

**WEDDING CEREMONY – HANNAH WADE & CHRIS SAUNDERS**  
*August 8, 2015      Shari Woodbury, Officiant*

**PRELUDE & PROCESSIONAL**

**WELCOME**

Welcome to this happy occasion today.

HANNAH and CHRIS have called us here today to witness the public declaration of their love, caring and commitment for each other.

For us, as for them, it is a time of joy,  
a time to rejoice that these two people  
have found each other to love,  
a time to rejoice that they have chosen to share  
with each other all that life may bring.

Let their happiness brighten our hearts  
as we now join in the celebration of their marriage.

**CALL TO CELEBRATION**

So allow me to offer the CALL TO CELEBRATION.

I believe the call today is a very simple one,  
It is to be here today...to take pause.....

To allow ourselves to be present in this sacred time  
In this sacred place of beauty.

Beauty is all around us here, a spirit of love is reflected in this beauty which surrounds us (describe specific surroundings)

The call then is to simply be here in the spirit and beauty  
which reflects the love which HANNAH and CHRIS have for one another.

And this is the gift which THEY give to all of us.

A time to be together.....to take pause.....  
to be present and graciously take part in the sacred creation  
which forever surrounds us.

**RECOGNITION OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

I now would like to recognize the family and friends of HANNAH and CHRIS

You have nourished this couple in the name of love.

Now allow this love to grow in new ways through this marriage. Please accept the heartfelt thankfulness from today's wedding couple in appreciation for all that you have done.

The couple wishes to express their gratitude for all who have gathered here from near and far to celebrate this special day – thank you.

Thank you, too, for the love and friendship that you have brought into their lives. Your support and presence has enriched Hannah and Chris, and helped make them who they are.

On this memorable occasion, we would also take a moment to remember Chris' father, Hawthorne Saunders, and all of those who cannot be with us today, but who surely rejoice in this couple's happiness and good fortune.

Let us observe a moment of silence as we call to mind those, who though not present physically, are yet with us in spirit.

## **READINGS**

At this time I would like to invite forward two readers, Crystal Martinez, a friend of Hannah's, and her cousin, Norah Sharp. They will offer readings selected by today's wedding couple, to reflect their views on life and marriage.

*[both come forward at once and read from pulpit, one after the other]*

The prayer of St. Francis of Assisi: (Crystal Martinez)

Roy Croft: (Norah Sharp)

## **MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

Hannah's grandmother Mary and Mary's sister Molly will share a Croatian blessing.

## **MINISTER'S HOMILY**

[omitted here]

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

WILL ALL OF HANNAH'S AND CHRIS'S GUESTS PLEASE RISE?  
Friends and relatives, you occupy an important place in this couple's lives.  
You have sustained them in the past with your thoughts and prayers,  
And now that their life is entering a new phase, your role will be different  
Yet not necessarily diminished.  
And so on this, their wedding day, we ask you to remain steadfast,  
Reaching out to them in times of trouble,  
Helping them to celebrate their achievements and joys.  
Wherever your own destinies may carry you,

We ask that you continue to include them in your lives.  
If you are so willing, please say, "we will."

*[you may be seated]*

## **INTRO TO VOWS**

CHRIS and HANNAH, your married life  
will give you the opportunity to grow together.  
My wish for you is that you be as open and honest as possible,  
for beyond that which you know of each other  
lies your deepest selves.  
Inexhaustible.....Mysterious.....Challenging.  
May your knowledge become wisdom  
and may your wisdom bless your love and concern for one another.

## **VOWS**

I now invite you to repeat after me as you offer Vows to one another....  
I Hannah, take you, Chris  
to be my life partner  
Loving what I know of you  
Trusting what I don't yet know.  
I pledge to share my life openly with you  
To speak the truth to you in love.

I promise to honor and tenderly care for you,  
To cherish and encourage you  
Through all the changes in our lives.

I will make with you a life  
And share its joys and sorrows.

I will make with you a home  
To see our dreams grow.

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I Chris, take you, Hannah  
to be my life partner  
Loving what I know of you  
Trusting what I don't yet know.  
I pledge to share my life openly with you  
To speak the truth to you in love.

I promise to honor and tenderly care for you,  
To cherish and encourage you  
Through all the changes in our lives.

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And share its joys and sorrows.  
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To see our dreams grow.

## **FROM THE HEART**

And now the couple would like to share some reflections on their  
relationship. [*hand each their letter*]

Hannah, what does your heart want to say to Chris?

...And now Chris, what words do you offer from your heart to Hannah?

[*he ends by doing the Dominican money-box ritual in Spanish*]

## **EXCHANGE OF RINGS**

With what symbol do you seal your vows? (Rings)

*The circle of the ring speaks love freely given – it has not beginning, it has not end. Let the giving of the ring be a symbol of your pledge.*

*Hannah, repeat after me:*

Take this ring as a token of my love for you,  
And know that wherever I go I will return to you,  
Whatever I have I will share with you,  
For our lives are joined in love and trust.

*Chris, repeat after me... [same words]*

## **SHARING OF THE CUP**

The cup is a symbol of home and table and the fruits of the generous earth, in which these two people will partake together. This cup contains fresh, pure water—the elixir of life, source of all potential. Water is the simplest of compounds, yet absolutely essential for the maintenance of life. And so, like life giving water, our relationships bear the sweetest fruit when a few simple principles are followed. The Tao Te Ching, words of wisdom from ancient China, states it this way:

In dwelling, live close to the earth  
In thinking, keep to the basics.  
In conflict, be fair and generous.  
In decision making, try not to control.  
In work, do what you enjoy.  
In family life, be present for one another.

*DRINK NOW AND MAY THE CUP OF YOUR LIVES BE FULL TO THE RUNNING OVER.*

## **SAND CEREMONY**

Chris and Hannah, you have just sealed your relationship by the giving and receiving of rings, and this is a pledge between two people who agree that they will commit themselves to one another throughout their lives.

Each of you in attendance this weekend were asked to be here because you hold a special place in Chris's and Hannah's life. You came to honor and witness their love and commitment. Chris and Hannah wanted to make each of you a tangible part of this ceremony. Thus, earlier loved ones were invited to place a rock into this glass jar. These rocks form the foundation layer of the couple's sand art, just as you have contributed and supported the foundation of their relationship. The piece begins with this foundation layer to symbolize that the marriage has a solid foundation.

Chris and Hannah, today you join your separate lives together. The two separate bottles of sand symbolize your separate lives, separate families and separate sets of friends. They represent all that you are and all that you will ever be as an individual. They also represent your lives before today.

I invite you to pour these two containers of sand into your shared vessel... As you combine them, the individual containers of sand will no longer exist, but will be joined together as one. Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be.

## **BLESSING OF THE COUPLE**

I would like to offer you now a blessing.

HANNAH and CHRIS

May the home you make together be the kind  
That helps to make this world more home-like.  
May it be a place of virtue and honor  
Of hospitality and peace  
Where all who arrive in peace are welcome  
Where both adults and children are nourished.  
Above all, may you always find such fulfillment there,  
That you never cease to reach out in love and concern for others  
So that those who have cause to follow your lives  
Will rejoice not only in your success and happiness  
But in your brave and generous living.  
As your marriage brings a new meaning to love,  
So your love brings a new meaning to life.

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

It is now my great pleasure to pronounce, by the authority invested in me  
And in accordance with the laws of the state of Indiana  
That you are married.

**\*\*\*\*\*KISS!!!\*\*\*\*\***

## **PRESENTATION**

I now present the happily married couple.

## **RECESSIONAL**

[sign marriage license after exiting]