

Joe and Beth,

You have come to this day with a deepening friendship, respect, and love for one another. There is much that you treasure in one another. You've also said that you are comfortable with one another, that you can almost finish one another's sentences, that you both have a sense of humor with good "give and take" to it, that you both can talk and listen well, and that you truly believe you will be able to talk out anything in the years to come.

You want your marriage to show a couple who care about what is going on in the world around them, who are thoughtful but who also have fun, who work well off each other, and who create space for one another as individuals.

Your readings for your marriage service speak of how you envision this venture upon which you embark today.

Whitman's poetry conjures the excitement of the journey with the possibilities of the unknown and the pledge of those who would journey together for a whole life long. Lindbergh's prose captures the lightness and balance called for in each moment of what is always a dynamic relationship.

The writer to the Colossian Christians speaks of both the nature of relationship that always reveals forgiveness and forbearance and grace. Such a relationship is empowered to do so because the people in it continually remember how God's love has been given to them in Jesus Christ, how they have been loved, forgiven, constantly called into new life.

Whitman wrote: "However shelter'd this port and however calm these waters we must not anchor here," – indeed a marriage will not always be the excitement and happiness you experience this day or even that which you have known in the first months and years of your relationship.

You will continually sail into unknown waters. But if you travel lightly and aware of one another in the rhythm of the relationship, and as Lindbergh writes: not needing "to hold on tightly because they move confidently in the same pattern," and if you always remember God's never-ending care for you, you will discover joy that deepens far beyond simple happiness.

And you will find ever-renewed resources for life's journey.

May you continue to treasure one another all your days, and may God bless you in your marriage.

Love,
Jamie