

The congregation stands to welcome the bridal party

The chuppah

The chuppah is a four-posted canopy with open sides used in Jewish wedding ceremonies. The material is a tallit, which is a prayer shawl traditionally used by men. The structure is said to represent the home a married couple will create and its openness can serve as a reminder to the couple to open their home and hearts to strangers and those in need.

Our chuppah is a very special one. The wooden poles have been handmade by our close friend, Alfie. The tallit belongs to Rebecca's father, Dennis. The chuppah is normally self-standing, but we have chosen ours to be held up by close friends and family - a nod towards our friends and family being the foundation on which our home stands.

Welcome by Dennis Snower

Circling by Rob and Rebecca

In Jewish tradition, the bride circles the groom seven times, symbolising the creation of a new family circle and forming a "wall" of protection for their relationship. Rebecca & Rob are adapting this ritual for this ceremony by each circling the other three times and then we will circle once together to represent the equality in their relationship.

Reading by David Snower

Vows by Rob and Rebecca

Exchange of rings

Seven blessings

In a traditional Jewish wedding, the seven blessings are a series of blessings over the new marriage which are adapted from ancient rabbinic teachings. Rebecca & Rob have chosen to adapt this tradition and instead have seven personal blessing over this wedding from their loved ones centred around love, a loving home, laughter, wisdom, health, creativity, friends and family.

Love - Danni Palmer

A loving home - Bianca Newcombe

Laughter - Phil Maclure

Wisdom - Charlie Beeson

Health - Annie Raff

Creativity - Tash Driver

Friends and Family - Lillian Beacham-Snowder

Schehecheyanu

The Schehecheyanu is a blessing used throughout the Jewish year to give thanks when something is experienced for the first time or the first time that year. This may not be our first wedding, but it is our first wedding celebration surrounded by all our friends and family.

Hebrew:

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu,
v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.*

Translation:

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Priestly Blessing

The priestly blessing is found in the Torah and consists of three blessings, which is why it's sometimes known as the "threefold blessing". The priest (in this case Rebecca's father and brother, Dennis and David) spreads his hands over the heads of those being blessed, like the Jewish priests would have done in ancient times.

Hebrew:

*Yivarechecha Adonai viyishmirecha
Ya'er Adonai panav elecha veechuneka
Yeesa Adonai panav elecha viyasem lecha shalom*

Translation:

*May God bless you and keep you.
May God shine His countenance upon you and be gracious to you.
May God turn His countenance toward you and grant you peace.*

Breaking of the glass

The breaking of the glass is a well known part of a Jewish wedding. There are countless interpretations for this tradition. Some see it as a reminder of the destruction of the First Temple of Jerusalem. Others say it is suggestive of the fragility of human relationships. The sound of it breaking warns us that love, like glass, is delicate and must be protected. Traditionally, it has also been a reminder during the most joyous occasion that life brings sadness and sorrow. Even in a moment of great happiness, we are asked to remember that there is still pain and suffering in the world, which we have a responsibility to help relieve.

The glass-breaking is followed by a communal "Mazel Tov!", which means "Congratulations!" in Hebrew and Yiddish. Siman Tov u'Mazel Tov is usually sung afterwards.

Mazel Tov!

Hebrew:

Siman tov u'mazal tov
Mazal tov v'siman tov
Siman tov u'mazal tov
Mazal tov v'siman tov

Siman tov u'mazal tov
Mazal tov v'siman tov
Y'hey lanu!

Y'hey lanu, y'hey lanu
U'l'khol Yis'ra'iel
Y'hey lanu, y'hey lanu
U'l'khol Yis'ra'iel

Translation:

Good signs and good luck
Good luck and good signs
Good signs and good luck
Good luck and good signs!

Good signs and good luck
Good luck and good signs
For us!

For us, for us
And all Israel
For us, for us
And all Israel!