

I. OPENING

Today we the family and friends of Jennifer Christine and Matthew David are here to unify the couple in the bond of sacred matrimony.

Today's ceremony is just one of many steps on the path of a manifested destiny. Your presence here is no coincidence. By choosing to spend your time with Jennifer and Matthew, you have proven that you are already part of the fabric of their lives. By participating in this ceremony, you are simply making public your love and support for them as a couple.

As with all structures, stability and longevity are dependent on a strong foundation. In the case of a building, the strongest foundation is built with bricks, mortar and steel. In friendships and marriage, the strongest foundations are built on love, compassion and trust.

II. COMMUNITY BLESSING

All of us are a part of this foundation. Let us take a moment to manifest or focus on the love, compassion and trust that dwells in all of us. Find a comfortable sitting position, close your eyes if you wish, and commit to helping Jennifer and Matthew. Release all thoughts except for your love and joy.

As with everything in life, this ritual works best when your lungs are deeply filled with breath. Let your breath fill you lungs to their deepest capacity a few times. Then, simply let your lungs dictate your breath rate.

Find your inner smile as you slowly open your eyes. Think about Jennifer and Matthew as you bid them loving wishes for their journey together. To fully realize your commitment to this ceremony, take the hands of the people next to you and repeat these words:

As one of your loved ones, I am here...
to honor your pledge to each other...
to hear and accept your public testament...
of love, devotion and commitment to each other...
as you embark on your grand adventure.

(Then J&M will say:)

We are honored and humbled by your presence and your care.
Your testimony today teaches us the value of love, compassion and trust.
We will seek to honor you by remaining forever steadfast in our devotion to you and each other.

III. MARRIAGE BLESSING (Recognition of Parents)

The bonding of a couple in the sacred bonds of marriage is a means of publicly declaring that from this point forward, the two of you will forever be emotionally and spiritually joined. As individuals, your paths have brought you here to this place...but those paths don't end here. Instead, they join together to create an additional path for your journey. These three paths will carry you to many wonderful, scary, enlightening, challenging and harmonious places.

It will be like nothing you've experienced before, but won't be completely foreign to you. Everything in your past has prepared you to navigate this new part of your journey. The reasons for past lessons will become clear and help you learn even more about yourself and your mate.

You've learned lessons from your time together.
You've learned lessons from your time apart.
You've learned lessons from past relationships.
But, maybe more than anything else, you're learned lessons from the examples set by your parents. Their marriages are a testament to the power of love, compassion and trust necessary for a lasting marriage. Their success serves as a shining example of how to navigate through the years as companions.

Their triumphs and hardships are engrained in you. Learn from their examples. These tools will serve you well.

(J will say:)

Thank you for the example you have set for us.

(M will say:)

Because of you, we understand that while there may be hardships, the triumphs (both profound and mundane) are where the true blessings of marriage are found.

(M) How to love. How to show patience.

(J) How to embrace. How to let go.

(M) How to encourage. How to be silent.

(J) How to show strength. How to show weakness.

(M) How to be individuals. How to be an active part of something stronger than the sum of its parts.

It is with gratitude and honor that they give you these katas, or blessing scarves, as a symbol of the strength of your bond and a reminder of your blessings.

*== During song by VL: J&M bond the parents, ==
== then get bonded by MKW ==*

IV. INDIVIDUAL VOWS

== Jennifer's Vows ==

Matthew David, I promise to be your devoted partner for the rest of our days.

I am here with you today to begin a new segment of my life.

I am excited to be walking next to you down this new path we are creating.

The power the two of us have together gifts us with new life, new lessons, new experiences, and many many grand adventures that nurture both of us into stronger individuals.

You are my best friend, my perfect lover, you are my teacher and challenger.

I am motivated by you and give you my hand and heart, I grow stronger with you by my side.

I pledge to be true to you, to cherish you, and to be your biggest supporter as long as I shall live.

== *Matthew's Vows* ==

My dearest Jennifer Christine... your love is a miracle.

It fills me with electricity and passion.

It triggers my deepest devotion.

It inspires and humbles me.

When I'm with you, I feel deeply rooted in my destiny. My pulse calms. My gaze fixes on to you and the rest of the room fades away. When you smile, I feel as though I could defeat armies and slay dragons.

When you whisper in my ear, every love song and poem ever written feels like it was meant for us.

I crave you. I desire you. And I will always seek to be worthy of you.

If you let me, I will be your strongest supporter, your truest friend, your spiritual partner, your eternal companion and your perfect love.

V. SHARED VOWS

Do you, Matthew David, take Jennifer Christine to be your wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, to love and to honor, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, for as long as you both shall live?

Do you, Jennifer Christine, take Matthew David to be your husband from this day forward, to love and to honor, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, for as long as you both shall live?

Who bears the rings? (*Melissa stands*)

A ring is a circle, the symbol of the sun, the moon and the earth...
of wholeness, perfection, and unity.
It has no end or beginning and signifies the continuation of true love.

(Matthew takes ring from Melissa)

Jennifer Christine, with this ring, I thee wed.

(Jennifer takes ring from Melissa)

Matthew David, with this ring, I thee wed.

VI. FINAL BLESSING

As a final blessing, I offer you this Cherokee prayer...

Honor all that nature created as you pledge your hearts and lives
together.

Honor the earth and ask for your marriage to be abundant and grow
stronger through the seasons;

Honor fire and ask that your union be warm and glowing with love
in your hearts;

Honor wind and ask to sail though life safe and calm;

Honor water to clean and soothe your relationship that it may
never thirst for love.

With these declarations and gestures of love, I now pronounce you
husband and wife.