

WELCOME

Shawn: Welcome. There are many reasons we are here today.

Shawn: Today is about friendship and family. You, as Rebecca and Adam's family and friends, have come here to support and witness the public declaration of their private and personal commitment to one another. But it is also their deep friendship with each other that has propelled them to come here today to solidify their own family. As Nietzsche said, "It is not lack of love, but a lack of friendship that makes unhappy marriages." In many ways, marriage is a merger of the ultimate friendship and a chosen, intentional family. It is comfortable, impassioned, silent, and caring. It is being in a room together pondering pizza and politics; burgers and punk rock.

Reading - Jessi - from front: "When I say Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash's romance was the greatest love story of the 20th century, I'm not just thinking about their fiery courtship. Though your better love stories do require that obstacles are overcome and the Cashes had plenty of those. I was really thinking about their marriage. 35 years of actual happily ever after. The pictures of the two of them together through the years are almost suspiciously entertaining to look at. Johnny cracking June up or she's cracking him up or in my favorite, the photo on his compilation album "Love", she's fallen asleep against his shoulder. His chin is resting on her head and he might be smelling her hair. In his liner notes next to that picture, Johnny Cash says he's sitting there thinking about Robert Browning's poem about the death of his wife Elizabeth Barrett Browning when June Carter Cash walks in and wonders what he'd like to eat for lunch. And that seems about right. The two of them in a room together pondering sandwiches and poetry." (Sarah Vowell, "The Greatest Love Story of the 20th Century", This American Life)

Shawn: Today is about love. Love organizes our large and sometimes unpredictable world. It is that which enshrines and ennobles our human experience. It is the basis for the peace of family, and the peace of the peoples of the earth. The greatest gift bestowed upon humans is the gift of love freely given between two persons. Today is about the love of friendship, the love of family, the love of romance and intimacy and joy.

Reading - Lynn - from audience: "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. Love is the roots that grow towards each other underground, slowly and determined." (Louis de Bernieres)

Shawn: Adam and Rebecca have made that decision. They have embraced their fortunate accident and decided never to part.

Shawn: Today is about making a public declaration of something intensely private. It is about the moments shared and the commitments made in the last five years. Today is about everyday - the laughter, the tears, the mundane routine of life. Today, Adam and Rebecca, are letting you into their shared lives. They are asking you, their loved ones, to acknowledge, respect, and be joyful as they define their lives together. Today is a momentous occasion. As the Massachusetts Supreme court said in their landmark case: "... 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 ... marriage is an esteemed institution, and the decision whether and whom to marry is among life's momentous acts of self-definition." Rebecca and Adam have asked you here today to witness this moment as they define themselves together and begin to walk into their future as witnesses to each other's lives.

Reading - Kathi - from audience: "Why do people get married? We need a witness to our lives. There's a billion people on the planet ... I mean, what does any one life really mean? But in a marriage, you're promising to care about everything. The good things, the bad things, the terrible things, the mundane things ... all of it, all of the time, every day. You're saying 'Your life will not go unnoticed because I will notice. Your life will not go unwitnessed because I will be your witness.'" (from the movie "Shall we dance?")

REMEMBRANCE

Shawn: And now, Adam and Rebecca would like to take a moment of silence to remember those who could not be here today to witness this event. Particularly Amy Hardy, Adam's sister whose sharp wit would entertain and whose pride would give this day even more meaning. And also Rebecca's uncle, Rev. John D. Riley, an Episcopal priest and activist, whom she thought might one day preside over this ceremony.

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

Shawn: Rebecca and Adam, do you come here of your own free will, fully aware of the consequences of the decision you are making, and with the solid intention of spending your lives with each other?

Becca & Adam: We do.

HOMILY

PRAYER

Shawn: Let us pray.

Grant that their wills may be so knit together that they may grow in love and peace with one another all the days of their life. Amen.

Give them wisdom and devotion in the ordering of their common life, that each may be to the other a strength in need, a counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy. Amen.

Give them grace, when they hurt each other, to recognize and acknowledge their fault, and to seek each other's forgiveness. Amen.

Make their life together a sign of love to this broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair. Amen.

Give them such fulfillment of their mutual affection that they may reach out in love and concern for others. Amen.

Grant that all persons who have witnessed these vows may find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed. Amen.

MARRIAGE ADDRESS

Reading - Jan - from audience: "The point of marriage is not to create a quick commonality by tearing down all boundaries; on the contrary, a good marriage is one in which each partner appoints the other to be *the guardian of his solitude*, and thus they show each other the greatest possible trust. A merging of two people is an impossibility, and where it seems to exist, it is a hemming-in, a mutual consent that robs one party or

both parties of their fullest freedom and development. But once the realization is accepted that even between the closest people infinite distances exist, a marvelous living side-by-side can grow up for them, if they succeed in loving the expanse between them, which gives them the possibility of always seeing each other as a whole and before an immense sky."
(Rilke)

Shawn: In marriage, two people turn to each other in search of a greater fulfillment than either can achieve alone. Marriage is a bold step, taken together, into an unknown future.

It is risking who we are for the sake of who we can be. Only in giving of ourselves fully, and sharing our lives with another, can the mysterious process of growth take place. Only in loyalty and devotion bestowed upon another can that which is eternal in life emerge and be known. Two among us, who have stood apart, come together now, to declare their love and to be united in marriage. The words we say today have no magic or prophetic powers. The power of the wedding vows is merely a reflection of a reality that already exists in the hearts and minds of these two people. Adam and Rebecca, nothing I can say, or nothing you can say to each other, will ensure a long and happy, satisfying and committed marriage. Only your love for one another, and your integrity to make your commitment real can do that. Rebecca and Adam, please make your commitment with integrity and reveal to each other what is in your hearts and minds.

VOWS

Rebecca: I, Rebecca, choose you, Adam, to be my partner in crime; to be the first thing I see in the morning and the last thing I see at night; to be my confidante, my sanctuary; to be the guardian of my solitude. I choose you to laugh with, to cry to, to be the first person I play my songs for. Adam, I choose to share my life with you.

In return, I promise to be your partner in crime - to shoulder the burdens & share the abundance of life with you. I promise to support and encourage you; to take care of you when you're sick; to be your confidante and sanctuary. I will continue to love you all the way to the moon and back down to the dirt and I promise to always be your biggest fan.

Adam: I, Adam, choose you Rebecca to be my partner in crime. I choose to be with you when you're happy, I choose to be with you when your sad, when you're angry and when you're proud. I choose to to share with you my accomplishments and my defeats. I choose to share with you my wisdom and my inane trivia. Mostly the latter. In return, I promise to be your partner in crime. I promise to witness your accomplishments and defeats, I promise to do what I can to ensure your success and happiness. I promise to be your confidant and your sanctuary. I promise to love you all the way to the moon and back down to the dirt.

RING EXCHANGE

Shawn: Rebecca and Adam, you have chosen to exchange rings and to mark yourselves, for everyone to see, as partners whose lives are irreparably intertwined. You have chosen to each wear two rings, one gold and one silver, to represent the two of you standing side by side as you walk into the future. May I have the rings?

[Caitlyn or Mikey will bring Mav up with the rings]

Adam: Rebecca, I give you these rings as a constant reminder that "love consists in this: two solitudes protect and border and greet each other."

Rebecca: Adam, I give you these rings as a constant reminder that "Love consists in this: two solitudes protect and border and greet each other."

BLESSING

CLOSING

Reading - Jeanine - from audience: "You know what the first rule of flyin' is? ... Love. You can know all the math in the 'Verse, but take a boat in the air you don't love, she'll shake you off just as sure as the turning of worlds. Love keeps her in the air when she oughta fall down, tells ya she's hurtin' 'fore she keens. Makes her home." - Serenity, Mal

Shawn: Rebecca and Adam, you have found your home and are now joined in marriage. Grant that you may fully share your hearts and souls, live in fidelity and peace, and obtain those eternal joys prepared for all who love.