

Zack Phillips and Noelle Lynn Wedding  
Oct. 24, 2015 in scenic Brown County  
Shari Woodbury, Officiant

### **PRELUDE & PROCESSIONAL**

- Parents and grandparents seated by end of prelude
- Officiant and groom process down center aisle
- Bride, escorted by parents, process down the middle aisle

### **WELCOME**

**Officiant:** Welcome to this happy occasion today.

Zack and Noelle have called us here today to witness the public declaration of their love, respect, and commitment for each other.

Marriage is perhaps the greatest and most challenging adventure of human relationships. No ceremony can create a relationship does not already exist and has not already been strengthened in all of the commitments you have made to each other, both large and small. This ceremony is a symbol of how far you have come together. This ceremony will affirm the choice you make to stand together as equal partners, to continue to live your lives together and to love each other wholly.

### **CALL TO CELEBRATION**

**Officiant:** 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 Noelle and Zack 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**

#### **Officiant:**

I now would like to recognize the family and friends of Zack and Noelle. Family and friends, 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 Noelle and Zack in appreciation for all that you have done.

On this memorable occasion, we would also take a moment to remember 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.

[silence]

### **READINGS**

**Officiant:** At this time I would like to invite forward Zack's cousin, Josh Hays, who will offer a reading selected by the couple, to reflect their views on life and marriage.

Reading : **2. from "Gift From the Sea" by Anne Morrow Lindbergh**

*[musical interlude]*

### **GROUP DECLARATION OF SUPPORT**

**Officiant:** Two people in love do not live in isolation. Their love is a source of strength with which they may nourish not only each other but also the world around them. And in turn, we, their community of friends and family, have a responsibility to this couple. By our steadfast care, respect, and love, we can support their marriage and the new family they are creating today.

Will everyone please rise.

*[Guests stand]*

**Officiant:** Will you who are present here today, surround Noelle and Zack in love, offering them the joys of your friendship, and supporting them in their marriage?

**All:** We will

**Officiant** You may be seated. *[Guests sit]*

### **EXPLANATION OF HANDFASTING TRADITION**

**Officiant:** Today, Noelle and Zack have chosen a traditional handfasting ceremony. In Europe, until the mid 1700s, few unions were sanctified in a church or synagogue. Rather, they were celebrated by a simple handfasting ceremony in which the two partners joined hands over the village anvil, in the fields or in the groves of trees. Today, we build upon this tradition.

As Simone Signoret said, closer to our own time:

“Chains do not hold a marriage together.  
It is threads, hundreds of tiny threads  
which sew people together through the years.  
That is what makes a marriage last.”

Zack and Noelle since you have met you have had many adventures and your friendship has blossomed. As you have planned and prepared for this marriage, you have become aware of your values and expectations.

You have clarified your intentions which will give meaning to both this ceremony and to the marriage itself. Your intentions are that you wish the very best for each other; that you will be kind and considerate to each other; that you will respect each other as equals; that you will grow old together, sharing and caring for each other through whatever may come.

You know, however, that there will be times when you falter. With open hearts,

you are declaring your intentions here today with your family and friends as witnesses and symbolizing your commitment to each other and these ideals by this ritual of handfasting.

This ceremony, in ways unseen, will greatly strengthen your union. Recall your words and intentions often and let them guide you and support you throughout your years together.

### **HANDFASTING CEREMONY**

**Officiant:** Zack and Noelle, please join hands in the infinity circle.

*[The bride and groom's hands are joined together, usually holding hands so the wrists and pulses are touching.]*

**Officiant:** Zack and Noelle, I bid you look into each other's eyes.

**Officiant:** Will you honor and respect one another, and seek to never break that honor?

**Zack and Noelle:** We will      *[the first cord is draped over the couples' hands]*

**Officiant:** And so the first binding is made.

**Officiant:** Will you share each other's pain and seek to ease it?

**Zack and Noelle:** We will      *[second cord is draped over the hands]*

**Officiant:** And so the binding is made.

**Officiant:** Will you share the burdens of each other so that your spirits may grow in this union?

**Zack and Noelle:** We will      *[third cord is draped over the couples' hands]*

**Officiant:** And so the binding is made.

**Officiant:** Will you share each other's laughter, and look for the brightness in life and the positive in each other?

**Zack and Noelle:** We will. *[forth cord is draped over the couples' hands]*

**Officiant:** And so the binding is made.

*[Tie cords together – like a bow in front, loose]*

**Officiant:** Noelle and Zack, as your hands are bound together now, so your lives and spirits are joined in a union of love and trust. Above you are the stars and below you is the earth. Like the stars you love should be a constant source of light, and like the earth, a firm foundation from which to grow.

The knots of this binding are not formed by this cord, but by your vows. You hold in your hands and hearts the making or breaking of this union. May your marriage be blessed with patience and dedication, forgiveness and respect, love and understanding.

*[Slip hands out from cords, leaving tied, and Zack will place in basket]*

## **RING EXCHANGE**

**Officiant:** With what symbol do you seal these vows?

**Zack and Noelle:** Rings.

**Officiant:** All things turn in circles. The Earth spins in a circle around the sun, and the sun turns around the galaxy. Time turns in circles of birth and death and rebirth yet again. And, like all things, marriages move in cycles as well. The circle of the ring speaks of love freely given — it has no beginning, it has no end. By taking on the symbol of the circle, you make a promise to remember always that all things come around; to keep faith in spring while enduring winter. Let the giving of the ring be a symbol of your pledge.

**Officiant:**

I invite each of you, before placing the ring on your partner's finger, to offer words from the heart.

Noelle, what does your heart want to say to Zack?

*[hand Noelle her written reflections... she speaks them, then puts ring on finger]*

And Zack, what would you share with Noelle?

*[hand Zack his written reflections, he speaks them, then puts ring on finger]*

**Officiant:** Every day, you will look down at your hands as they do their jobs, and you will see a brief flash of light as the ring placed on your finger today shines. It will remind you, again and again, of your promise to your partner. Every time you take hands, you will feel the ring on your partner's hand, and you will both be reminded of your vows again in turn.

## **SHARING OF THE CUP**

Wine is a symbol of transformation.

The ordinary fruits of the vineyard become extraordinary  
as they are combined and ferment together naturally.

So it is fitting that the cup you will now share  
in your married life be filled with wine.

You, too, will be more together,  
and will change with one another.

Will the mothers of Noelle and Zack please come forward,  
and pour from the bottle of wine you have selected, into a common cup.

As parents of these two fine people, you were the first to  
teach them what love is, and what family is.

As you pour these two wines together, mixing in one glass,

so the streams of these two families come together to form a new family.  
The heritage of each family will be carried on  
in the new family that Zack and Noelle create today.  
And just as the red and white mix together to make a unique rosé,  
so too will this new blend of Noelle and Zack's be their own  
as they make a life together.

At the same time, these families from which Zack and Noelle came  
grow larger, as Noelle becomes part of Zack's family,  
and Zack likewise becomes part of Noelle's family.  
So your pouring and combining of these beautiful wines, mothers,  
represents also the warm embrace you now offer  
your new daughter- or son-in-law as a member of your family.

*[The mothers take turns pouring their wine into the common cup, leaving  
some in the carafe to represent their individual families]*

Thank you. *[mothers are seated]*

Zack and Noelle, I invite you now  
to drink to one another  
and to a long and happy union. . .

*[The couple drink, one after another.]*

Whatever life may bring you,  
may the cup of your love be ever full.

## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

**Officiant:** No one but you can declare yourselves married. You have begun it here today in speaking your vows before your family and friends, and you will do it again in the days and years to come, standing by each other, sharing all the sweet and the bitter of life.

In the honesty and sincerity of what you have said and done here today,  
And in accordance with the laws of the state of Indiana,  
It is my honor and delight to declare you to be husband and wife  
You may seal your vows with a kiss.

### **BENEDICTION**

Allow me to offer a blessing.  
Noelle and Zack, my hope for you is this:  
that you have many long years to delight in each other's company,  
to feel gratitude for your great good fortune in having found and loved each  
other,  
to make a home together that is at once sheltering and welcoming,  
to each do meaningful, productive work at home and in the world,  
and to love and be loved by the friends and family who have come here today to  
support you.

Now, may the love that has brought you together continue to grow and enrich  
your lives, and may every word you have pledged here be a living truth in your  
lives.

I proudly introduce to you, for the first time, Mr. and Mrs. Lynn-Philipps.

[*turn mike off*]

### **RECESSIONAL**

[Wedding party exits, sign marriage license]