

Unity Symbols

Flowers, Water, Sand, and Candles can all be used as symbols of Unity. A unity symbol ceremony usually takes place after the Vows and Exchange of Rings. It can also be performed after the Vows and before the Exchange of Rings.

Flowers

1.

Unity Flowers

The Bride and Groom each take a flower from their mothers.

Bde and Grm have each taken a flower from their mothers symbolizing their two separate families. These two flowers will now be placed together in one vase. The two separate heritages of their families are joined together as one.

The two flowers are placed together in one vase.

2.

Combining Bouquets

Flower Ceremony

True partnership is only achieved by a man and woman who retain their individuality even as they unite. We ask God to bless and protect this union. Your union is also the joining of two families. Grm and Bde, as you combine your two families and these two bouquets into one, you join your lives together.

*The Bride and Groom each get a small bouquet from their parents.
They then combine the two bouquets and place the flowers in a vase.*

Water

The color of the water is up to each couple. Try the colors out before to see if they actually change. The couple who first choose this found that yellow didn't affect the red and everything remained red.

Mixing of Waters

Bde and Grm have decided to express their unity with a mixing of colors.

As you see there are two cylinders filled with colored water. Each color symbolizes Grm and Bde's personality.

We have Bde's color, Red - which is fiery, passionate and also the color of love. While Grm's color, Yellow, is warm, steady, and also the color of friendship.

When these two colors and personalities merge, they will unite love, passion, stability and friendship, making one balanced, unified color. Grm and Bde become a part of each other, while also maintaining a part of themselves.

Music

*The Bride and Groom walk back to the table
and slowly pour the water, accompanied by music*

Sand

Find three containers, one for you and your fiancée to pour the sand into, two for each of you to pour the sand from. You can find colored or plain sand at most craft stores. After Judge Armstrong reads the text pour the two containers of sand into the third container simultaneously. You may wish to leave a small amount of sand in each container to symbolize that although you are now joined as one, you each remain individuals. You may also wish to empty the two smaller containers – so be sure the sand doesn't overflow the larger container.

1.

Sand Ceremony

As a symbol of their two lives joining, Bde and Grm will pour these two vials of sand together. Once these sands are mixed they can never be separated again – just like the lives of Bde and Grm are joined as one and inseparable.

The Bride and Groom slowly pour each vial of sand into a third empty vial. The sands are mixed as they pour.

2.

Sand Ceremony

You are committing here today to share the rest of your lives with one another. Today, this relationship is symbolized through the pouring of these two individual containers of sand into a third one. One, representing you, Bde, and all that you were, all that you are, and all that you will ever be. One, representing you, Grm, and all that you were, all that you are, and all that you will ever be.

To Bride: Bde, pour some of your sand, which will represent you as an individual.

The Bride pours sand.

To Groom: Grm, pour some of your sand, which will represent you as an individual.

The Groom pours sand.

Just as the individual grains of sand can never again be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so your marriage will be.

Bde and Grm, now pour your remaining sand into the container together to represent the joining of your two individual lives into this union of marriage.

The Bride and Groom pour the remaining sand.

As you have joined yourselves in wedlock may you strive always to meet this commitment with the same spirit you now exhibit.

3.

Sand Ceremony

Grm and Bde, you have just sealed your relationship by the giving and receiving of rings. This covenant is a relationship pledge between two people who agree that they will commit themselves to one another throughout their lives. The most beautiful example of this partnership is the marriage relationship. You have committed here today to share the rest of your lives with each other.

Today, this relationship is symbolized through the pouring of these two individual containers of sand one, representing you, Grm and all that you were, all that you are, and all that you will ever be, and the other representing you, Bde, and all that you were and all that you are, and all that you will ever be.

As these two containers of sand are poured into the third container, the individual containers of sand will no longer exist, but will be joined together as one. Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be.

The Bride and Groom slowly pour each vial of sand into a third empty vial. The sands are mixed as they pour.

4.

Unity Sand Ceremony

Grm and Bde, today you join your separate lives together. The two separate containers of sand symbolize your separate lives, separate families and separate sets of friends. They represent all that you are and all that you'll ever be as an individual. They represent your lives before today.

As these two containers of sand are poured into the third container, the individual containers of sand will no longer exist, but will be joined together as one. Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be.

The Bride and Groom pour the two containers of sand into a third container simultaneously.

Unity Candles

The side candles are called taper candles. They can be lit before the ceremony by anyone designated by the Bride and Groom – the ushers, parents, etc. The taper candles can be lit during the ceremony by the Bride and Groom, or by a member of each of their families – mothers, fathers, both parents. These taper candles are then used to light the Unity Candle.

Hurricane Lamps

For an outside ceremony, it is usually very difficult to light the candles and to keep them lit. Use hurricane lamps with each candle. Don't have the side candles lit during the ceremony – light them just before the Unity Candle is lit. The Best Man or Judge Armstrong can lift the large hurricane lamp from the Unity Candle as you light it and then quickly replace it.

NOTE: Purchase a hurricane lamp for the Unity Candle that is wide enough for the candle to fit inside and tall enough to be a couple inches, or more, above the top of the flame. The side candles should also be short enough to fit inside their two hurricane lamps. The hurricane lamp doesn't help when the candle is taller than the lamp or when the Unity Candle is too wide for the lamp because of the decorations around the base of the candle. Be sure everything works together before the day of the ceremony.

Instructions

With candles lighted, the Bride's and Groom's parents come forward and then light the Unity Candle held by the Bride and Groom.

The Bride and Groom each take a lighted candle and join the flames of the two candles to light the Unity Candle. The two candles can then be extinguished leaving only the Unity Candle lighted.

The Bride and Groom each light a candle and then join the flames of the two candles to light the Unity Candle. The two candles can then be extinguished leaving only the Unity Candle lighted.

1.

Unity Candle

The flames of life from these two families are now being united as one. May the light and warmth of this new single flame grow ever stronger through the years protecting and giving

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joy and strength to all those whose lives it may touch. May it also serve to remind Grm and Bde of God's eternal light and love, especially in times of trouble and sorrow.

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

2.

Remembrance

Our community is shared, if in a different way, by those who have passed beyond this life. Their roles in the life of Grm and Bde are no less remembered and honored as we savor today's joyous moments. Join with us, then, in fond memory of all these people, and in particular the grandfathers/grandmothers fathers/mothers of the Groom and Bride, () and (), In their memory, let us be silent together.

Moment of Silence

In all the quiet of this very special moment, we pause, also to give thanks for all the rich experiences of life that have brought Grm and Bde to this point in their lives. We are grateful for the values which have flowed into them from those who have loved them and nurtured them and pointed them along life's way and for the values which they have found by their own strivings. We are grateful that within them is the dream of a great love and the resources to use that in creating a home that shall endure.

Unity Candle Lighting

The heritage each brings to this marriage will continue to be an important element in their lives, but now will be shared between them. In commemoration of the merging of these two rich heritages and in memory of those, living and dead, who are part of these heritages, I now invite Grm's parents and Bde's parents to come forth and light candles, representing each of the families of this couple.

Parents light side candles.

Grm and Bde will now light the unity candle with these candles, symbolizing the union of their two families in this marriage and the rich heritage each brings to it. As they light the unity candle, they do not extinguish their flames. Although they are embarking upon a new and unique relationship in the union of their lives in marriage, they, nonetheless, retain their own separate and unique identities and personalities.

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*The Bride and Groom each take a lighted candle and join the flames
of the two candles to light the Unity Candle.*

3.

Unity Candle Ceremony

The lighting of the Unity Candle is a ritual symbolizing the union of a man and a woman as they enter into marriage. The Unity Candle represents the oneness that is being created by the joining of their individual lives into a shared journey. The individual candles symbolize the uniqueness of Bde and Grm, as they walk side by side, heading in the same direction.

By committing to one another today, they kindle the light within each other, and promise to do their best to always see that light within one another. To nurture and tend that flame in each other, especially in difficult times, when this may be difficult to do.

To Bride: Bde, take this candle as a symbol of your individual path.

To Groom: And Grm, take this candle as a symbol of your individual path.

Now joining your individual flames together, light the center candle, which symbolizes the torch of your union, and the new greater flame of your marriage. And as you do so, silently vow to tend to the flame of this union, and to never forget that just as this union is made stronger, by your strength as individuals, so are you as individuals made stronger by the strength of this union.

4.

Unity Candle Lighting

Grm and Bde, 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.

The Bride and Groom each take a candle.

These candles represent your lives before today. Now together light the center one.

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

Now extinguish your own candles.

The Bride and Groom extinguish their individual candles.

Your two lives are now joined in one light, the joining together of your two families and sets of friends to one, that neither time nor circumstance can alter.

5.

Unity Candle

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

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

They can either extinguish the individual candles or leave them lit.

6.

Unity Candle

Together Bde and Grm light one candle from two smaller candles as they acknowledge their union as husband and wife. By allowing the flame of the two smaller candles to remain lit, they also accept the individuality of each other as a means to fulfilling their oneness."

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

7.

Lighting of Unity Candle

I am my beloved and my beloved is mine. From every human being there rises a light that reaches straight to heaven and when two souls that are destined to be together find each other their streams of light flow together and a single brighter light goes forth from their united being.

Bde and Grm will now light the Unity Candle.

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Music

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

8.

Lighting of the Unity Candle

Grm and Bde the two distinct flames represent your lives to this moment; individual and unique. This candle before you is a candle of Commitment because it takes two people working together to keep it aflame. This candle is also a candle of Unity because both must come together, giving a spark of themselves, to create the new light. Grm and Bde will light the center candle to symbolize the union of their lives. As you light this candle, may the brightness of the flame shine throughout your lives. May the radiance of this one light be a testimony of your unity. May this candle burn brightly as symbols of your commitment to each other. May it give you courage and reassurance in darkness, warmth and safety in the cold.

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

The flames of life from these two families are now united as one. May the light and warmth of this new single flame grow ever stronger through the years protecting and giving joy and strength to all those whose lives it may touch. May it also serve to remind Grm and Bde of God's eternal light and love, especially in times of trouble and sorrow.

9.

Unity Candle

Grm and Bde have brought light, meaning, and joy into each other's lives. They are unique individuals with their own personalities and their own strengths. Their individuality is symbolized by the two candles that we see before us today. And as they go forward now to light the center candle, they are declaring the fact that something new is being created here. Their individuality still exists and they will honor each other's uniqueness, but they also joyfully declare that they are one! May the light of their shared journey burn brightly from this day forth.

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

10.

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Unity Candle

Today Grm and Bde come here from two different families, from which a new family will be created. At this time, I invite the parents of Grm and Bde to come forward to light the individual candles. The individual flames, representing each family and their values and hopes for their children, symbolize two families and individuals who will become one.

Parents come forward and light the individual candles.

Grm and Bde, the candle you are about to light is a Candle of Marriage. Its fire is magical because it represents the light of two people in love. This candle before you is a Candle of Commitment because it takes two people working together to keep it aflame. This candle is also a Candle of Unity because the flames of both families must come together, to create the new light.

As you light this candle today, may the brightness of the flame shine throughout your lives. May it give you courage and reassurance in darkness, warmth and safety in the cold, and strength and joy in your bodies, minds, and spirits. May the light of love, the light of understanding, the light of respect, and the light of tolerance shine eternally for you both. May your union be forever blessed.

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle using the individual candles.

11.

Unity Candle

Today, each of us has been touched and renewed by the power of love, which we have seen in Bde and Grm. The love and joy you have discovered in one another is not of your own creation. God's creative love has been nurtured within you through the love you have known in family and friends. These two candles reflect love which is forever restless until it touches another. As you now join these flames into one, may the love, which you have promised to each other, be enriched, each day through the grace of God.

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

12.

Candle Ceremony

Now, we're going to engage in a ceremony of spiritual symbolism. Ancient sages tell us that for each of us, there is a candle, a symbol of our own inner light, but that no one can kindle his or her own candle. Each of us needs someone else to kindle it for us. When two people fall in love, they kindle each other's candles, creating great light and joy and glorious expectations.

Groom and Bride, I'd like you to remember when it was in your relationship that you first realized you were truly in love and wanted to spend the rest of your lives together. And holding that thought....

To Groom: Groom, take this candle

The Groom picks up a candle.

symbol of the inner light in Bride. Light it by the eternal light, with the dedication to rekindle it again and again, whenever necessary.

To Bride: And Bride, take this candle

The Bride picks up a candle.

symbol of the inner light in Groom. Light it by the eternal light, with the dedication to rekindle it again and again, whenever necessary.

With these candles, we can see how to achieve a beautiful marriage. In your marriage, you will try to bring these lights, the symbols of yourselves, closer and closer to each other, until they become one

The Bride and Groom join their flames and hold them together.

great torch of light, a radiant symbol of love, joy, peace, and harmony. This is the mystery of the union two becoming one.

Yes, it is vitally important to remember that there are always really two

The Bride and Groom divide their flames.

in marriage, each with his or her own desires, yearnings, dreams, and wishes. And these must be respected and responded to with great love, with great compassion, and with genuine tenderness.

We know that it is the prayer of your beloved, as it is the prayer of each of us here, that you will continuously light these candles of love, so that there will always be light and joy, peace and harmony in your hearts and in your home.

The Bride and Groom set the candles down.

13.

Unity Candle

Grm and Bde have brought light, meaning and joy into each other's lives. They are unique individuals with their own personalities and their own strengths. Their individuality is symbolized by the two candles that we see before us today. As they light the center candle, they are declaring the fact that something new is being created here. Their individuality still exists and they will honor each other's uniqueness, but they also joyfully declare that they are one! May the light of their shared journey burn brightly from this day forth.

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

14.

Unity Candle

Bde and Grm will light their Unity Candle, a symbol of their relationship and love. The candles from which they light it have been lit by their parents to represent their lives to this moment.

The two candles, representing the faith, wisdom, and love they have received from their parents, are distinct, each burning alone. Bde and Grm will light the center candle to symbolize the union of their lives. As this one light burns undivided, so shall their love be one.

The Bride and Groom light the Unity Candle.

May the radiance of this one light be a testimony of their unity. May these candles burn brightly as symbols of their commitment to each other, and as a tribute to their parents' everlasting love for them.

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