

Wedding Ceremony

Procession: Wedding Party walks to stage in pairs

Scott and Amy walk together

all to "I Will" by The Beatles, played by David Godowsky on guitar, Becca Prah on cello, and Heather Brown on French horn.

Opening Words:

Ali:

The opening words to welcome us all here today are from "Goodridge Vs. Department of Health" by Massachusetts Supreme Court Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall

"Marriage is a vital social institution. The exclusive commitment of two individuals to each other nurtures love and mutual support; it brings stability to our society. For those who choose to marry, and for their children, marriage provides an abundance of legal, financial, and social benefits. In return it imposes weighty legal, financial, and social obligations....Without question, civil marriage enhances the "welfare of the community." It is a "social institution of the highest importance." ... Marriage also bestows enormous private and social advantages on those who choose to marry. Civil marriage is at once a deeply personal commitment to another human being and a highly public celebration of the ideals of mutuality, companionship, intimacy, fidelity, and family.... Because it fulfills yearnings for security, safe haven, and connection that express our common humanity, civil marriage is an esteemed institution, and the decision whether and whom to marry is among life's momentous acts of self-definition."

Invocation:

Ali:

We are all here today to celebrate the love of Amy Lockhart Clark and Scott Eric Thomson. They will make vows to each other. We will hear these words, and we will perform this rite which will forever join them in love for each other and the world around them, support and care of one another, and commitment to their relationship. And we are all here to witness their intention to work hard to make these vows stay true and beautiful for ever and ever.

The first reading will be given by their friend Mandy.

First Reading:

Mandy:

The first reading is from the book *The Little Prince*

"Who are you?" the Little Prince asked. "You're very pretty..."

"I am a fox," the fox said.

"Come and play with me," the Little Prince proposed. "I'm feeling so sad."

"I can't play with you," the fox said. "I'm not tamed."

"Ah! Excuse me," said the Little Prince. But upon reflection he asked, "what does *tamed* mean?"

"You're not from around here," the fox said. "What are you looking for?"

"I'm looking for people," said the Little Prince. "What does *tamed* mean?"

“People,” said the fox, “have guns and they hunt. It’s quite troublesome. And they also raise chickens. That’s the only interesting thing about them. Are you looking for chickens?”

“No,” said the Little Prince. “I am looking for friends. What does tamed mean?”

“It is something too often neglected. It means ‘to establish ties’.”

“To establish ties?”

“That’s right,” said the fox. “For me you are only a little boy just like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you have no need of me, either. For you I am only a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, we will need each other. You will be the only boy in the world for me, and I will be the only fox in the world for you...”

[...] “My life on Earth is monotonous. I hunt chickens, people hunt me. All chickens are just alike, and all men are just alike. As a consequence, I am rather bored. But if you tame me, it will be as if the sun has shined on my life. I will know the sound of footsteps that will be different from all the rest. Other footsteps send me back underground. But your will call me out of my burrow like music. And then, look! You see the wheat fields over there? I don’t eat bread. For me, wheat is of no use. Wheat fields do not speak to me. And that is sad. But you have hair the color of gold. So it will be wonderful, once you have tamed me! The wheat, which is golden, will remind me of you. And I will love the sound of the wind in the wheat.”

The fox fell silent and stared at the Little Prince for a long while. “Please...tame me!” he said.

“I’d like to,” the Little Prince replied, “but I haven’t much time. I have friends to find and so many things to learn.”

“The things you tame are the only things you learn,” said the fox. “People haven’t time to learn anything. They buy things ready-made from stores. But since there are no stores where one can buy friends, people no longer have friends. If you want a friend, tame me!”

“What do I have to do?” asked the Little Prince.

“You have to be very patient,” the fox answered. “First you will sit down a little ways from me, over there, in the grass. I will watch you out of the corner of my eye, and you won’t say anything. Language is the source of misunderstandings. But day by day you will move a little closer...”

The next day the Prince returned.

“It would have been better to return at the same time,” the fox said. “For instance, if you come at four in the afternoon, I will begin to be happy at three. The closer it gets to four, the happier I’ll feel. By four I will be excited and worried; I will discover what it costs to be happy! But if you come at just any time, I will never know when I should prepare my heart...there must be rites.”

“What’s a *rite*?” asked the Little Prince.

“It is another thing too often neglected,” said the fox. “It is what makes one day different from other days, one hour different from other hours. [...]”

“So the little Prince tamed the fox.”

The Address:

written and read by Ali:

It is a great honor for me to stand here today to solemnize the marriage of Amy and Scott. And in thinking about their union, I am in awe of the incredible good luck and fortune that brings us all here today to celebrate with them. As some of you know, Amy and I became friends by accident. Before she moved to Boston, she came out for a weekend to attend an information session for Emerson's creative writing program. She was going to stay with an acquaintance's family that weekend, but at the last minute, they cancelled, leaving Amy and her friends in the lurch. That day, I received a phone call from Becca Prahl, my college roommate's sister and today's cello player, asking if I would mind if her friends stayed with me for the weekend. And that is how I became friends with Amy, and later with Scott, and came to be here today, joining them in marriage.

I tell this story to illustrate how what we cherish most in life is often the result of a long series of wildly improbable, but very fortunate events. And love and marriage are the happiest example of this serendipity. Had Bot and Charles not been extremely persuasive about the virtues of living in Boston, Scott may well have moved somewhere else after college to find his fortune. Had there been no fateful sushi dinner in early 2005, when Amy's friends told her she must stay in Boston, Amy would have moved to Lewiston, Maine. And within months of deciding to stay in Boston, Amy was working at the UUA and had met Scott. As their friends and family, we have witnessed how their early friendship steadily grew into love. And we have shared in their joy as their relationship deepened, culminating in the union we are celebrating today.

Love is rare. Love is a blessing. And today's union is a rare blessing that is anchored by Amy and Scott, and radiates outwards, bringing joy not just to them, but to their families, their friends, and their community. This is important, because marriage does not exist in a vacuum, but in the context of a larger community. This relationship between family and community is powerful, and with it comes with a deep responsibility that goes both ways. Just as Amy and Scotts new family strengthens their community, we will, in turn, lend them our strength. And as our intertwined lives take their twists of fate, we will take turns supporting one another in times of need. Through these actions, we will create a richer, stronger community for us all. Today's ceremony lays but the foundation that Amy and Scott will build on as they voyage through life together. We, as your family and friends, are honored to be part of this journey.

Moment of Reflection:

Ali:

And as we are gathered here in celebration of Amy and Scott's union, let us take a moment to reflect upon the blessings love brings to all of our lives.

[silence]

Scott and Amy's friend Bot will read the second reading now.

Second Reading:

Bot:

The second reading comes from a novel by the author Zadie Smith.

“What was it about this unlovable century that convinced us that we were, despite everything, eminently lovable as a people, as a species? What made us think that anyone who fails to love us is damaged, lacking, malfunctioning in some way? And particularly if they replace us with a god, or a weeping Madonna, or the face of Christ in a ciabatta roll –then we call them crazy. Deluded. Regressive. We are so certain of the goodness of ourselves, and the goodness of our love, we cannot bear to believe that there may be something more worthy of love than us, more worthy of worship. Greeting cards routinely tell us everybody deserves love. No. Everybody deserves clean water. Not everybody deserves love.”

Love is a privilege and a blessing. And Scott and Amy are blessed to have found each other, and have earned much happiness together.

The Consecration of a Family:

Ali:

Amy and Scott come to you today to create a family. And you, their community –their friends and family, all their loved ones-- your presence consecrates their new family today and will support them as they move forward in their new life together. So, I will ask you now to repeat after me:

Ali: Bless this family

Community: Bless this family

Ali: and protect them with love

Community: and protect them with love

Ali: and strengthen them with faith

Community: and strengthen them with faith

Ali: and surround them with friends

Community: and surround them with friends

Ali: so they will know joy

Community: so they will know joy

Ali: today and all the days of their lives

Community: today and all the days of their lives.

Ali: I entrust this family to all of you.

The last reading today will be read by Amy's sister Margaret.

Third Reading

Margaret:

This comes from a children's book by Lemony Snicket

“Dewey was wrong when he said that being noble enough is all we can ask for in this world, because we can ask for much more than that. We can ask for a second helping of pound cake, even though someone has made it quite clear that we will not get any. We can ask for a new watercolor set, even though it will be pointed out that we never used the old one, and that all of the paints dried into a crumbly mess. We can ask for Japanese fighting fish, to keep us company in our bedroom, and we can ask for a special camera that will allow us to take photographs even in the dark, for obvious reasons, and we can ask for an extra sugar cube in our coffees in the morning and an extra pillow in our beds at night. We can ask for justice, and we can ask for a handkerchief, and we can ask for cupcakes, and we can ask for all the soldiers in the world to lay down their weapons and join us in a rousing chorus of “Cry me a River” if that happens to be our favorite song. But we can also ask for something we are much more likely to get, and that is to find a person or two, somewhere in our travels, who will tell us that we are noble enough, whether it is true or not. We can ask for someone who will say, ‘You are noble enough,’ and remind us of our good qualities when we have forgotten them, or cast them into doubt.” And Amy and Scott are incredibly lucky that they have all of you with them in their travels to remind them of their good qualities. And especially, that they have each other, to love and be loyal to and be noble for all the rest of their lives.

The Blessing and Exchanging of Rings:

Ali:

And now the bride and groom will exchange rings and make vows to one another.

Ali –receives rings from wedding party

These rings are beautiful symbols for all to see that Amy and Scott are bound together by love, by established ties, and by the rite of marriage.

Amy: Scott, this is the symbol of my promise to be married to you forever.

Scott: Amy, this is the symbol of my promise to be married to you forever.

The Vows:

Ali: Scott, do you believe that Amy is “noble enough?”

Scott: yes

Ali: Amy, do you believe that Scott is “noble enough?”

Amy: yes

Ali:

Do you, Amy, take Scott, to be lawfully wedded to, to love, honor, and cherish all the days of your life?

Amy:

I do.

Ali:

Do you, Scott, take Amy, to be lawfully wedded to, to love, honor, and cherish all the days of your life?

Scott:

I do.

The Announcement:

Ali:

And now, you should kiss one another, and be married for life!

Recessional

Scott and Amy walk together to all to “I Will” by The Beatles, played by David Godowsky on guitar, Becca Prahl on cello, and Heather Brown on French horn. Followed by their wedding party.