

Outline for a Vow Renewal Ceremony

Welcome

- ☞ An introduction of myself as celebrant
- ☞ Housekeeping rules for the ceremony including guidelines for switching off mobile phones, photography and confetti
- ☞ A general outline of what the ceremony will involve, how long it will last and how it will start and finish

Bride or Couple's Entrance

How would you like to enter - together or separately? It is up to you!

Introduction

- ☞ A statement of intention – why we are all here
- ☞ Introducing you, the couple, and what your wishes are for your ceremony
- ☞ Welcoming family and friends and highlighting the importance of their presence

1st Reading

This is usually a general reading which sets the tone for the ceremony.

Your story as a couple

This provides some background to the ceremony and can include:

- ☞ How you first met and what you first thought of each other
- ☞ Your journey in married life - how you have progressed from when you first were married to where you are now
- ☞ Any significant milestones along the way – both good times and any difficulties that have been faced or overcome
- ☞ Common interests and hobbies that are an important part of your relationship
- ☞ Your hopes for the future

2nd Reading

Thoughts on Marriage

This includes the more serious aspect of marriage and the nature of love and relationships.

3rd Reading

This is an appropriate time to have a reading that highlights the different aspects of marriage and what it involves.

Promises/Vows

You can choose to re-affirm your commitment by repeating your original vows or you can choose or write new ones

You can make your commitments to each other in a variety of different ways: vows can be repeated a line at a time or you can agree to a commitment which I read out. Alternatively, you can read your vows from a hand-held card.

You can write your own vows based on what you think of each other and your shared aspirations for the future. You can keep your vows secret from each other, but it is important that you show them to me.

Re-exchange or blessing of your rings

It is particularly significant in re-affirming your commitment to each other that you re-exchange rings. Couples often choose to take their rings off at the beginning of the ceremony and to exchange them at this point. Alternatively, you could give each other new rings or other tokens which are meaningful to you both or have a blessing of your rings.

Often at this point in the ceremony an explanation is given of the significance of the wedding ring as a continuous unbroken circle.

Re-declaration of marriage – declaring you as husband and wife

4th Reading - Blessing

As the ceremony draws to a close a blessing or well wishing are particularly poignant.

Closing Remarks

Other ideas that can be incorporated into the Ceremony

- ☞ Lighting unity candles - two candles representing your families are lit at the beginning of the ceremony and then after you have made your commitments to each other you light one main candle together.
- ☞ Wish tree – guests are invited to write a wish for your future, which they hang on a tree during or after the ceremony.
- ☞ Handfasting – ribbons are wound round your hands whilst you are making your commitments to each other.
- ☞ Owl flies and lands on your arm with rings or handfasting ribbons
- ☞ Certificate or Special Picture – signed by you as part of the ceremony and then afterwards, by all your guests.
- ☞ Warming of the rings – your wedding rings are passed around your guests and they are invited to make a wish for your future
- ☞ Sand blending ceremony – different coloured sand is blended together, representing the joining together of your two families

Please note that there is no set format you have to follow, this is just to give you some ideas of what you can include in your ceremony!