

Celtic Wedding Ritual

All guests stand in a circle

Shaman in center of Ring

Inner Ring formation

Bridesmaids to the east

Groomsmen to the west

Grooms' immediate family to the North

Brides' immediate family to the South

Outer Ring formation

Honored Guests

Groom enters circle between family and groomsmen

Bride enters circle between family and bridesmaids

SHAMAN: "My friends and clansmen, today we gather in the circle of hope under the sight of our gods and the spirits around us. We gather here to bear witness to the joining of _Bride_ and _Groom_. As to the legitimacy of this union what say ye?"

GROOM FATHER: "Let it be so."

BRIDE FATHER: "Let it be so."

SHAMAN: "So, let it be so. The gods give us one heart that we may come to cherish another. Our soul to entangle itself with another to live out our days in the charge of keeping each other safe and bound together by the spirit of unwavering love. May we bring these two souls together, and symbolically show the spirits above by binding their earthly bodies. Light the candles."

ALL ATTENDEES: "The candles are lit; the spirits are summoned."

BEST MAN and MAID OF HONOR step forward and symbolically bind the right hands of the groom and bride. As they step back into the circle,

BEST MAN: "It is so."

MAID OF HONOR: "It is so."

SHAMAN: "The binding upon your hands symbolically shows that from this day forth you will be connected, let each hand know what the other is doing in all things, both of the earth, and of the spirit. What say ye?"

GROOM: "It will be so."

BRIDE: "It will be so."

After ensuring the couple's bound hands are directly above the sacred stone.

SHAMAN: "Repeat after me. We swear by peace and love to stand, heart to heart and hand in hand. Oh Spirits, hear us now, confirming this our sacred vow."

BRIDE & GROOM: Repeat the Shaman.

SHAMAN: "We are here today to join these wonderful people. This decision is not to be entered into lightly, or carelessly, but thoughtfully, deliberately, and reverently. My friends today you are surrounded by the circle of life, previous generations both here physically, and those beyond now gaze upon your sacred oath. Are Ye Ready?"

BRIDE & GROOM TOGETHER: "It is so."

SHAMAN: "Let not this union be cast aside but shared and supported by all those gathered here. Those of us whom have ventured along this path know very well the challenges that come with living in this modern-day world. We know the challenges that will face this couple as they journey along their path. Let us not turn our back but come together to help them face these challenges. We must acknowledge our commitment to this union, by agreeing to provide unbiased counsel and wisdom when sought throughout their lives together. What say ye?"

ALL ATTENDEES: "It is so."

SHAMAN: "Although in the eyes of the gods and spirits gathered, I perform this ritual, together you will build the foundation for a lasting marriage - through mutual commitment, faithfulness, and by working toward creating an atmosphere of care and consideration, and respect, and by making every effort to speak with, as well as to be loving to one another. To further support this journey, you agree that you will seek counsel from those gathered here, as well as others, to ensure the stability, and growth, of your marriage. What say ye?"

BRIDE & GROOM TOGETHER: "It is so."

SHAMAN: "This journey is more than a commitment. It is a process, and to endure it must hold the capacity for change and growth. You will be faced with many choices in your life together. Ultimately, it is upon these choices, and your reactions, that the success of your marriage depends. Your love will be a safe haven, a source of warmth and comfort to each other, and to your family and friends, and will continue to bring you closer, both in times of need, and in great abundance. By your presence before us today you demonstrate that you vow to strengthen your commitment to each other. May this moment when you pronounce these vows always shine in your hearts and mind and bring you comfort."

SHAMAN: "Will you Groom take Bride to be your wife? To comfort her, and honor her, forsaking all

others, to be faithful to her, for better or worse, richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and support her, as long as ye both shall live?"

GROOM: "With all my heart, I will."

SHAMAN: "Will you Bride take Groom to be your husband? To comfort him, and honor him, forsaking all others, to be faithful to him, for better or worse, richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and support him, as long as ye both shall live?"

BRIDE: "With all my heart, I will."

SHAMAN: "May the rings be brought forth. You have chosen to exchange rings as a demonstration and visible symbol of your inward and spiritual union. As the ring encircles your fingers, so too may the love encircle your hearts and bind you together in loyalty and understanding."

SHAMAN: "Groom, as you place the ring on Bride's finger, repeat after me. With this ring, and all that I am, all that I have, and all I hope to ever be, I swear this oath to give you my honor, my love, and my devotion, forever. To this I swear this oath."

GROOM: Repeats Shaman

SHAMAN: "Bride, as you place the ring on Groom's finger, repeat after me. With this ring, and all that I am,

all that I have, and all I hope to ever be, I swear this oath to give you my honor, my love, and my devotion, forever. To this I swear this oath."

BRIDE: Repeats Shaman

SHAMAN: "As we witnessed, they are no longer two, but one. What therefore has been joined by oath, let no one put asunder. They are joined."

BEST MAN & MAID OF HONOR step forward and remove the binding from wrists and say, "It is so."

SHAMAN: "By the power vested in me by the gods and spirits of the realm, and the authority vested by the State of Alaska, I now pronounce you as husband and wife. Ladies, and gentlemen, friends and family gathered here today. It is my honor to present Mister and Missus _Last Name_. You may now kiss your bride my friend."

BEST MAN & MAID OF HONOR place the broom on the exit path for the couple.

SHAMAN: "As ye depart from this place, your first task as husband and wife is to jump the Besom. May this symbolically sweep away the darkness of your past and align your hearts for a bright future together. Peace upon your journey."