**Lee/Shaw Wedding**

**Gathering Words**

Welcome everyone. Lisa and Thomas have brought us together here for an occasion of great joy and cause for celebrations. Having found each other, they have built the kind of relationship that will serve them well as the foundation of their marriage. They have chosen each and every one of us here today to be here with them and to witness their wedding vows as they join together as husband and wife.

Lisa and Thomas have grown together over the last few years. They have been strengthened by their love for one another and have received many blessings through its beauty. They have learned that they can depend each other and on the power of their love, and that through each other they are becoming better people.

So, in witnessing this ceremony today, we are observing only an outward sign of an inward union that already exists between Lisa and Thomas. Marriage is one of the most important relationships that two people can commit to in their lifetime. Marriage offers the greatest challenges to overcome; but in return, it gives us love, strength, and friendship. Marriage deepens and enriches every facet of life; happiness is fuller, memories are fresher, and commitment is stronger.

And so, we have gathered here together as family and friends to witness and celebrate the coming together of Lisa and Thomas as they enter into the sacred and joyous union of marriage.

 **Declaration of Support**

Lisa and Thomas would like to acknowledge their parents who are such an essential part of who they are today. They thank you for being their first teachers of the power and possibilities in life. They also thank you for the love and support you have given them throughout their lives. May you take great pride in the fact that the seeds you have planted in Lisa and Thomas will flourish in the formation of this new family today.

To all of their friends, being able to share their wedding day with you, surrounded by your love and support, is a treasured blessing. Knowing that your best wishes go forward with Lisa and Thomas strengthens them as they embark upon their journey as husband and wife.

**Marriage Address**

Lisa and Thomas, you began simply as friends, and now that friendship has grown into a loving and abiding commitment. Your marriage will no doubt, be filled with surprises. It is a great and challenging adventure into the depths and heights of human caring, affection, trust, and understanding.

Let your hearts be truly safe and at home with each other. Be generous in expressing your love. Be open to receive love from one another. Be flexible and forgiving with each other. May your love create a safe haven for you both on the journey that lies ahead of you.

Remember that your relationship is alive and ever changing, and that your love is a gift. How you regard each other and how you behave towards one another will determine the destiny of your union. Be kind to your relationship. Nourish it with tender loving care; and above all else, keep your love alive. Treat it as the precious blessing it is.

**Poem Reading**

The Art of Marriage by Wilferd Peterson

Happiness in marriage is not something that just happens,

A good marriage must be created.

In the art of marriage,

The little things are the big things.
It is never being too old to hold hands.
It is remembering to say I love you at least once a day.
It is never going to sleep angry.
It is never taking the other for granted;
the courtship should not end with the honeymoon,
it should continue through all the years.
It is having a mutual sense of values and common objectives.
It is standing together facing the world.
It is forming a circle of love
that gathers in the whole family.
It is doing things for each other,
not in the attitude of duty or sacrifice,
but in the spirit of joy.
It is speaking words of appreciation
and demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.
It is not expecting the husband to wear a halo
or the wife to have wings of an angel.
It is not looking for perfection in each other.
It is cultivating flexibility, patience,
understanding and a sense of humor.
It is having the capacity to forgive and forget.
It is giving each other an atmosphere
in which each can grow.
It is finding room for the things of the spirit.
It is a common search for the good and the beautiful.
It is establishing a relationship in which the independence is equal,
dependence is mutual and the obligation is reciprocal.
It is not only marrying the right partner, it is being the right partner.

**Sand Ceremony**

“LISA and THOMAS, today you join your separate lives together. These two separate bottles of sand symbolize your separate lives, separate families, and separate sets of friends. They represent all that you were and all that you are as individuals. They represent your lives before today.”

“As these two containers of sand are joined together to become one, so too, are your individual lives joined together to become one. Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be, united as one for all of your days.”

**Wedding Vows**

Lisa and Thomas, we are here to remember and rejoice with you and to recount with one another that it is love that guides us on our path, and it is in this spirit that you have come here today to exchange these vows:

*Thomas first:*

*I,…take you,…*

*To be my wife/husband from this day forward.*

*I promise to love you with all of my heart,*

*To laugh with you in times of joy,*

*To comfort you in times of sadness.*

*To be your strength in times of hardship,*

*To never take you for granted,*

*To listen when you speak, and*

*To cherish you as my partner and best friend,*

*Today, tomorrow, and always.*

*Lisa Repeats*

**Giving/Receiving of Rings**

*“May I have the rings please???”*

These rings are symbols of the love, friendship, and faithfulness that you share. As circles, they have no beginning and no end. May these rings be your most treasured adornment and may the love that they symbolize be your most treasured possession.

**Ring Vows**

*Thomas First:*

*With this ring, I pledge to you with all of my heart,*

*To love and support you in all ways*

*To the best of my ability*

*For the rest of our lives*

*Lisa Repeats*

**Final Words**

Lisa and Thomas, our best wishes go with you from this day forward. We wish you a fulfilling life, rich with happiness. We wish for you a gentle and peaceful life that nurtures and comforts you. We wish for you a noble life, which reflects your honesty, kindness, and integrity. We wish for you an adventuresome life, exploring the fullness of your own and each other’s true selves.

There is a wonderful life ahead of you. Live it fully. Love its changes and choices. Let life amaze you and bring you great joy.

And now, by the power vested in me by the State of California, I now pronounce you husband and wife. Thomas, you’ve kissed her as your sweet heart, now kiss her as your wife. You may now kiss your bride!!!

**Presentation**

Ladies and gentleman, I present to you for the very first time…Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lee.