### Standard Civil (Non-Religious) Ceremony

*Processional/Introductions/Greeting:*

We are gathered here today in this wonderful paradise, to celebrate one of life's greatest relationships – the union between man and woman, which we call marriage. As you, **Bride** and **Groom**, are joined together in this marriage, search your hearts for the wisdom of this covenant, which has from ancient times been expressed with those ideas that come from the heart.

Since the laws of this community governing marriages have been met, the joining of these two people shall now take place. Before the vows are taken, however, it is my responsibility to remind each of you of the significance and importance of the relationship you are on the threshold of entering.

The promise you are about to make to each other is one of irrevocable love, fidelity, cooperation, and understanding through life and all of life’s difficult challenges. I urge each of you to live up to the commitments you are now making to one another.

Be caring, be kind, be loving, be thoughtful, be faithful, and give as much as you would take.

Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone, for the strings of the guitar are alone even though they quiver with the same music.

Stand together, yet not too near, for the pillars of the temple stand apart, just as both the genep tree and the mango grow, but not in each other’s shadow.

Let your love be a gift, and the soil in which your hearts take root.

In reminding you to observe your marital duties and obligations I have done my part. And now it is your turn…

Please join hands and look into each other’s eyes.

*Declaration of Intent/Exchange of Vows:*

Do you **Groom** have this woman to be your wedded wife?

Groom: “I do.”

Then repeat after me:

I, **Groom**, take you, **Bride**, to be my wedded wife,/ to have and to hold from this day forward,/ for better, for worse,/ for richer, for poorer,/ in sickness and in health,/ to love and to cherish,/ till death do us part.

Do you **Bride** have this man to be your wedded husband?

Bride: “I do.”

Then repeat after me:

I, **Bride**, take you, **Groom**, to be my wedded husband,/ to have and to hold from this day forward,/ for better, for worse,/ for richer, for poorer,/ in sickness and in health,/ to love and to cherish,/ till death do us part.

*Exchange of Rings:*

May I have the rings?

**Groom**, place the ring on **Bride’s** finger and repeat after me:

With this ring I thee wed./ Wear it as a symbol of our love and commitment.

**Bride**, place the ring on **Groom’s** finger and repeat after me

 With this ring I thee wed./ Wear it as a symbol of our love and commitment.

Your two lives are now joined in one unbroken circle. Wherever you go, may you always return to one another in your togetherness. May you two find in each other the love for which all men and women long for. May you grow in understanding and compassion. And may these two rings symbolize the spirit of undying love in the hearts of both of you.

An excerpt from "The Prophet" by Kahil Gibran

Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself.
But if you love and must needs have desires, let these be your desires:
To melt and be like a running brook that sings its melody to the night.
To know the pain of too much tenderness.
To be wounded by your own understanding of love;
And to bleed willingly and joyfully.
To wake at dawn with a winged heart and give thanks for another day of loving;
To rest at the noon hour and meditate love's ecstasy;
To return home at eventide with gratitude;
And then to sleep with a prayer for the beloved in your heart and a song of praise on your lips.

*Recognition and Declaration/Presentation of the Couple/Recessional:*

And so now, inasmuch as you, **Groom**, and you, **Bride**, have announced the truths that are already written in your hearts, by the power invested in me by the Territory of the United States Virgin Islands, I now pronounce you husband and wife.

**Groom**, you may kiss your bride!