

MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR MARRIAGE

WELCOMING STATEMENT (Sample)

Good afternoon and welcome to Gwynedd Friends Meeting.

We are present here in the worship room of the Religious Society of Friends, also known as the Quakers. We are gathered here to celebrate a very special occasion – the wedding of _____ and _____.

The gathering together for Quaker worship is called a Meeting for Worship. Today's ceremony will occur in a Meeting for Worship. So let me say a few words about how we Quakers worship.

We believe there is that of God in everyone. It is this conviction that leads us to uphold our testimonies of equality, peace, and social justice, among others. We worship in silence. This silence is more than just the absence of sound. This silence serves to connect us with the Inner Light, Inner Christ, or the Divine. We seek to make this divine connection without any intermediary like a priest or a minister.

Please do not take any pictures during the ceremony. You may take pictures here in this room, and elsewhere, after the ceremony.

Now let me explain what will take place during the wedding ceremony so that you know what to expect. But before I do that, please silence or turn off all electronic devices like phones, tablets, etc.

The wedding ceremony will take about 45 minutes to an hour.

When I sit down, the silent worship will begin. Out of the silence, when the couple feel led, they will rise and say their wedding vows to each other.

[Optional as appropriate:]

They will then exchange their wedding rings.

An important part of the wedding is the wedding certificate. The certificate will be brought to the couple for their signatures. It will then be read to the Meeting by _____. After a brief period of silence, everyone gathered here today is encouraged to share messages and sentiments for the newly wed couple.

During this sharing, for instance, you may want to: offer a prayer or a poem for the newlyweds, speak of a special remembrance with the couple, reflect on some special event in their lives. Or whatever other messages of support and love you are led to share.

When you speak, however, please stand up and speak loud enough so everyone can hear you and benefit from your sharing. Also, please allow a brief pause between speakers.

After this period of sharing, at the appropriate time, I will close the meeting by initiating a shake of hands. Then everyone will shake hands with the person sitting next to them. This hand shaking will indicate the conclusion of the wedding ceremony.

After that, you are free to take pictures, mingle and socialize.

Following the wedding, everyone is cordially invited to proceed to the lobby area where you are requested to sign the wedding certificate, as witnesses to the marriage.

[Optional, as appropriate:]

Following the ceremony, everyone is cordially invited to join the newlyweds, their friends and family for a reception in the adjacent community room.

Now, I will sit down, and, with that, the silent worship, and the ceremony, begins.