

Civil Partnership Ceremony Booklet

INDEX

1. Order of Ceremony Example

(2 – 21 Selection of readings & poems to be read by family, friends or officiating Registrar)

2. A Dance
3. If We Wanted To
4. Love
5. Oh, The Comfort
6. From The I Ching
7. Love's Testing
8. Give Lavishly! Live Abundantly!
9. May The Sun Bring You New Energy By Day
10. Dove Poem
11. Extract From Les Miserables
12. Love Is.....
13. True Love
14. Captain Corelli's Mandolin
15. The More You Give, The More You Get
16. Love is Giving
17. The Magic of Love
18. We Are Not Mean't.....
19. To Love
20. The Bridge Across Forever
21. Where There Is Love

(22 – 27 Selection of personal readings to be read by each partner)

22. Always
23. These I Can Promise
24. I'll Love You Forever
25. If I Can Make You Cry
26. Today
27. I Promise
28. Love
29. Ceremony Of Hands
30. Promises
31. Exchange Of Rings/Gifts

(1)
Order of Ceremony Example

Civil Partnership Ceremony
(Names)

Order of Ceremony
* * *

Welcome and Introduction by Authorised Registrar

* * *

Reading *(Optional)*

* * *

The Legal Requirements of Civil Partnership

* * *

Reading and/or Ceremony of Hands *(Optional)*

* * *

Promises of Commitment

* * *

Exchange of Rings/Gifts

* * *

Reading *(Optional)*

* * *

Conclusion of Ceremony

* * *

Signing of Civil Partnership Schedule

* * *

Closing Words

*Format of ceremony can be adapted to suit
your own special requirements*

**Selection of
Civil Partnership Readings
Which could be included in your
ceremony**

*(Read by family, friends or the
Officiating Registrar)*

(2)
A DANCE

A good relationship is something like a dance –
built on the same rules.

Partners in a dance do not need to hold on
tightly, because they move in the same
patterns, confident in each other.

To touch heavily would be to arrest the pattern
and freeze the movement – to check if not to
stop the beauty of it's unfolding.

There is no place here for the possessive
clutch, the clinging arm, the heavy hand.

Only the barest touch in passing is sufficient to
carry the deepest wealth of meaning.

Now arm-in-arm, now face to face, now back-
to back- it doesn't matter which. As dancers,
they know they are partners responding to the
same rhythm, creating a pattern together and
being invisibly nourished by it.

The joy of such a dance is not only the joy of
creation; it is also the joy of living in, and for,
the moment.

The joy of knowing that lightness of touch and
life itself are inter-twined.

(Colin Wicker)

(3)
IF WE WANTED TO

If we wanted to
Our love is strengthened by knowing that each
of us could survive on our own

If we wanted to-
But realising that more than anything –
We choose to be together

(Anon)

(4)
LOVE

It is a short word, but it contains all: it means the body, the soul, the life, the entire being. We feel it as we feel the warmth of the blood, we breathe it as we breathe the air, we carry it in ourselves as we carry out thoughts. Nothing more exists for us. It is not a word: it is an inexpressible state indicated by four letters.

(Guy De Maupassant (1850 - 1893))

(5)
OH, THE COMFORT

Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort, of feeling safe with a person: having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pour them all out, just as they are, chaff and grain together.

Knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping and then – with the breath of kindness- blow the rest away.

(Anonymous)

(6)
FROM THE I CHING

When two people are at one in their inmost hearts, they shatter even the strength of iron or bronze. And when two people understand each other in their inmost hearts, their words are sweet and strong like the fragrance of orchids.

(7)
LOVE'S TESTING

Life is precious and isn't always filled with the
best or the worst;
It is not all roses or all thorns.
There are ups and downs, good days and bad –
And then there are some days
Which are the nadir, the pits, the all-time lows.

It is at those times when your love for each
other will be tested.
It is at those times when you must become
true partners and friends.
It is at those times that you must show
patience and kindness.

When your love is tested, show respect for
each other.
Be the most important person in each other's
life.
Love and care for each other when you are
strong, be each other's strength in weakness.

(8)
GIVE LAVISHLY! LIVE ABUNDANTLY!

The more you give, the more you get
The more you laugh, the less you fret
The more you do unselfishly
The more you live abundantly

The more of everything you share
The more you'll always have to spare
The more you love, the more you'll find
That life is good and friends are kind

For only what we give away
Enriches us from day to day
(Helen Steiner Rice)

(9)

**MAY THE SUN BRING YOU NEW ENERGY
BY DAY**

May the sun bring you new energy by day.
May the moon softly restore you by night.
May the rain wash away your worries
And the breeze blow new strength into your
being.

All the days of your life may you walk gently
through the world, and know its beauty.

Now you will feel no rain.

For each of you will be shelter for the other.

Now you will feel no cold,

For each of you will be warmth to the other.

Now there will be no loneliness

For each of you will be companion to the other

Now you are two persons

But there are three lives before you:

His/Her life, his/her life, and your life together.

May beauty surround you both in the journey
ahead and through all the years.

May happiness be your companion

To the place where the river meets the sun

And may your days together

Be good and long upon this earth.

(10)
DOVE POEM

Two doves meeting in the sky
Two loves hand in hand, eye to eye
Two parts of a loving whole
Two hearts and a single soul

Two stars shining big and bright
Two fires bringing warmth and light
Two songs played in perfect tune
Two flowers growing into bloom

Two doves gliding in the air
Two loves free without a care
Two parts of a loving whole
Two hearts and a single soul

Two hands in a lovers' grasp
Two gems in a golden clasp
Two verses sung in perfect rhyme
Two pulses beat in perfect time

Two doves chirping sweet new songs
Two loves lasting all life long
Two parts of a loving whole
Two hearts and a single soul

Two dreams found before too late
Two lives together bound by fate
Two people cling to one another
Two people in love with each other

Two doves – can you see them soar?
Two loves – who could ask for more?
Two parts of a loving whole
Two hearts and a single soul

(Anon)

(11)

EXTRACT FROM LES MISERABLES

You can give without loving, but you can never
love without giving.

The great acts of love are done by those who
are habitually performing small acts of
kindness.

We pardon to the extent that we love.
Love is knowing that even when you are alone,
you will never be lonely again.

And great happiness of life is the conviction
that we are loved.

Loved for ourselves

And even loved in spite of ourselves.

(Victor Hugo 1802 – 1885)

(12)

LOVE IS.....

More beautiful than roses, much deeper than
the seas,
Stronger than a hurricane, but timid like a
breeze.

Real as in a picture, but yet it can't be seen,
More beautiful than anything, as vivid as a
dream.

Precious as rare jewels, a bond between two
hearts,
A symphony of feelings, when time is spent
apart.

Finding common ground, on issues not agreed,
Giving into arguments, tending all your needs

Being there for always, is all I want to do,
Holding on forever, because our love is true
(Andrea Hill)

(13)
TRUE LOVE

True love is a sacred flame
That burns eternally
And none can dim its special glow
Or change its destiny

True love speaks in gentle tones
And hears with gentle ear,
True love gives with open heart
And true love conquers fear.

True love makes no harsh demands
It neither rules nor binds,
And true love holds, with gentle hands
The heart that it entwines

(14)
CAPTAIN CORELLI'S MANDOLIN

Love is a temporary madness,
it erupts like volcanoes and then subsides.
And when it subsides you have to make a
decision.
You have to work out whether your roots have
so entwined together
that it is inconceivable that you should ever
part.
Because this is what love is.
Love is not breathlessness,
it is not excitement,
it is not the promulgation of eternal passion.
That is just being "in love" which any fool can
do.
Love itself is what is left over when being in
love has burned away,
and this is both an art and a fortunate
accident.
Those that truly love have roots that grow
towards each other underground,
and when all the pretty blossoms have fallen
from their branches,
they find that they are one tree and not two.
(Louis de Bernieres)

(15)

THE MORE YOU GIVE, THE MORE YOU GET

The more you laugh, the less you fret
The more you do unselfishly
The more you live abundantly
The more of everything you share
The more you'll always have to spare
The more you love, the more you'll find
That life is good and friends are kind
For only what we give away
Enriches us from day to day

(16)

LOVE IS GIVING

Love is giving, not taking
mending, not breaking,
trusting, believing,
never deceiving,
patiently bearing
and faithfully sharing
each joy, every sorrow,
today and tomorrow

Love is kind, understanding
but never demanding
Love is constant, prevailing,
its strength never failing.
A promise once spoken
for all time unbroken,
Love's time is for ever.

(Anon)

(17)
THE MAGIC OF LOVE

Love is like magic
And it always will be,
For love still remains
Life's sweet mystery!

Love works in ways
That are wondrous and strange
And there's nothing in life
That love cannot change!

Love can transform
The most commonplace
Into beauty and splendour
And sweetness and grace!

Love is unselfish,
Understanding and kind,
For it sees with its heart
And not with its mind!

Love is the answer
That everyone seeks...
Love is the language
That every heart speaks...

Love can't be bought
It is priceless and free,
Love like pure magic
Is a sweet mystery!

(Helen Steiner Rice)

(18)
WE ARE NOT MEAN'T....

We are not meant to go through life alone.

We need a partner who will
forever remain by our side -
someone to lean on at times,
remembering, as well,
that we will be leaned on, too;
someone to share our joy
and hold us in our sorrow

Understand that there will be difficult times
and doubt may cloud your lives

It is then that you must
trust each other the most
and believe that love will sustain you.

Do not give up easily;
fight for what is most precious –
your partnership.

Help it survive
by nurturing it every single day.

Never hesitate to say "I love you"
or to be the first one to say "I'm sorry".

Give a lot,
overlook even more,
and always expect as much in return.

Never look back
or lose yourself,
but celebrate the special privilege
of being a couple.

Never lose sight
of what brought you together
in the first place:
your special love for each other.
Cherish that always.

You have our best wishes
As you take this giant step forward.
We wish you nothing but happiness
As you enter into this wonderful new
partnership.

(19)
TO LOVE

To love is to enter a whole New World, a world of togetherness, a world of sharing....All that is dearest and deepest within your hearts.

To love is to remember and keep alive forever all those unique qualities that drew you to one another in the beginning.... Those first halting phrases.....That wonderful feeling of oneness when your eyes first met.

To love is to constantly search for new ways to bring each other happiness, to make the most of every moment you share together, and marvel at how your feelings for one another keep rising to new dimensions.

To love is to create an oasis of tranquillity for one another and a quiet place, apart from others where you need not pretend.....where you can be yourselves.....And to know within your hearts you will be accepted by one another.

To love is to greet each day with anticipation. Always eager for another opportunity to share new adventures... And to gather new memories together.

To love is to follow the rainbow through the rain, to be able to laugh at yourselves and be willing to say....."I was wrong, I'm sorry". To forgive, and more importantly, to forget, and to always believe and trust one another.

To love is to watch with wonder all the miracles of the world, to find beauty in the simple things in life, and to find, within yourselves, a deeper appreciation and a new awareness of how wonderful it is to be alive.....To be happy.....To be together.

To love is coming together from the pathways of your past and then moving forward....Hand in hand, along the uncharted roads of your future, ready to risk, to dream, and to dare.....Always believing that all things are possible with commitment and love.

(20)
EXCERPT FROM

THE BRIDGE ACROSS FOREVER

A soul mate is someone who has locks that fit our keys, and keys to fit our locks. When we feel safe enough to open the locks, our truest selves step out and we can be completely and honestly who we are; we can be loved for who we are and not for who we're pretending to be.

Each unveils the best part of the other. No matter what else goes wrong around us, with that one person we're safe in our own paradise. Our soul mate is someone who shares our deepest longings, our sense of direction. When we're two balloons, and together our direction is up, chances are we've found the right person. Our soul mate is the one who makes life come to life.

(Richard Bach)

(21)
WHERE THERE IS LOVE

Where there is love the heart is light
Where there is love the day is bright
Where there is love there is a song
To help when things are going wrong...

Where there is love there is a smile
To make all things seem more worthwhile,
Where there is love there's quiet peace,
A tranquil place where turmoil's cease

Love changes darkness into light
And makes the heart take "wingless flight".

(Helen Steiner Rice)

Selection of

Personal Readings

*(It is intended that these readings be
read by the couple entering into the
partnership)*

(22)
ALWAYS

I vow to you, my heart complete
My every breath, for you I'll take,
Every thought I'll have, will be of you,
I'll love you forever, with a love that's true

I'll give to you my days, my nights,
My laughter, my smiles, my love, my life,
I'll give to you all my dreams,
I'll give myself and all that means

I vow to you to always care,
To always be one who shares everything
For everyday,
For now, for then and for always.
(Dan Metz)

(23)
THESE I CAN PROMISE

I cannot promise you a life of sunshine
I cannot promise riches, wealth, or gold;
I cannot promise you an easy pathway
That leads away from change or growing old

But I can promise all my heart's devotion;
A smile to chase away your tears and sorrow;
A love that's ever true and ever growing;
A hand to hold in yours through each
tomorrow.

(Anon)

(24)

I'LL LOVE YOU FOREVER

I'll always love you
For you'll always be
The most wonderful thing
That has happened to me
Without you beside me
My day would not start
There'd be no air to breathe
And no beat to my heart
You're my reason for living
My present, my past
Only you have the power
To make my dreams last

(25)

IF I CAN MAKE YOU CRY

If I can fill your eyes with pleasure
Just be holding you
In the early hours of morning
When the day that lies aheads not quite begun.

If I can make you smile
If I can move you close
To laughter with a word or two
When your day's been filled with strangers
And the castles that you build all tumble down.
Oh well, that's enough for me
That's all the hero I need to be
I smile to think of you and me
You and I
And how our pleasures make you cry.

(Paul Williams)

(26)
TODAY

Today, I look into the eyes of my best friend
The one with whom I can share anything
My deepest hopes and heart-filled dreams
Inner fears and sheltered insecurities
My most warming joys and overwhelming
triumphs
All future journeys that I have left to encounter
This and more I know I can share with you

Today, I take pride in my best friend
With admiration I look upon you and smile
All that you are and all that you do that make
me so proud
Every part of you that I have come to adore
And for all those parts I have not yet learned

Today, I give my heart to my best friend
My most prized possession
I give it to you with confidence and trust
Because I know with you it is safe
And this is why
Today I am making this commitment to my
best friend

(27)
I PROMISE

I promise to give you the best of myself and to
ask of you no more than you can give
I promise to respect you as your own person
and to realise that your interests,
desires and needs are no less important than
my own.

I promise to share with you my time and my
attention and to bring joy,
strength and imagination to our relationship
I promise to keep myself open to you, to let
you see through the window
of my world into my innermost fears and
feelings, secrets and dreams

I promise to grow along with you, to be willing
to face changes
in order to keep our relationship alive and
exciting
I promise to love you in good times and in bad,
with all that I have to give
and all I feel inside in the only way I know how
Completely and forever

(Dorothy R. Colgan)

(28)
LOVE

I love you
Not only for what you are
But for what I am when I am with you

I love you
Not only what you have made of yourself
But for what you are making of me
I love you
For the part of me that you bring out
I love you
For putting your hand into my heaped-up heart
And passing over all the foolish, weak things
that you can't help dimly seeing there.
And for drawing out into the light all the
beautiful belongings that no one else had
looked quite far enough to find.

I love you
Because you are helping me to make for the
lumber of my life
Not a tavern, but a temple:
Out of the works of my every day
Not a reproach but a song.

I love you
Because you have done more that any creed
could have done
To make me good
And more than any fate could have done to
make me happy.

You have done it
Without a touch
Without a word
Without a sign
You have done it by being yourself
Perhaps that is what being a friend means,
after all.

(Roy Croft)

(29)

Ceremony of Hands

....., please face, and hold his/her hands, palms up, so that you may see the gift that they are to you. These are the hands that will love you and cherish you through the years, for a lifetime of happiness. These are the hands that will countless times wipe the tears from your eyes: tears of sorrow and tears of joy. These are the hands that will comfort you in illness, and hold you when fear or grief fill you. These are the hands that will give you support and celebrate with you in your accomplishments.

....., please hold hands, palms up, where that you may see the gift that they are to you. These are the hands that will hold you tight as you struggle through difficult times. They are the hands that will comfort you when you are sick or console you when you are grieving. These are the hands that will love you and cherish you through the years, for a lifetime of happiness. These are the hands that will give you support as he/she encourages you to fulfil your dreams.

Together, as a team, everything you wish for can be realised.

(30)
PROMISES

Below is a selection of promises which can be
incorporated into the ceremony.

(1)

I Promise you
that I will grow with you
and value your ideas and expressions
I will always talk with you
and share our happy times and our sad times
I will always honour and respect
the bond we have made today
in the presence of these witnesses or family &
friends.

(2)

I promise to be supportive of as an
individual
I will cherish him/her throughout our lives
together
And I will be faithful to him/her for always.

(3)

I.....pledge myself to.....
Though our future together is unknown
No matter what our lives hold for us
May our love never fail?
But grow deeper and stronger
As the years pass

(4)

I.....promise you.....
That I will cherish our love
And promise to be faithful
As your partner and your friend
Until my life ends

(5)

I promise to be trusting, tolerant and
understanding
To bring happiness and laughter into our
partnership
I promise to be your companion in joy and to
comfort you in adversity
I vow to be your honest, faithful partner
This is my commitment to you

(6)

I promise to nurture our partnership of lifelong
commitment
I will endeavour to enhance your whole person
And look to our future together with joy

(7)

I.....pledge to share my life with

I promise to cherish and tenderly care for you
To honour and encourage you.
I will respect you as an individual
And be true to you through good times and
bad
This is my commitment to you

(8)

.....I choose you above all others
To share my like
I promise to honour this pledge as long as I
live

(9)

Personal choice of partners

(31)
EXCHANGE OF GIFTS/RINGS

At the exchange of rings/gifts you may choose
any of the following options. The wording may
also be altered to your own personal
preference.

(1)

I give you this ring/gift as a symbol of the
partnership we have entered into
Wear it from now as my pledge of my lifelong
commitment to you

(2)

I give you this ring/gift
as a symbol of the pledge
I have made to you
and as a token of the commitment
we have entered into

(3)

The giving of this ring signifies the promise of
a love that is everlasting

(4)

This ring is a sign that my love for you will
never end

(5)

This ring is a token of my abiding love
And a sign of the promise I make to you today

(6)

I offer you this ring/gift
As a keepsake of the promises
I have made to you today

(7)

I give you this ring/gift
To remember today
It is a sign of my promise
To love you forever.

Notes

Notes

Notes