

Stuart Butterworth
The 'Caring, Can-do Celebrant'
Ten Wedding Poems
and Readings for You



1. Union by Robert Fulghum

You have known each other from the first glance of acquaintance to this point of commitment. At some point, you decided to marry. From that moment of yes to this moment of yes, indeed, you have been making promises and agreements in an informal way.

All those conversations that were held riding in a car or over a meal or during long walks—all those sentences that began with ‘When we’re married’ and continued with ‘I will and you will and we will’—those late night talks that included ‘someday’ and ‘somehow’ and ‘maybe’—and all those promises that are unspoken matters of the heart.

All these common things, and more, are the real process of a wedding. The symbolic vows that you are about to make are a way of saying to one another, ‘You know all those things we’ve promised and hoped and dreamed—well, I meant it all, every word.’

Look at one another and remember this moment in time. Before this moment you have been many things to one another—acquaintance, friend, companion, lover, dancing partner, and even teacher, for you have learned much from one another in these last few years.

Now you shall say a few words that take you across a threshold of life, and things will never quite be the same between you. For after these vows, you shall say to the world, this—is my husband, this—is my wife.



2. To Love Is Not To Possess by James Kavanaugh

To love is not to possess,
To own or imprison,
Nor to lose one's self in another.
Love is to join and separate,
To walk alone and together,
To find a laughing freedom
That lonely isolation does not permit.
It is finally to be able
To be who we really are
No longer clinging in childish dependency
Nor docilely living separate lives in silence,
It is to be perfectly one's self
And perfectly joined in permanent commitment
To another—and to one's inner self.





3. I'll Be There For You by Louise Cuddon

I'll be there my darling, through thick and through thin
When your mind's in a mess and your head's in a spin
When your plane's been delayed, and you've missed the last train.

When life is just threatening to drive you insane
When your thrilling whodunit has lost its last page
When somebody tells you, you're looking your age
When your coffee's too cool, and your wine is too warm
When the forecast said 'Fine', but you're out in a storm
When your quick break hotel, turns into a slum
And your holiday photos show only your thumb

When you park for five minutes in a resident's bay
And return to discover you've been towed away
When the jeans that you bought in hope or in haste
Just stick on your hips and don't reach round your waist
When the food you most like brings you out in red rashes
When as soon as you boot up the bloody thing crashes

So my darling, my sweetheart, my dear...
When you break a rule, when you act the fool
When you've got the flu, when you're in a stew
When you're last in the queue, don't feel blue 'cause
I'm telling you, I'll be there



4. Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

'I have for the first time found what I can truly love—I have found you. You are my sympathy—my better self—my good angel—I am bound to you with a strong attachment. I think you good, gifted, lovely; a fervent, a solemn passion is conceived in my heart; it leans to you, draws you to my centre and spring of life, wrap my existence about you—and, kindling in pure, powerful flame, fuses you and me in one.'

5. The Apache Wedding Prayer

Now you will feel no rain, For each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold, For each of you will be warmth to the other.
Now there is no more loneliness, For each of you will be companion to the other.
Now you are two bodies, But there is one life before you.
Go now to your dwelling place, To enter into the days of your togetherness.
And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

6. Your love is as the sea– Author Unknown

Your love is as the sea, constant and ever-changing... Your love is as the wind, rapturous and all encompassing. Your love is as the earth, solid and firm... Your love is as a flame, illuminating your lives and warming your hearts.

Yet your love extends beyond the sea, wind, earth and flame; it is greater than who you are and meaningless without you; it is more powerful than your past yet the foundation for your future.

It has brought you here today to become one in the eyes of your family and friends, for all the days to come.

Your love is the essence of your lives.

7. In Your Eyes, I Have Found My Home – Author Unknown

In your eyes, I have found my home. In your heart, I have found my love. In your soul, I have found my mate.
With you, I am whole. Full. Alive. You make me laugh, you let me cry, you are my breath, my every heartbeat.

I AM YOURS.

You are mine, of this we are certain. You are lodged in my heart, the small key lost, you must stay forever.
You are my inspiration, and my soul's fire, you are the magic of my days. You help me laugh, you teach me
love, you provide a safe place for me, unlike I've ever known.

You free me to sing my own song, you are more of an amazement to me, each day I rediscover you, you are
my greatest love, I am yours. YOU ARE MINE.

8. Family Tree - by Alison Jean Thomas

It seems strange to me
That a family tree is drawn from the top of the page.
Instead, draw mine with roots deeply planted in firm ground
Like forefathers, whose stories retold,
Nourish us.
Draw the trunk giving support and power,
Strongly branching out
So that young shoots can reach high
And buds,
Some yet unfurled,
May catch dreams in sunlight.



9. The Key to Love – Author Unknown

The key to love is understanding... The ability to comprehend not only the spoken word, but those unspoken gestures, the little things that say so much by themselves.

The key to love is forgiveness... to accept each others faults and pardon mistakes, without forgetting, but with remembering what you learn from them.

The key to love is sharing... Facing your good fortunes as well as the bad, together; both conquering problems, forever searching for ways to intensify your happiness.

The key to love is giving... without thought of return, but with the hope of just a simple smile, and by giving in but never giving up.

The key to love is respect... realising that you are two separate people, with different ideas; that you don't belong to each other, that you belong with each other, and share a mutual bond.

The key to love is inside us all... It takes time and patience to unlock all the ingredients that will take you to its threshold; it is the continual learning process that demands a lot of work... but the rewards are more than worth the effort... and that is the key to love.



10. You Are The Bubbles - by Rachel Bright

Together, you are the bubbles in one another's champagne
The morning sun through a window
The breaking of a smile.

Together, you are the one doughnut in the bag with more jam than all the others.
That photo where everybody looks great.
The know-all-the-words, sing-out-of-tune chorus of your favourite song.

Together, you are the beginnings of a big idea.
The twinkly bits that hang in the sky after the firework goes bang.
The cold, thin air at the top of a mountain.
The only two people in a crowded room.

Together, you are that unforgettable day of the holiday.
An accidental adventure.
Chocolate chip.
The last two pages of your favourite book.
A BBQ with friends.
The spray of the sea.
The nose of the cheese.
A kiss.
A hug.
A hold-my-hand.

A decision which, looking back, will seem to be the most excellent one you've ever made.

Together you are bubbles.
The unburstable bubbles of the very best things in life.
The only things any of us ever really need.



