

Handfasting & Declaration of Intent  
Jenn and Matt  
December 16, 2006

Groomsmen seat mothers  
Groomsmen and Groom take their places  
Ring bearer walks in  
Bridesmaids walk in  
Bride and Father walk in  
Bride and Father angle so Priestess can be heard with the greeting.

Greeting:

Priestess: Welcome, friends and family! We are gathered here today to celebrate the union of Jen and Matt in marriage. This ceremony is but an outward sign of their inward union of heart, mind and spirit, a celebration of the joining of two souls already attuned to each other. When such a true bond exists between two people, it is fitting that an outer acknowledgement be made. We are here to bear witness to the entry into the closer relationship of husband and wife of these beloved friends who are already one in spirit.

Presentation of the Bride:

Priestess: Who has the honor of presenting this woman to be married to this man?

Father says: I do, her father...with the blessings of her family

Priestess: Thank you  
(Father then steps back and takes his seat. )

Speak to Couple:

Priestess: Know now before you go further, that since your lives have crossed in this life you have formed ties between each other. As you seek to enter this state of matrimony you should strive to make real, the ideals which give meaning to both this ceremony and the institution of marriage.

With full awareness, know that at this time you are not only declaring your intent to be handfasted before your friends and family, but you speak that intent also to your creative higher powers.

The promises made today and the ties that are bound here greatly strengthen your union; they will cross the years and lives of each soul's growth.

Do you still seek to enter this ceremony?

Couple: Yes, We Seek to Enter.

### Blessing of the Elements/Directions:

Priestess: In times past it was believed that the human soul shared characteristics with all things divine. It is this belief which assigned virtues to the cardinal directions; East, South, West and North. It is in this tradition that a blessing is offered in support of this ceremony.

Blessed be this union with the gifts of the East. Communication of the heart, mind, and body Fresh beginnings with the rising of each Sun. The knowledge of the growth found in the sharing of silences.

Blessed be this union with the gifts of the South. Warmth of hearth and home The heat of the heart's passion The light created by both To lighten the darkest of times.

Blessed be this union with the gifts of the West. The deep commitments of the lake The swift excitement of the river The refreshing cleansing of the rain The all encompassing passion of the sea.

Blessed be this union with the gifts of the North Firm foundation on which to build Fertility of the fields to enrich your lives A stable home to which you may always return.

Each of these blessings from the four cardinal directions emphasizes those things which will help you build a happy and successful union. Yet they are only tools. Tools which you must use together in order to create what you seek in this union.

### Charge:

Priestess: Jen and Matt, I would ask that you both remember to treat yourself and each other with respect, and remind yourself often of what brought you together today. Give the highest priority to the tenderness, gentleness and kindness that your marriage deserves. When frustration and difficulty assail your marriage – as they do to every relationship at one time or another – focus on what still seems right between you, not only the part that seems wrong. This way, when clouds of trouble hide the sun in your lives and you lose sight of it for a moment, you can remember that the sun is still there. And if each of you will take responsibility for the quality of your life together, it will be marked by abundance and delight.

To Couple: Do you so promise?

Couple: We do.

### Rings:

Priestess: Ben, please present the rings

Priestess: Circles represent eternity, and though our lives are finite, love – the creative force that binds us together, the force that gives new life – is everlasting.

Priestess: I cleanse and bless these rings. (Priestess passes the rings through the smoke of a candle)

Priestess: Matt, I have not the right to bind thee to Jen, only you have this right. If it be your wish, say so at this time and place your ring in her hand

Matt: It is my wish.

Priestess: Jen, if it be your wish for Matt to be bound to you, place the ring on his finger. (places ring on Matt's left ring finger)

Jen I have not the right to bind thee to Matt, only you have this right. If it be your wish, say so at this time and place your ring in his hand.

Jen: It is my wish

Priestess: Matt, if it be your wish for Jen to be bound to you, place the ring on her finger. (places ring on Jen's left ring finger)

Unity Candle:

Priestess: Jen and Matt, the two separate candles symbolize your separate lives, separate families and separate sets of friends. I ask that each of you take one of the lit candles and that together you light the center candle.

The individual candles represent your lives before today. Lighting the center candle represents that your two lives are now joined to one light, and represents the joining together of your two families and sets of friends to one. (as bagpiper starts, step forward and take time lighting candles. Light tapers and then use the taper to light the unity candle)

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[Bagpiper - Amazing Grace]

Handfasting:

Priestess: Please hold hands, in a figure 8, the sign of infinity. I bid you look into each others eyes.

Matt, Will you cause her pain?

I May

Is that you intent?

No

Jen, Will you cause him pain?

I may

Is that you intent?

No

\*To Both\*

Will you share each other's pain and seek to ease it?

Yes

And so the binding is made.

\*First cord is draped across the bride and grooms hands\*

Jen, Will you share his laughter?

Yes

Matt, Will you share her laughter?

Yes

\*To Both\*

Will both of you look for the brightness in life and the positive in each other?

Yes

And so the binding is made.

\*Second chord is draped across the couples hands\*

[Jen], Will you burden him?

I may

Is that your intent?

No

[Matt], Will you burden her?

I may

Is that your intent?

No

\*To Both\*

Will you share the burdens of each so that your spirits may grow in this union?

Yes

And so the binding is made.

\*Drape third chord across the couples hands\*

Jen, will you share his dreams?

Yes

Matt], will you share her dreams?

Yes

\*To Both\*

Will you dream together to create new realities and hopes?

Yes

And so the binding is made.

\*Drape fourth chord across the couples hands\*

Matt, will you cause her anger?

I may

Is that your intent?

No

Jen, will you cause him anger?

I may

Is that your intent?

No

\*To Both\*

Will you take the heat of anger and use it to temper the strength of this union?

We Will

And so the binding is made.

\*Drape fifth chord across the couples hands\*

Jen, Will you honor him?

I will

Matt, Will you honor her?

I will

\*To Both\*

Will you seek to never give cause to break that honor?

We shall never do so

And so the binding is made.

\*Drape sixth chord across the couples hands\*

\*Tie chords together while saying:\*

The knots of this binding are not formed by these chords but instead by your vows.

Blessings and Advice:

Priestess: Jen and Matt... as the two of you come into this marriage uniting you as husband and wife, and as you this day affirm your faith and love for one another, I would ask that you always remember to cherish each other as special and unique individuals, that you respect the thoughts, ideas and suggestions of one another. Be able to forgive, do not hold grudges, and live each day that you may share it together – as from this day forward you shall be each other's home, comfort and refuge, your marriage strengthened by your love and respect for each other.

Just as two threads woven in opposite directions will form a most beautiful tapestry, so too can your two lives merged together make a beautiful marriage. To make your relationship work will take love. This is the core of your marriage and why you are here today. It will take trust, to know in your hearts that you truly want the best for each other. It will take dedication, to stay open to one another – and to learn and grow together. It will take faith, to go forward together without knowing exactly what the future brings. And it will take commitment, to hold true to the journey you both pledge today to share together.

May that glory which rests on all who love, rest upon you, bless you, and fill you with happiness and a gracious spirit.

May all that is noble and lovely and true abound in your hearts, and abide within you.

May your love give you strength in all your days together. May you accept life's rewards and bear its burdens together for all time.

May your hearts be united in the never ending bond of pure love.

May you share many happy years together and enjoy the rewards of a good life.

May your friends and family bring you happiness, and may your generous love for them be returned to you, many times over.

And may joy and peace live always in your hearts and in your home

(take off cords and lay them on the altar)

Cakes and Ale

Priestess: (hands chalice to the Matt,saying:)

(Priestess hands plate of bread to Matt.)

May you eat your fill from the plate of plenty.

(Matt feeds bride and bride feeds groom.)

May you drink your fill from the cup of love.

(Matt holds chalice to Jen while she sips then Jen takes chalice and holds it to Matt while he sips. The chalice is then handed back to the Priestess who sets it on the table.

Sword and Broom

(bridesmaid and best man, lay out sword and broom)

As your first act of working together as a couple, I'd like to ask that you jump the sword and the broom. May the sword cut all ties with the past that don't benefit you both as a couple, and the broom sweep them away.

Jump over Sword and broom.

Closing:

Priestess: Jen and Matt have declared their love before this gathering, and made their pledges to each other. Therefore, by the authority given to me by the state, and by the depth of your commitment to each other, and the breadth of support shown by this gathered community, I pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride.

I take great pleasure in introducing this newly united couple, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton.

(bagpiper leads them out of the room)

Bride and Groom

Ring Bearer

Bridesmaids/Groomsmen

Priestess: (to guests) The wedding party will have their receiving line in the side room. Please join them there to give them your well wishes.