**Kurt & Cara’s Wedding**

12 September 2014

(Edition 4-RG-Final)

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**PRELUDE –** Background Music(string trio)

**PROCESSION –** Rick, Kurt, Sheila & Charles, Colleen & Stephen, Susan & John, Cianna, Cara & Rob

**WELCOME**

Please be seated. On behalf of the families of Kurt and Cara, thank you so much for coming to show your support and love. They have been anticipating this day for some time. I have been anticipating it as well—all of Kurt’s life, in fact!

**GIVING OF THE BRIDE**

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

Rob: “Her mother and I.”

**OPENING PRAYER**

Lord, thank you for this beautiful day where we can celebrate the love of Kurt and Cara. We thank you for the ordinance of marriage. It’s the perfect illustration of the pinnacle of love. In today’s ceremony we ask that by it we would be reminded of your love for each of us.

Lord, we thank you for those who have traveled a great distance to celebrate with Kurt and Cara. I pray that this outpouring of love will warm the hearts of this young couple.

Lord, we thank you for all the support they’ve received. We ask for Kurt and Cara to be encouraged by the friends and family who share in their love. I pray they will never forget it.

Finally, Lord, we ask that you would be present here with us. We love you and wouldn’t dare venture this service alone. Be here with us.

In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

**A MOTHER’S READING (SUSAN)**

The Bible is the earliest source of the institution of marriage. I will now ask Kurt’s mother, Susan, to read Mark 10:6-9 to show God’s original plan for marriage.

**MESSAGE**: “Planting a Garden”

It is appropriate for this wedding to occur at a

lavender **farm**. After all, the first wedding ceremony was also **outdoors**—in the beautiful **Garden** that Adam and Eve called “home.”

It was 27 years ago that God “**planted**” Kurt into my life—through his dear mother, whom I love to claim as my wife. Most of the friends here probably don’t know that you were **planted on earth** on your grandpa Kurt’s 70th birthday—the very day! You were the best birthday gift he ever had before he went to heaven.

I distinctly remember **planting** our first garden together with you, Kurt. You were three years old and very meticulous about **planting the seeds** at just the right depth! Many over the years have appreciated that kind of carefulness and attention to detail.

Kurt, I can’t tell you how many thousands of times your Mom and I have beamed with pride about you. God has indeed **planted** his work in you for this special day.

The garden and planting imagery continues as God **planted Cara** into the soil near you.

Cara, you were **planted at Agros** two years ago and you began **spreading your roots** towards Kurt. Agros is a fitting name, as it implies **agriculture.** I can see why Kurt was smitten by your love of life, your energy, intelligence, wittiness, your love for Jesus and your vivacious spirit. So in the past two years his quiet love for you **grew**.

Kurt, I’m sure you know that you are getting a great deal in this marriage. Your Mom and I couldn’t be happier than with your choice of a wife. She is God’s perfect gift for you—**planted** in your life so you both can grow together like **two plants** whose vines and branches become inseparably intertwined. Cara, we know that you also are getting a wonderful gift in Kurt!

Kurt, your Mom and I remember being on the phone with you two years ago. We were in Singapore and you were outside a Seattle grocery store. You were a bit uneasy because there was this girl who **rooted** herself towards

your apartment to fix you dinner as a way of saying thanks for helping her study for her grad school exam. When she **planted herself** in your life, you declared your typical saying… “Awkward!” We’re so glad to see that you later began to appreciate Cara’s forthrightness!

You are committing today to *love* each other…

**But what is love?**

This might not sound romantic, but *real* love goes beyond the warmth and glow, the

excitement and romance of being deeply “in love.” It is sacrificial––a *choosing* to care as much about the welfare and happiness of your spouse as your own. Real love is seen only after you have truly sacrificed yourself for the other. So what you feel now for one another only foreshadows a deeper and more meaningful love in your future.

Real love is not only sacrificial but also persevering. Nothing is easier than saying *words* and nothing harder than *living* them day in and day out. In a sense, what you promise today must be renewed and recommitted tomorrow. At the end of this ceremony, you’ll be husband and wife, but you still must decide each day to work on nurturing your relationship.

But real love is not total absorption in each other, either; it is looking outward in the same direction together. A Swedish proverb

says, “Sorrows shared are halved. Joys shared are doubled.” Marital love makes you stronger so you can reach out and become involved with life in ways you dared not risk alone.

Kurt, you must love Cara as Christ loves the church. This means you are to **protect** her by sacrificing yourself for her. Ephesians 5:25 says, “Husbands, **love** your wives, as Christ **loved** the church and gave himself up for her.”

As Christ sacrificed himself for the church, you are to sacrifice yourself for Cara—protecting her physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

You also show Christ-like love when you **honor** Cara. 1 Peter 3 says, “…husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way… showing **honor** to her.”

You must be diligent to understand Cara’s thoughts and feelings. Cara’s opinions matter! You honor her when you listen to them.

Cara, you also are about to assume serious responsibility.

To love Kurt as the Church loves Christ means you are to **submit** to Kurt. Ephesians 5 tells wives to submit to their husbands as the Church submits itself to Christ. In the original

language this word is written in the middle voice. This means that submission is a choice.

But what does that mean? Practically speaking, Cara, you choose to do two things.

First, choosing to submit to Kurt means you ***support*** him. Knowing Kurt’s heart, knowing Kurt’s dreams, you are to choose to help him carry them out. Kurt will look to you for solace and support in the hour of trial. You show love by offering that support.

Second, Cara, you choose to ***accept*** his role as head of the family. That doesn’t mean that he always receives the pleasure of making the final decision when you both reach a disagreement! But you show your trust by accepting Kurt’s role as the head of your family. This will make his leading a joy and be a blessing to both of you.

Marriage is not a merely contract but a lifetime covenant. It is a public declaration before God and all these friends and family gathered here.

**CHARGE TO THE COUPLE**

I charge you both, as you stand in God’s presence, to remember that *love and loyalty* will serve as the foundations of a happy and enduring home. If the solemn vows which you are about to make are kept permanently, and if you steadfastly seek to do the will of your Heavenly Father, your life will be full of peace and joy, and the home which you are establishing will endure every challenge.

**CHARGE TO THE PARENTS**

Parents, please stand to symbolize the commitment we are making today. To us as parents, our main role in relationship to Kurt and Cara is to encourage them to continue to love one another and not to interfere with their decisions. The four of us, including myself, need to remember that, Rob & Sheila, you now have a new son and, Susan and I, we now have a new daughter. We are to assist them in times of need without expecting anything in return. The Bible says that they “leave” us and “cleave” to one another. As a sign of accepting this new role, please say together, “We agree to accept this role.” “We agree to accept this role.” You may be seated.

**THE PLEDGE**

Cara and Kurt, please join hands and face one another.

Kurt, will you have Cara to be your wedded wife, to live together in the covenant of faith, hope, and love according to the intention of God for your lives together? Will you listen to her inmost thoughts, be considerate and tender in your care for her, and stand by her faithfully in sickness and in health, and, choosing her above all others, accept responsibility to meet her needs as long as you both shall live? Will you lead her, provide for her, honor her, and protect her as long as you live?
**“Yes, I will.”**

Cara, will you have Kurt to be your wedded husband, to live together in the covenant of faith, hope, and love according to the intention of God for your lives together? Will you listen to his inmost thoughts, be considerate and tender in your care for him, and stand by him faithfully in sickness and in health, and, choosing him above all others, accept responsibility to meet

his needs as long as you both shall live? Will you submit to his leadership, honor him, respect him, and accept his role as head of your family for the rest of your life?
**“Yes, I will.”**

**EXCHANGE OF VOWS**

Kurt and Cara have chosen to write and recite their own vows. Therefore, please do not blame me for anything you are about to hear!

Kurt: I promise to respect and appreciate both who you are, and who you want to become. I will endeavor to understand your deepest aspirations and apprehensions, and to meet your needs, never choosing to withhold when it is within my capacity to give.

I promise to protect your freedom, and support your choices. I will venture with you into uncharted territory, seeking adventure and excitement over comfort and security.

I promise that from this day forward, you will not walk alone. The challenges you face, we will face together. In your failures, I will support you, and in your successes, I will celebrate with you. Whenever you need me, I will be there to comfort and encourage you.

I promise to let my actions, more than my words, reflect my appreciation and love for you, and not let complacency obscure passion.

Cara: I will regard you with deepest respect. I will notice you, honor you, prefer you, venerate, and esteem you. I will praise you and love and admire you exceedingly. I will challenge you to lead and support you in the decisions you make. I will encourage you in my words, thoughts, and actions. I will serve you humbly and joyfully, even when that means putting my own dreams and goals on hold in order to help you achieve yours. I will enjoy life’s adventures with you and be your dearest companion. I will care for you and strive to understand you. I will be your biggest cheerleader and partner in crime.

**GIVING OF RINGS**

May I have the rings? May the seamless circle of these rings symbolize your endless love and remind you of the holy covenant you make now.

Kurt, please put Cara’s ring on and recite after me, “Cara, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love. With all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you.”

Cara, please commit yourself likewise, “Kurt, I give you this ring as a symbol of my love. With all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you.”

**WINE BLENDING CEREMONY**

Notice we have two types of wine up front. The red wine represents Kurt and the white wine pictures Cara. Why two types, different from one another?

From now on your thoughts shall be for each other rather than your individual selves. Your plans shall be mutual, your joys and sorrows shall be shared alike. As you each take your wine and mix it together, the new glass represents the union of your lives into one flesh. As this one glass cannot be divided, so shall your lives be indivisible in your new home.

**GIVING OF ROSES**

Cara and Kurt realize that they would not even have life itself apart from their mothers. As they present these beautiful roses to the dear women who gave them birth, they honor and esteem Sheila and Susan for the immeasurable role these mothers have played in their lives.

**A MOTHER’S READING (SHEILA)**

I will now ask Cara’s mother, Sheila, to read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 to show God’s plan for partnership in marriage.

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Lord, you have heard these vows. Look graciously upon Kurt and Cara, that they may love, honor and cherish each other, and so live together in faithfulness in patience, in wisdom and godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and a place of peace. We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

**PRONOUNCEMENT**

Cara and Kurt, please face the audience.

Now that Kurt and Cara have given themselves to each other by the promises they have exchanged, by the authority of God committed to me as a Minister of the Gospel, and, by the law of the State of Washington, I pronounce Kurt and Cara to be husband and wife, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Kurt, you now have your Dad’s permission to kiss your bride!!!

**DECLARATION**

Family and friends, I present to you for the first time Mr. & Mrs. Kurt & Cara Griffith!

**RECESSIONAL**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Be dismissed for appetizers & beverage.

Look for your name on the table.

Bathrooms are on the main and top floors.

We will sign papers and join you shortly.

Dinner will follow soon.