**WEDDING CEREMONY (DRAFT)**

**For**

**STACY KUHN**

**(Wording in purple copied/pasted directly from Stacy’s draft)**

**HS - I’ve reworded and tweaked as I thought would suit you. Please review and confirm you like it. I didn’t want to go too long and I think this, as is, would be at least ten minutes given that you and Phil have your vows to speak. Thanks**

**OPENING/GATHERING WORDS**

Dear family and friends, we are gathered today to attest to the power of love and enduring connection as we witness the marriage of these two fine people. While the air is filled with expressions of love and good wishes... from all sides, let us take a moment and think of the significance of this ceremony as Stacy and Phil’s journey continues as true, loving, committed life partners.

It’s been said, ”Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone gives you courage.” Love, faith, and courage brought us to this point today, and we are gathered to honor all three.

**REMEMBRANCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS :**

Stacy and Phil cherish the memory of those that are with us in spirit. It’s been said that “The life of a soul on earth lasts beyond departure.” It is with that in mind that we honor loved ones no longer with us.

**Charge for the Couple, Names to be included: Readings and Songs: Selection:**
**Author:**
**Reader or Singer’s Name: (\*\*\* we don’t have any readings selected – not sure if we need to… but possibly)**

Stacy and Phil, as we stand here, we are reminded that the two of you have already built and nurtured a strong, loving foundation. I am reminded of the symbolism of a magnet and steel... drawn to each other... connected... transferring energy back and forth. Today marks the renewal of your mutual faith in one another. It acknowledges and seals the unbreakable bond you’ve already forged. Sartre said, “Commitment is an act, not a word.” You two have acted and naturally demonstrated your dedication to one another for many years. Loyalty and devotion course through your mutual veins and today we affirm that act.

(**HS- I kept the following wording the same. Let me know if you want it to be revised**)

Phil, do you understand
and accept this responsibility,
and do you promise
to do your very best each day
to create a loving, healthy, and happy marriage?

Groom: Yes, I do.

Stacy, do you understand
and accept this responsibility,
and do you promise
to do your very best each day
to create a loving, healthy, and happy marriage?

Bride: Yes, I do.

**THE DECLARATION OF SUPPORT:**

Stacy and Phil, today, as family and friends, we have come together to witness and celebrate the love and the bond you have found, nurtured, and share with each other, (**Do you want to add**) **and with us**. As we know, it has been said that, “We are part of all that we have met,” and by being here with you, we reflect your love and we declare our support for your marriage. As two people who share a passionate commitment to one another, we, who are in your lives, are your mirror. Love, honor, and respect are multi directional and as you walk beside one another, we will be there to encourage the journey.

(To guests) (**HS- I eliminated this part because I combined this sentiment in the above section. Please confirm you like this**).

**MARRIAGE ADDRESS**:

Marriage is beyond passion... it goes further than companionship... it’s deeper than partnership.... it’s more powerful than considerations. Marriage is respect...commitment... devotion... patience... and most of all, appreciation.... Marriage is not the grand gesture in the special occasion, but the connection formed in the smallest moments...the “**oh. Yeah... THAT**” of life.... the thought and consideration of the tiniest of actions, almost overlooked, that cause us to stop and remember why he or she is the **ONE**. It’s a true blessing to find that sense of belonging and peace with another human being. One of the mysteries of life is how we keep unfolding and evolving as people. We cannot predict and we must not levy the heavy burden of expectation on our **ONE**, but we must find it within us to maintain our own sense of self while giving as completely as we can to our mate. It’s a delicate balancing act, but with love, consideration, and infinite respect, it is possible.

Stacy and Phil, you already know this. Within each other, you find your **HOME** in the truest, deepest sense. You are each other’s **ONE** and your connection and love is profound. Continue to walk together... in the same direction... with humility and grace... vulnerability and humor... purpose and respect... kindness, sensitivity, and a deep, abiding friendship.

**CANDLE CEREMONY:**

Our souls are light. Our beings emanate light. Light banishes the darkness... it helps us find our way... but there can be no light without some darkness to define its edges, shape, domain. Stacy and Phil, as you two tie this bond, something wonderful happens... and while each of your lights can exist individually, together the are strengthened and are even more incandescent.

Your commitment to each other is also a commitment to your individual and combined light. Your mission is seemingly simple, but as with all flames, don’t leave them unattended!! Nurture your unique and mutual lights.. encourage the brightness to lead to discovery, knowledge, wisdom, and even greater love. Respect the darkness. It will be there... but that will serve to guide you to bring even more light.

Stacy, take this candle as a symbol of your spirit;
and Phil, take this candle as a symbol of your spirit.

Now joining your individual flames together,
light the center candle which symbolizes the spirit of your union and the new and greater flame of your marriage.
As you do so, silently vow to tend the spirit of this union,
and never forget that just as this union is made stronger
by your strength as individuals,
so are you as individuals
made stronger by the strength of this union.

**WEDDING VOWS:**

Groom:

Bride:

**RING EXCHANGE, PRELUDE BY THE OFFICIANT:**

 Ancient Roman culture is credited for the “back story” of the wedding ring. It was believed that there is a vein, known as the Vena Amoris, or “Vein of Love,” that goes from the ring finger of the left hand straight to the heart, and so a ring, a durable symbol of unbroken, infinite commitment, is placed on that finger as an expression of eternal love and connection. While medical insights have advanced over the years, tradition has endured.

Stacy and Phil, the rings you two will now exchange serve several functions. They are your reminder that no matter what, each of you will be right there.... for one another. They symbolize your durable, solid bond, they reflect your light, they signify and act as your key to the age old institution of marriage... and while the Vena Amoris may be the stuff of myths, let’s be clear that your love, trust and commitment, as acknowledged by this symbol, is more real than anything.

**RING EXCHANGE BY THE COUPLE**

This ring is a symbol of promise
to always love, cherish, honor, and respect.

Officiant:
\_\_\_\_\_, do you take \_\_\_\_\_
to be your lawfully wedded wife/husband, to love and to cherish
from this day forward?

Groom/Bride: I do.

(The Officiant hands them the rings to place on their partner’s finger.)

**FINAL BLESSINGS:**

Stacy and Phil, we wish you all the best for a happy, healthy life filled with love, friendship, and family. May the road on which you continue be broad enough to expand your knowledge and wisdom, may the twists and turns keep it interesting, and may you discover that the length... your time together, is infinite and transcendent. (**Do you want to keep God In the closing? If so**). Before God and all of us, your friends and family, it gives me great joy to pronounce you husband and wife. Congratulations!