

Unity Candle Ceremony (to be used during Wedding Reception)

Preparations

Place the unity candle on or near the table where the wedding party will sit. Just before mealtime, have someone invite your guests to take their places and focus their attention at the head table for a brief prayer. One of you may want to do this or perhaps invite one of your parents to do this since together you are all hosting the event.

Option 1:

A Parents' Prayer

The groom's parent(s) light one taper and the bride's parent(s) the other. The following blessing prayer is prayed by one or more of your parents. It is divided into sections to accommodate more than one prayer leader.

**Dear friends,
let us pray together for N. and N.
and for God's blessing on this meal we are about to share.**

Pause briefly for silent prayer.

**All-loving God,
you have joined our children N. and N. in marriage.
For this we praise and thank you.**

**May their joy be abundant and their sorrows few.
May they embrace the challenge and beauty of Christian marriage
and gratefully welcome children, should they be so blessed.**

**May they know the comfort of loving friends and enduring faith.
And may they grow old together, secure in your friendship and tender care.**

**May this candle that they light,
remind them of the unbreakable bond they now share.**

Each of you then takes a taper candle and together light the unity candle.

**Gracious Lord,
We ask you to pour out your blessing on this meal we are about to share.
May it nourish our bodies and strengthen the bonds of love
that we now share because of this happy day.**

All join in praying:

**Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts,
which we are about to receive from thy bounty,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Alternatively, the prayer leader ends with:

Through Christ, our Lord we pray. Amen.

Unity Candle Ceremony Option 2:

A Couple's Prayer

The two tapers may be lit ahead of time as your guests are entering or you might ask your best man and maid or matron of honor (or two other guests) to light these just before the prayer begins. One or both of you lead the prayer.

**O God,
you have joined us together in marriage
and surrounded us with loving friends.
We now light this candle to remind us of our unbreakable bond.**

Each takes a taper and from them light the unity candle.

Then continue the prayer:

**Pour out your blessings upon those we love
and upon this meal we are about to share.
Fill our hearts with gratitude and enduring confidence.
And may the joy of this day sustain us, comfort us,
and bring us hope all the days of our married life.**

**We pray through Christ Jesus, our Lord.
Amen.**