Michael**: I will.

**Celebrant to the Bride**:
  *Shirley,* will you take *Michael,* to be your husband, your lifelong partner?
*Will you constantly seek to stay aware of your relationship with him, communicate with him, remain sensitive to his needs, and nurture his success and happiness through all the years ahead?*

**Shirley**: I will.

**The Vows**

***Celebrant:*** *Michael, please state your vows to Shirley:*

*Michael: will write his own vows*

***Celebrant:*** *Shirley, please state your vows to Michael:*

*Shirley: will write her own vows*

**RING CEREMONY**

***Celebrant:***

*These rings are made of precious metals; purified by the heat of many fires. Something beautiful and precious is made from these raw elements. Similarly, love comes from raw beginnings, made by and from imperfect beings, it transcends those beginnings to form a higher manifestation of its essence. Love epitomizes the process of making something beautiful where there was once nothing or only something purely elemental.*

*Thus, these rings are a symbol of the wealth that resides inside each of you and the purity of your love for one another.*

*May these rings symbolize your inherent wholeness and unity with one another, giving you the strength to happily honor your commitments to each other.*

*May they remind you that marriage is not a destination but a journey, with no beginning and no end, but filled with moment-to-moment opportunities to love and be loved to the best of your ability.*

**Celebrant:** Michael, place Shirley’s ring on her finger and repeat after me...

[Zach holds up the *heart geode* with the rings. Michael takes out the first ring and anchors it on Shirley’s fingertip.]

**Celebrant:** Michael, repeat after me ...

Michael: Shirley, with this ring I thee wed.

[Zach holds up the box with the rings. Shirley takes out the second ring and anchors it on Michael’s finger tip.]

**Celebrant**: Shirley, repeat after me ...

Shirley: Michael, with this ring I thee wed.

**DECLARATION**

**Celebrant:**

If a wedding is supposed to be joyful, then we have achieved this and more. The spirit of joy here is one blessing of many. Shirley and Michael, another blessing is this circle of family and friends assembled around you, their lives *connected* with yours.

**REVISED SECTION 4:**

Plato may have said, “At the touch of love everyone becomes a poet,” but I will say this: If a wedding is intended to be joyful then I am certain we have achieved this and more. The air is redolent with the spirit of happiness, promise, and boundless blessings, not least of which is this circle of beloved family and cherished friends. Shirley and Michael, I invite you to take a moment and really acknowledge the love that is in this room and know beyond a shadow of a doubt, that your union is truly blessed.

Shirley and Michael, with reverence for the Creator, having joyfully declared your intention to spend your lives together, may your *great* dreams come true, and in those instances where life’s fancy overrules yours, may new dreams, *ambitions, and hope* arise. May all around you continue to grow, *evolve, and emanate beauty*. And many, many years from now, may you look at one another and be able to say, “With you, I have lived the life I always wanted to live. With you I have become the person I hoped I could be.”

*PERHAPS WE CAN HONOR THE JEWISH SIDE WITH THE BREAKING OF THE GLASS HERE—Michael still uncertain about this.*

**Celebrant:**

Therefore, having exchanged rings and pledged yourselves to each other,

At this moment we’d like to remember the fragility of human relationships; and a reminder that marriage changes the lives of individuals forever. I’d like to invite Michael to break the glass in order to honor this tradition:

**PRONOUNCEMENT**

I do now, by virtue of the authority vested in me by God and the State of New York, pronounce you ‘husband and wife. You may seal your marriage with a kiss!
~Here ends a beautiful ceremony! Here begins a marvelous married life together!

***RECESSIONAL MUSIC***

***Mix*** *Wedding March by Mendelssohn (first few bars so we get the hint) with*

*"Crazy in Love" by Beyoncé and Jay Z*

[www.firstnantionministry.org](http://www.firstnantionministry.org) = Website for Kevin to become ordained if needed.