

Unforgettable

Commitment Ceremonies



Jennifer Cram
Civil Celebrant

SAMPLE CEREMONY SAME SEX COMMITMENT

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OPENING WORDS	Friends, [NAME1] and [NAME2] have invited us all here to witness their public declaration of love for each other and of their intention to spend the rest of their lives together. My name is Jennifer Cram and I have been engaged to perform the ceremony.
STATEMENT OF SUPPORT	Many of you have a special relationship with one or both of them. By being here you are giving support to their relationship, and are setting a seal on their union. When times get tough in the years ahead, it will be to you that [NAME1] and [NAME2] turn to for support. They ask for your encouragement, and your life-long support for their decision to become partners for life. There is a sincere wish that they will be able to count on your availability and your reliability throughout the rest of their lives. I invite you all now to indicate your support by answering "I Do" to the following questions: Do you commit yourself to providing all of the encouragement and support possible to help [NAME1] and [NAME2] in their relationship, from this day forward, as they love, support and serve each other? THOSE PRESENT: I do. Do you agree to do all in your power to assist [NAME1] and [NAME2] in the difficulties that they are bound to encounter? THOSE PRESENT: I do.
SONG	Beethoven's <i>Song of Joy</i> (words by Gustav Spiller)
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE	[NAME1] and [NAME2] appreciate that this ceremony has no significance in Australian law. Nonetheless, the strong and genuine nature of their love for each other demands a public acknowledgement of their commitment to each other. It is not the legal nature of the ceremony which creates a strong and abiding relationship. Rather it is the trust and care in that relationship that enables it to survive. What matters most is that [NAME1] and [NAME2] are absolutely certain they are right for each other, and that they did not make the decision to commit to each other lightly. That they chose to make this commitment publicly is a reminder to us all that our lives have meaning, and that love can be the strongest bond, the happiest joy, and the loveliest healing we can ever experience.
PARENTAL SUPPORT	I now ask [NAME1] and [NAME2]'s parents to come forward and stand beside their sons, to signify and acknowledge the rite of passage from parental support to the mutual support this commitment ceremony represents.
DECLARATION OF INTENT	Making a commitment for life is a covenant that should only be entered into by those who are spiritually and emotionally free to offer themselves to each other. Therefore, I will ask [NAME1] and [NAME2] to state their intention. [NAME1] and [NAME2], have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in a committed partnership for life? [NAME1] and [NAME2]: We have. Since it is your intention to join together in a lifelong partnership, please join hands with your palms facing upwards.

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RITUAL	<p>Hands represent giving and receiving. By putting your hands together in this manner, you are acknowledging to us all that your relationship that of equals who are committed to loving and caring for each other, that you wish to commit to each other, and that your lives and your destinies from this point on are bound together.</p> <p>The pouring of water is a symbol of purification and blessing, a symbol that represents the purity of your intentions and the transition these intentions represent. < [NAME1] and [NAME2]'s parents pour water over joined hands ></p>
Pouring of water over joined hands	
Hand fasting	<p>The binding of hands is a ritual that is universal. [NAME1] and [NAME2] have asked that this braided cord, which they created themselves from the seven different colours of the rainbow, be used as a symbol of our celebration of diversity, of unity and particularly of hope. [NAME1] and [NAME2], until this moment you have been separate in thought, word and deed. As this cord encircles your hands, binding you together, so shall your lives be entwined.</p> <p>These are the hands of your best friend, young and strong and full of love, that hold yours as you promise to love each other all the days of your life. These are the hands that will work alongside yours as you build your future together. These are the hands that will passionately love you and care for you throughout the years. These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief torments your mind, and, with the slightest touch, will comfort you like no other. These are the hands that will give you strength when you struggle, and support and encouragement to chase down your dreams. These are the hands that will, countless times, wipe the tears from your eyes, tears of sorrow and tears of joy. And lastly, these are the hands, that even when wrinkled with age, will still be reaching for yours, still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch – a touch from these hands. (Adapted, Author Unknown)</p> <p>With this cord I tie you heart to heart. But it is not the cord which binds you together, for you hold in your hands the making or breaking of this union.</p>
VOWS	<p>Before these witnesses, I ask you [NAME1] is it your wish from this day forward to share your life in all its important aspects with [NAME2]?</p> <p>[NAME1] It is Will you do your best understand him, sustain his needs, care for him, comfort him, cherish and love him, for the rest of your life? [NAME1] I will.</p> <p>[NAME2] is it your wish from this day forward to share your life in all its important aspects with [NAME1]?</p> <p>[NAME2] It is Will you do your best understand him, sustain his needs, care for him, comfort him, cherish and love him, for the rest of your life? [NAME2] I will.</p> <p>[NAME1]: [NAME2], I promise to trust you, to be honest with and to be faithful to you. I pledge to you that I will honour your integrity, respect your privacy and cherish your person as long as we both live.</p> <p>[NAME2]: [NAME1], I promise to trust you, to be honest with and to be faithful to you. I pledge to you that I will honour your integrity, respect your privacy and cherish your person as long as we both live.</p>
RING CEREMONY	<p>Rings have long been symbols of a loving relationship. [NAME1] and [NAME2], these rings, which you have chosen for each other, represent wholeness; a state of completeness where nothing is missing and everything is possible. Let them remind you of the eternal cycle, of the coming round from want to plenty, from despair to joy, from failure to possibility, from loneliness to love. Through the years to come may they remind you of the promises you have made today and strengthen your determination to make your love last and your relationship grow.</p> <p>[NAME1] I give you this ring as a sign that I choose you to be my beloved, and that I offer myself as your life companion today, tomorrow and always.</p> <p>[NAME2] I accept this ring as the symbol that I have pledged my life to you, that I am bound to you always, through my love, with all my heart.</p> <p>[NAME2] I give you this ring as a sign that I choose you to be my beloved, and that I offer myself as your life companion today, tomorrow and always.</p> <p>[NAME1] I accept this ring as the symbol that I have pledged my life to you, that I am bound to you always, through my love, with all my heart.</p>

READING
Tranquility
by Sir Philip Sidney

**My true love hath my heart, and I have his
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss,
There never was a better bargain driven:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.
His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thought and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own,
I cherish his, because in me it bides:
My true love hath my heart, and I have his.**

THE DECLARATION

[NAME1] and [NAME2], by the love that has brought you to this point in your relationship and to this place today, by the promises you have made to each other in the presence of this company, and by the integrity of your commitment to each other, it is my pleasure and my honour to pronounce you partners for life.

THE KISS

Traditionally, a kiss confers not only greeting and honour, but also attachment. One both salutes and claims whomever he kisses. So a public kiss at this point is more than just a delightful display of the physical affection [NAME1] and [NAME2] feel for each other, it is the way they each claim the other as forever theirs. Please claim your partner.

SIGNING OF
CERTIFICATE OF
COMMITMENT

Musical interlude (*It had to be you - Harry Connick Jnr, and When I'm Sixty-four - the Beatles*) during signing of the certificate.

CONGRATULATIONS &
PRESENTATION OF THE
COUPLE

The healing powers of love are legendary. When we feel we are deeply loved by those around us, we are transformed by that love and emboldened to make deep and significant changes in our lives. Today we have witnessed the power of love. [NAME1] and [NAME2], emboldened by their love for each other, have made a public commitment to each other and a statement to us all about the universality of love, regardless of gender or sexual orientation. Let us acknowledge their new estate by sending them on their way into their life together by saying together the old Celtic blessing printed in your ceremony booklets:

**The peace of the running water to you
The peace of the flowing air to you
The peace of the quiet earth to you
The peace of the shining stars to you
And the love and the care of us all to you.**