SACERDOTAL FUNCTIONS & SERVICES

BY AMY SKEZAS, JAN NAGY, & MARION LAMB

LESSON MIN002
IN THE NEW TZADDI SEMINARY
May the frightened cease to be afraid
And those bound be freed;
May the powerless find power
And may people think of benefiting each other.
—Shantideva, *A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*
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When you are invited to officiate at a sacerdotal function such as a wedding or a funeral, you are being invited to share in a sacred passage. There will be details and logistics to manage, but, as someone who cares for souls, you are being invited because you are coming from a spiritual perspective.

“Sacerdotal” comes from the Latin word *sacerdos*, meaning “priest.” “Sacerdotal” means “of or pertaining to a priest or the priesthood,” or “of a doctrine ascribing supernatural powers to ordained priests.”¹ Sacerdotal functions and services include worship services, weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies of passage in social community. The simplest of all is offering a blessing.

These kinds of ceremonies have an ancient lineage in our human social/ancestral memories.² In many ways they go to the heart of what it means to be in a society with other human beings. From birth to death, a human life is marked by passages that can be celebrated with sacred ritual and ceremony. Child blessing/naming/baptism, first communion, bar or bat mitzvah, movement into adolescence, engagement to marry, handfasting, marriage, home cleansing or blessing, conception of children, giving birth to children, moving into middle age, moving into elder age, vigil through times of illness, and last rites or benediction for passage into death are some of the human life passages celebrated as sacred in different spiritual traditions. Other celebrations are keyed to the life of the Earth, to the seasons, for example, return of the light in midwinter, planting/sowing of the land in spring, ripening of the crop in summer, harvest in autumn, and movement into winter’s dark quiet. Many of the Christian holidays are keyed to seasonal celebrations from the Jewish and earlier pagan cultures on which Christianity built.

In this lesson we provide some sample services for various sacerdotal functions from various traditions/belief structures. These are offerings to support you in your ministry, not requirements for your ministry.
TALK ABOUT IT
AHEAD OF TIME

If you are invited to officiate at a sacerdotal function, take time to plan and to talk with the celebrants well before the date of the ceremony. Be sure to discuss:

• What they are expecting and hoping for

• Whether there is any language they want to avoid or be sure to include

• Where the ceremony will be held, indoors or outdoors, how many people they are expecting at the ceremony, and how they are getting out word about the function

• Community/cultural norms
  o Example: contemplate the difference between a Hells Angels wedding and a wedding between two Christian missionaries. Both are weddings, but these may be quite different ceremonies.

• What ambience they would like (music, lighting, etc.) and if there is anything particular you will be asked to wear or not wear (symbols, garments, etc.)

• If is a marriage, whether they expect legal recognition for their union and if so, whether that is available in their jurisdiction, and what the procedures are for registration of the marriage (check with the county clerk or registrar in the county where the ceremony will be performed)

• Whether there are other professionals with whom you may need to coordinate, such as a funeral director, wedding planner, etc.

• What your fee structure is for this kind of ceremony and how much time you are expected to spend with rehearsals, etc.
LEGALITIES

Feel free to create your own format for a ceremony, as long as you follow whatever legal requirements apply for that ceremony (e.g., weddings, death rites) in your jurisdiction; check with the county clerk or registrar to find out what the local rules are, and follow them. Note: You must be an ordained Minister in good standing to perform sacerdotal functions under the spiritual and temporal authority of the Church of Tzaddi. In some jurisdictions, marriages you perform are illegal otherwise.

PREPARING YOURSELF

In preparing for, offering, and integrating sacerdotal functions you might feel vulnerable as well as expanded. Acting as a channel for the Divine to help light the Divine Light within in a ceremonial setting can be charged with energy in a way that one-on-one healing and counseling is not. That is because there are more people, and more energy fields, through which you are actively and consciously running energy.

It is normal for you to feel nervous or excited before, during, or after a ceremony. Be sure to allow yourself enough personal time and space to be able to celebrate and adjust to this role. Remember that you are there as a representative of a universal power and that this is an aspect of your dedication of your life to the path of service with the Divine in love and joy. Remember that you have prepared in many different ways to channel the energy to help bless and support these people; you have dedicated yourself to service and have spent years of study and reflection to reach the place you now stand.

Please review Lorraine Weber et al., Minister Lesson 001, Ritual & Ceremony before you write your ceremony.
BLESSINGS

One of the simplest sacerdotal functions is the offering of blessings. You can offer blessings for any occasion that you recognize as a moment for opening to the Divine.

When you give a blessing, it is not only your personal affirmation of the goodness in the situation; it is God/Goddess’s/Great Mystery’s/Life’s blessing and affirmation. Blessings come from the Divine, and you act as a channel for that energy, much as you act as a channel for Divine healing in spiritual healing and counseling.

You can adapt traditional blessings to fit your beliefs and the beliefs of the community, using words with which you are comfortable. For example:

From the Bible, the Book of Numbers, 6:24-26
The Lord bless thee and keep thee;
The Lord make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee;
The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Thomas Ayers’ version:
May the Divine bless you and keep you,
May the Divine make its face shine upon you and be gracious unto you,
May the Divine lift up its countenance within you, and give you peace.

COMMUNITY

When you are invited to perform sacerdotal functions, the ceremony often takes place in a community setting. This may be in a community with which you are familiar, and it may be in a community that is specially gathered for that day only, coming together to celebrate that passage or ceremony.

A community is a living organism. It has an energy body (containing the physical persons of the community as well as the thoughts, beliefs, and energy patterns of the group), a history, a future, and a set of dynamic exchanges, some of which you will know about and some of which you will not know about, no matter how long you’ve been involved with the group. You are transmitting light into and with
this energy body in the sacerdotal function ceremony. Review Nancy Reuben, *Transmission of Light* audio file from your Core studies.

Realize that now, in addition to being seen as a healer and a counselor you are probably going to be seen as a community leader, someone who directs group energy. In the role of leader you are responsible for leading—you cannot just sit back and let someone else do it—and leading well is an art, one that is enhanced with experience. Remember it is a learning process; be gentle and nonjudgmental with yourself. You must begin somewhere, so begin with the understanding that you have skills and you are building upon them, and you will always be learning. Review Amy Skezas, Core Lesson 001, Vocation & Spiritual Leadership.

Part of being a group leader is to be familiar with, and respectful of, the energy of your group. You can get a sense of the community and individuals in it by being receptive, listening well, practicing neutrality, generating compassion, building rapport, creating and maintaining healthy boundaries, being in active dialogue, and talking with people (rather than talking to or talking at them)—the basic skills of spiritual counseling taught in Amy Skezas, Core Lesson 005, *Offering Spiritual Counseling*. It can be helpful for the parts of you that are nervous or insecure to remember that in every community, you create and build relationships one at a time, with individuals.

You may use the meditation that follows on the next page when you are preparing for sacerdotal functions, to help harmonize your energy with the energy of the community you are serving.

As you minister publicly in groups, over time your confidence and ability to project spiritual authority in a balanced way will grow. Take each opportunity to learn about community as a sign from Spirit that you are ready to grow.
MEDITATION: HARMONIZING WITH COMMUNITY BEFORE A SACERDOTAL FUNCTION

Put your body in a comfortable position, one in which your spine is erect and your diaphragm is free to move up and down as you breathe. Relax. Let go of the cares of your day and any concerns you have about performing the ceremony. Simply be present with your breath and with your self, right now.

Remember the inner radiance in your heart, the special star that shines for you, available day and night. Breathe and relax. Open now to that inner light, taking your awareness into your heart.

Imagine that you are passing through your sternum, through the bone, through the sac surrounding your heart, through the muscle of your physical heart, and into the space inside your heart’s chambers, where blood circulates and comes to be enriched by the radiance of your heart energy.

In that space imagine the light of the inner star shining forth from within you, blessing your blood with its radiance, nourishing you with its strength, clarity, and brilliance. Simply breathe, relax, and imagine this.

As the blood circulates throughout your body, imagine that the strength, clarity, and brilliance of this inner star are reaching all your cells. All the parts of your body are harmonizing with the light of this star, through your circulating blood. You are infused with light.

Sense now the opening in your heart again, and this time, invoke or call forth Divine love—the warm, unconditional love of the Divine for every part of you. Feel, see, or sense however you do that it is radiating through your heart, into your chest, into your aura. Let it grow, as it does.

Now, imagine that your physical body remains resting in meditation, but that you can send an emanation of yourself forward in time, through the subtle energy planes, to connect with yourself on the day of the ceremony. Imagine that your inner flow of Divine love and your inner star’s brilliance, clarity, and strength are more fully awakening in that future, bolstered by the energy you are creating in this connection today.
Focus first only on yourself in this future time, nourishing and supporting your heart, your aura, your emotions, your thoughts, and your physical body.

Now take your awareness to an area larger than your physical body in this future time. Imagine or perceive it, however you do. First choose an area that is perhaps five or ten feet larger than your physical body, perhaps in a sphere or in an egg-shaped volume. You may sense it pulsing with light, or have some other experience.

Imagine that you can sense the light of the inner star and the love of the Divine filling that volume. You do not have to effort or use your personal will to fill it; you simply are aware of the flow and light and love pouring forth, filling the space.

Now extend your awareness to a larger volume, perhaps the entire room of this future time, or wherever the ceremony will be held. Include all the people who will be there, even if you do not know how many, or all their names. Just imagine the space filled with the people who will be there.

Simply imagine the volume of the space, and all that is in it, and taking your awareness to your heart, allow the light of the inner star to shine forth and allow Divine love to pour forth from you into this space. There is no hurry, and no particular way it must look or feel; just be aware of the space, and be aware of your heart, and allow this to happen now.

You will sense when it is complete; the energy will begin to decrease, like a tidal ebb, withdrawing. Do not force more energy to come; allow it to decrease, and thank and acknowledge all these people as a group for gathering together in this future moment. Then, let them all go.

Return your awareness to your breath, your physical body, and the present moment of time. Focus on your aura and energy field and let the energy ebb as you slowly come back. Rest still and quiet as long as you like to allow your energy to settle and integrate.

Make any notes or drawings you would like about your experience.
Part of performing sacerdotal functions in our modern culture is getting clear about what fees to charge for your services. Fees are an exchange for the time and energy you spend in preparing, offering, and following up on the ceremony. It is reasonable and appropriate for you to be paid for your work. Your receiving the money or exchange helps to complete the circle of energy between you and the ceremony participants. It is part of what helps keep balance, in your life and in theirs.

If you are not sure what to charge, make a log of the time you estimate you will spend as well as any travel expenses or other out-of-pocket expenses, including long distance phone calls, etc. See what the charges would be if you charged your normal hourly rate for the time; that may set the fee too high, and if so, lower it to what seems like an appropriate level.

Sit with your numbers for at least a few days before making a final decision. In some of the sections that follow there is a Fees discussion pertaining to that particular type of ceremony to help you get clear.

The first time you do all this may be the most challenging; after you have performed several sacerdotal functions, charging a fee may seem like an ordinary and normal part of the experience.

Inquire about fees for such services in your area. Call other pastors or funeral directors to get some idea about what is appropriate in your market.
EXERCISE: FEES

Take a few minutes now to contemplate any objections or blockages you may have to charging fees for sacerdotal functions and list them below.

Sit with these statements over a period of time and let yourself see what beliefs are operating in you around these issues. If you can’t tell what beliefs are operating, look at the statements as if someone else had said them and ask yourself, “What would someone have to believe in order to think that this statement is true?” Note the beliefs below.
This ceremony’s objectives are to create a sacred connection to the Divine, to create a nurturing of the sacred, and to support sacred inspiration for the souls who are participating. This service was used by Tzaddi Founders Amy Kees and Dorothe Blackmere on Sundays as their regular weekly worship service.

You may conduct the service on any day or evening and can modify the ceremony to fit the needs of the occasion.

CHIMES AND MUSIC PRELUDE

Note: Music can be inserted as desired at any place in the service.

LIGHT THE ALTAR CANDLES

OPENING EVOCATION:

Call forth the Creative Force, by whatever name(s) your center refers to the Supreme Being.

INVOCATION:

Ask that Spirit be with those participating to bless and guide their life.

LIGHTING AND BLESSING OF THE SEVEN RAYS OF LIGHT:
Mother/Father God, as we light these seven rays of candle light, we ask for the bringing into balance and divine order of all conditions and of all things throughout this universe.

- We light the first ray of light and visualize White, which is for Purity, Divine Essence.
- We light the second ray of light and visualize Pink, which is for Divine Love and Peace.
- We light the third ray of Light and visualize Blue, which is for Spiritual Wisdom and Understanding.
- We light the fourth ray of light and visualize Green, which is for Divine Healing.
- We light the fifth ray of light and visualize Gold or Yellow, which is for Divine Protection.
- We light the sixth ray of Light and visualize Red, which is for the God Power to flow throughout the Universe and give us strength and courage.
- We light the seventh ray of Light and visualize Purple, which is for of transmutation and cleansing, and divine happiness and supply.
- May these rays be ever present with all of you in this gathering, to assist in bringing Divine Presence and Countenance into your lives.

SPECIAL READING

MUSIC (optional)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEDITATION:
Silent reflection
(This may also be moved to after the Ministerial Address.)

MINISTERIAL ADDRESS:

A sharing of inspiration and guidance

CLOSING OR BLESSING:

After final closing a sharing of nourishment is optional.
AMY’S METAPHYSICAL INNER PLANES WORSHIP SERVICE—CELEBRATION OF DIVERSITY/ONENESS

When congregants are spread out over large distances it is not practical to gather together to conduct a weekly worship service in person. Yet, you and the people you serve may want the support of celebrating being actively connected in a larger energy body. You may use this ceremony for a worship service held on the inner planes, where people are connected in their energy bodies. This connection is real and these kinds of services can be very nourishing to body and soul. All the congregants can “meet” at the same time, when it arises in their local time zones; you can organize a group from your light center at any time you choose. Any day and time can be chosen for this kind of worship celebration but it can be more effective if everyone in the group agrees on the same day and time as a general practice.

CENTERING:

Begin by acknowledging that this is a sacred space and time.
Turn off the telephone and bar all distractions.
Notice any tension in your physical body. Move or stretch to help it open.
Focus on your breath for at least five long slow inhales and exhales.
INVOCATION:

I call forth and invoke Divine Light.  
May I be ever more aware of Its Presence in me and in all things.  
I call forth my high guides of light and healing angels.  
May they surround me now in a circle of light.

VISUALIZATION:

Imagine this circle of light reflecting and playing all around you, like the sunshine dancing on a body of water. Allow yourself to go even deeper within.

Imagine that beyond this bright circle of light you can sense broad plains and expanses of energy, like the Great Plains of Kansas or the steppes of Russia or Mongolia.

Imagine that you can sense that there are many beings out in these planes of light, moving and traveling and living. Let yourself sense the many beings, guided by your guides and angels. Feel a sense of awe and respect that life is lived in so many ways, in so many dimensions, by so many sparks of the Divine, each unfolding in perfection.

Say to yourself, *I celebrate diversity.*

Return to your breathing and to the circle of light of your high guides and angels. Center yourself again.

Expand your awareness out again into the planes of light and imagine that you are growing even quieter inside yourself. Notice that with all the activity, there is also a silence that underlies everyone and everything. Imagine you are taking your awareness more fully into that silence. Rest there for a few moments.

Feel a sense of awe and respect that underneath the diversity, there is a living Presence that connects all beings, a larger life in which all have a part. Say to yourself, *I acknowledge Oneness.*

Return to your breathing and to the circle of light of your high guides and angels. Center yourself again.

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:
Thank these high guides and angels who hold space for your growth and development.

Thank and acknowledge the Greater Power in which you live and move and have your being.

Thank and acknowledge the others in your community whose light you share in purpose, in projects, and in learning and growing.

Thank and acknowledge yourself, for all the ways you are learning and growing and expressing the Divine in this world.

REST:

Still and quiet until the energy ebbs.

When you feel open, clear, and refreshed, take five long, slow inhales and exhales.

Now you are ready to come back to your daily routine, wide awake and present.
CERIDWYN & MARI’S WICCAN HAND FASTING OR COMMITMENT CEREMONY

The ritual called Hand Fast(en)ing or Trysting, meaning "meeting" and "trust," is an ancient ritual to celebrate a relationship which already exists. Since this ritual is one similar to marriage, it has the same basic components or elements as a marriage ceremony, a covenant between two people.

Hand Fasting expresses what two people need in order to maintain a loving and lasting bond. It is a non-legal, nonbinding, voluntary ceremony. It lasts no matter what future relationships an individual enters into, and may be used for a variety of situations, such as:

- Celebrating an anniversary or a special time of change
- Entering a business or planning a home together
- Gays or lesbians publicly pledging their commitment to each other, for example, in jurisdictions where marriage between these celebrants is not legally recognized

The following is an example of a Wiccan Hand Fasting ritual.
ARRIVAL OF GUESTS:

The arriving guests are anointed on their third eye with oil, seated, and given programs by the ushers. The program includes an invitation to all guests to remove their shoes if they wish to join energies directly with Mother Earth, to form a circle around the markers, and to join in with the songs and chants where indicated,

Note: Various people can join in by designating parts honoring the Three Faces of the Goddess or the Minister can do this in his/her address.

MINISTERIAL ADDRESS:

From ancient times we have a ritual to celebrate a relationship which already exists. This ritual is called Hand Fasting, Hand Fastening, or Trysting, a word meaning “meeting” and also “trust.” We are here today to join _______________ in bonds of commitment according to ancient rites.

Here before the earth and sky, know that this relationship is blessed by the Divine Creator of life and death and beauty. This is not a ritual that binds partners, as in traditional marriage, because to own another person is out of balance with the way of the Creator of all life. As long as trust and loving caring remain, blessings on this relationship stay as well.
READ: "On Love" from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran

You were born together, and together you shall be forever more. You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days. Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of Goddess/God. But let there be spaces in your togetherness. And let the winds of heavens dance between you.

Love one another, but make not a bond of love. Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls. Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup. Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf. Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone, even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music. Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping, for only the hand of Life can contain your hearts. And stand together yet not too near together, for the pillars of the temple stand apart and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

DRAWING THE CIRCLE:

A crone or designated person takes a broom and sweeps behind all guests from East to South, West, North, and ending in the East again repeating:

Here I mark our sacred place, Safe beyond all time and space.

ALL whispering: Mark, mark, mark, mark.
CLEANSING CIRCLE AND GUESTS:

A maiden or designated person takes a bowl of salt water from the altar and starts in the East to sprinkle each guest with it, saying:

From heart and mind remove all fault, I purify with water and salt.

ALL whispering: Purify...purify...purify...purify.

CHARGING CIRCLE AND GUESTS:

A matriarch or designated person uses a feather to gently send fragrant incense (e.g., patchouli) toward each guest, saying:

With fire and air beyond all time, I charge with energy divine.

ALL whispering: Charge, charge, charge, charge.
INVOCATION OF THE ELEMENTAL POWERS:

Each direction starts with a chant as energies are invoked.

ALL: EAST: Spirit of the east wind, living in the whirlwind, come down from the whirlwind, join our circle now. Spirit of the whirlwind, join our circle now.

MINISTER: Give the Wedding Cup to the couple who have been standing in the East, saying, Share the breath of Life.

ALL: SOUTH: Spirit of the fire, living in the fire, come out of the fire, join our circle now. Spirit of the fire, join our circle now. Share the warmth of an embrace.

WEST: Spirit of the river, living in the river, come up from the river, join our circle now. Spirit of the river, join our circle now. Anoint each other with the water of Life.

NORTH: Spirit of the mountain, living in the mountain, come down from the mountain, join our circle now. Spirit of the mountain, join our circle now.

MINISTER: Hands the couple a pot of clay, saying, May you always have the strength of Mother Earth and hold Her power in respect.

COUPLE: Each marks the other's forehead with clay and say:
CENTER: Spirit of the center, living in the ether, ground us on the earth plane, complete our circle now. Spirit of the center, complete our circle now.

ALL: RAISE ARMS, saying:

Hail Artemis, Diana Parthenos, Moon goddess, ever-changing, ever the same, remind us to honor all persons, center and balance our lives, complete our circle now.
COUPLE IS JOINED BY THEIR WITNESSES IN THE EAST

Minister anoints their foreheads, saying:
I purify you from all anxiety, I purify your mind from fear.

Minister anoints their hands, saying:
I bless your hands to do holy work.

Minister smudges couple saying:
I charge your eyes to see holy ways, your lips to speak divine words, your breasts to form strength and beauty, your genitals I bless for strength and pleasure, your feet to walk a worthy path.

CHALLENGES:

Who enters here?

COUPLE ANSWERS TOGETHER: We enter this circle in perfect trust.

ALL: We enter this circle in perfect love.

Welcome to the divine presence of Creation.
WITNESSING (2 witnesses):

Minister asks, Who is witness for _______?

WITNESS ANSWERS: I am witness for_________.

Minister asks, who is witness for_________?

WITNESS ANSWERS: I am witness for_________.

ALL: Welcome to the divine presence of Creation.

MUSIC

HANDS MAY BE BOUND TOGETHER RITUALISTICALLY

Minister says: Trysting, hand fasting, or the promising ritual is an ancient way of bonding. When precious metals were too expensive or unavailable, lovers’ or friends’ hands were bound together and then ritually separated to symbolize one bonding of two separate individuals. Flowers, vines, or ribbons can be used for this binding.

We approach trysting from a universal point of view. The bond invoked is loyalty in all lives. The words exchanged are promises to honor and care for each other whenever their spirits meet.

Minister asks first person, What bonds do you, _______, affirm?

1ST PERSON ANSWERS: This is a personal affirmation statement.

Minister asks second person, What bonds do you, _______, affirm?

2ND PERSON ANSWERS: This is a personal affirmation statement.

COUPLE FACES THE ALTAR

A designated person holds a plate of foods saying:
I invoke You, Goddess/Creator of all life, to witness the joining of these two spirits. I invoke You by the foods here present, by the roots for a strong foundation for this relationship, by the stems for standing firm and proud, by the leaves to grow and prosper together, by the flowers for joy and laughter, by the fruits for a long and enduring relationship. Descend into this circle of life and bless this tryst.

COUPLE FACES EACH OTHER

As they feed each other say,

May you never hunger.

Then as they offer the cup to each other say,

May you never thirst.

Minster says, DO YOU, _______, promise to take this lover for this lifetime and beyond, as your friend, to care and be loyal to, to love even if you love others as well?

ANSWER: I do.

Repeat for other party.

TOKENS SUCH AS RINGS CAN NOW BE EXCHANGED TO SEAL BOND.

By the exchange of these tokens (or other article), charged by your energy, your bond of love and friendship is sealed.
JUMPING THE BROOM

ALL: After the broom is brought forward say, Jumping the broom is a symbol of setting up housekeeping together.

The couple holds hands and jumps.

Minister says, I pronounce you lovers in trust.

ALL: Blessed be.

At this time the couple may wish to share a cup of wine or sparkling juice with those present.

MUSIC: Solo or music that can later be joined by those present.

SPIRAL DANCE

A designated person explains how to start while the altar is removed. You face outward and follow the leader as the circle moves inward.

MUSIC PLAYS: All join in a spiral dance weaving in and out. Gradually the music slows and all gather in a circle. In the final circle ALL say, The circle is now open, but unbroken. Merry meet and merry part, and merry meet again. Blessed Be.

GUESTS CAN THROW DRIED FLOWERS, RICE, ETC., AT THE COUPLE AS FEASTING AND MERRY MAKING BEGIN.
LEGAL ISSUES WITH MARRIAGE

Unlike many of the other sacerdotal functions, which the government does not care about, and where you can pretty much do what you and the celebrants want, a marriage ceremony has serious legal and financial consequences and there are rules that must be followed. Marriage status affects tax returns, government benefits, standing to make medical decisions, and other important aspects of 3D life.

So, if you are going to perform a marriage, in addition to all the spiritual aspects of the ceremony, you want to be sure that these 3D reality details are handled:

• You are legally empowered to do it so that the marriage will be legal
  o In many jurisdictions you must be a properly ordained minister in good standing in a legally valid church in order for the marriage to be valid. Check with the county clerk in the county where the marriage is to be performed.
  o Tzaddi is such a church and is valid in all 50 states. To be in good standing, you must follow the rules laid out in Core Lesson 008, Legal Matters for All Clergy. You are not in good standing if you do not have a clergy card for the current calendar year issued by the church office.
• You follow all the rules of the jurisdiction where the marriage is to be performed and registered
  o In some jurisdictions, premarital counseling is required. Check with the county clerk in the county where the marriage is to be performed.
  o There are sometimes squirrelly, local rules about procedures that have to be followed. Follow them. Check with the county clerk in the county where the marriage is to be performed.
• You plan ahead and follow through after with all the paperwork that is required for the marriage to be valid
  o Check with the county clerk in the county where the marriage is to be performed.
  o Marriages have been held up and invalidated for reasons as petty as someone not liking the way a line on a form was filled out.
  o Register your wedding with Tzaddi if you and the celebrants wish; it is another layer of documentation and it supports the church.
PREMARITAL COUNSELING

The purpose of premarital counseling is for the couple to explore a variety of aspects about themselves that may have been previously unknown, avoided, or just not considered—including money, religion, and children.

We advise you to schedule three premarital counseling sessions with the couple as part of the agreement you make to perform the marriage. You can find a premarital questionnaire on the clergy resources page at www.tzaddi.org. Give this to the couple and ask them to fill out the questionnaire separately from one another and not to share the answers with one another, but to return the questionnaire to you. Review both sets of answers, then proceed with three premarital counseling sessions when you can ask questions and have dialogue together with the couple. Share the answers at the appropriate time in the sessions.

Sometimes these sessions cause an engagement to break off. If so, it is for the best, because the material in the premarital questionnaire will have to be faced as part of everyday life of the couple. Sometimes these sessions can cause a healing crisis in the relationship and it will require more than three sessions to get things back on track for the wedding. Sometimes, couples are extremely conscious and there are few surprises. Obviously, leaving enough time for this process is a good idea before you schedule the wedding.

Explain this process at the time of initial contact with the couple. If you feel it’s appropriate you might want to suggest marriage workbooks to help the couple get to know each other in a slightly different way. (See the Resources list at the end of this lesson.)
PLANNING
THE WEDDING CEREMONY

1. Minister and the couple need to go over the particulars even if there is a wedding planner.

2. Provide the couple with the basic MARRIAGE CEREMONIAL ELEMENTS to enable them to know what must be included in their wedding ceremony (see below).

3. Suggest or provide books to the couple with ideas covering different types of wedding ceremonies.

4. Suggest the couple provide you with their final ceremonial plans two weeks before the wedding so that you may finalize your part with theirs and SCRIPT OUT the entire wedding ceremony that contains exactly what the participants do and say.

Rehearsal

1. Minister and all participants review physical layout where the wedding ceremony will take place, assuring themselves where each will stand and sit, where the musicians will be placed et cetera.

2. Minister 'walks' all participants through final script of the ceremony.
ELEMENTS OF MARRIAGE CEREMONY

THE PROCESSION

Symbolizes progress, a moving on from one state of being to another. The couple defines if and how the procession will take place. It often depends on the physical layout of the space selected for the ceremony.

THE CONVOCATION

Words spoken to the guests and the witnesses to commence the wedding and confirm the reality of the couple's intentions.

THE INVOCATION

Words through which the couple calls on God/Goddess/Great Mystery/Life to acknowledge and bear witness to their ceremony. The invocation sanctifies the couple's relationship to each other and the Divine.

THE READINGS

Designed to inspire contemplation and to invite the couple and their witnesses to express their views about love and marriage. The readings should reveal something particular about the couple.
THE MINISTERIAL ADDRESS, HOMILY, or SERMON

A message of celebration and exhortation by the Minister directed to the couple personally and used to inspire in their guests a deep sense of the meaning of love and the value of marriage. Brief and specifically focused on the particular aspects of marriage the couple wants expressed. The Minister may have partial or free rein with the address. These words often reflect or reinforce the Readings.

THE CONSECRATION

1. Serves to underline and elevate the address just heard.

2. Minister draws attention to the couple's exalted undertaking.

3. Prepares the couple to make the promises that will fulfill the meaning of marriage as it has been expressed in the address.

4. Reminds the couple that what they are undertaking is sacred and gives serious attention to the commitment they are about to make.

THE EXPRESSION OF INTENT

Makes public the couple's desire to wed, their intention to go forward. This is a transition point to the more intimate phase of the couple's promises or vows.
THE VOWS

1. The emotionally and spiritually binding part of the ceremony: Love made tangible.

2. The couple's heartfelt spoken promises of what they are willing to do for one another, under what circumstances, and for what length of time.

3. Vows make the couple accountable through intention to live, love, and behave in certain specified ways: these words will continually call them to the emotional, behavioral, and spiritual commitment they chose to undertake.

4. The vows are read in their entirety by the couple to more deeply connect them to the meaning of the vows so write them down to be read.

5. The couple face each other not the minister.

THE BLESSING AND EXCHANGING OF THE RINGS

1. Single or double ring ceremony.

2. Material symbol of the bond that is created in marriage.

3. Shape the words spoken at the time the couple exchange rings to express most purely the meaning the couple wants to live with every day they wear the rings.

THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF MARRIAGE

1. The public proclamation that the couple are married.

2. Presentation by the minister of the couple as husband and wife, in the case of partners of different genders, or for same gender partners, husband and husband, or wife and wife, or whatever the situation calls for/the celebrants wish.
THE KISS

1. The moment in which the couple claim one another.
2. Seals the promise.
3. Signifies reverence.
4. The claiming of each other as theirs forever.

THE BENEDICTION

1. The final ceremonial flourish.
2. Buoyant words from the Minister that send off the married couple with a blessing to halo their union through the future.

THE RECESSION

1. Jubilant.
2. Order of withdrawal: The newly married couple, flower girl/ring bearer, maid or matron of honor & each bridesmaid/best man & ushers, bride's parents, groom's parents, community of witnesses.

THE MARRIAGE LICENSE –SIGNING
Have all the parties required sign the marriage license.
A MARRIAGE CEREMONY OF LOVE & COMMITMENT

THE PROCESSION

"The Wedding March" or other piece, is played as one partner's party proceeds down the aisle to the altar to meet the other partner and their party and the Minister. The couple stand facing the altar and Minister until the Address.

THE CONVOCATION

We are gathered here in the presence of the Divine/God/Goddess/Great Mystery/Life (choose the words appropriate to the couple’s beliefs and use those words throughout the ceremony) and of this company to join in Holy Matrimony _________ and _________ and to bear witness to the transforming power of love.

Love is a quality of spirit and an attitude of the emotions, but a marriage is a life's work, a spiritual art form. Therefore, this is an occasion of both profound joy and great responsibility, and we who partake in it bind ourselves as witnesses to the labor of love that _________and _________ are undertaking here.

In acknowledgment of this holy purpose and of the power of this occasion, let us pray.
THE INVOCATION

In this sacred and joyful moment we call upon the highest in ______ and ________, the Divine inner presence that always knows exactly what you need, that gives and asks the best of you, that brought you to love and that has chosen for you the sweet commitment of marriage. For you we ask every blessing of this moment: a confirmation of the wisdom of your choice; great happiness on the path that is set before you; discretion, kindness, and care as you walk upon it; strength to live out your purpose; grace and peace through each step of your journey; and beloved friends to support you.

May you be filled with joy; may you keep your promises with ease; may love abide with you always.

THE READINGS

You may wish to choose from:

Colossians 3:12-17

The Song of Solomon (Song of Songs)

Psalm, hymn, or anthem sung or said

"On Love" from The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran

Poetry from Rumi

Ephesians 3:14-19.

Psalm, hymn, or anthem sung or said

A favorite reading of the couple or your own selection
Perhaps the most basic sacrament of God's presence in human life is the sacrament of human love in friendship and in marriage. Experiencing love in our human relationships makes it possible for us to accept the reality of our lives with a positive, even grateful attitude.

Human love does more than make it possible for us to trust that God loves us. The human friendships we enjoy embody God's love for us; in and through these friendships God is revealing to us the Divine self, giving in love. It is our consciousness of being loved both humanly and divinely that most leads us to that full personhood that is our destiny.

To experience the challenges of marriage is also to deliver yourself to its joys and ultimately, to joy itself. And it is thus, in the spirit of joy, that we welcome _________ and _________ to the spiritual undertaking that is marriage. Long may it stand as the shrine of their love.

THE CONSECRATION

Dear God, look mercifully upon your children, _________ and _________, and be generous with them, so that in the unfolding veils of time, they may truly stand for one another as emblems of the incarnation of your love. Give them a sense of joy, excitement, possibility, and challenge about what they are undertaking here, the ever-unfolding and beautiful work of refining their spirits in the presence of each other's witness, of becoming the bearers of your love.

And knowing that this is a high and often difficult work and that its rewards are uncommon, often invisible, in ordinary day-to-day life, we pray for them the benediction of company, the encouragement of witnesses, the boundless joy of living always in the midst of love.

Give them peace of heart and strength of spirit so they may honor the vows they make here today. And may the promises they make inspire and instruct each one of us who celebrates with them. Amen.
THE EXPRESSION OF INTENT

Asked first of one partner with appropriate response, then of the other, facing each other.

Now that you have heard the high calling of marriage, do you _______ choose _________ to be your honored and cherished wife/husband, to live with her/him and love her/him in the consecrated state of marriage?

Answer: I do choose to marry her/him.

THE VOWS

Have one partner say their vows first and then other. They remain facing each other as they read their vows to each other.

I, __________ choose you, __________ in the presence of this community, to be my wife/husband, from this time forward. To love you, to be a comfort and safe haven in your life, to hold you close. To listen deeply when you are sad or angry, to learn compassion with you, to nourish you with my gentleness, to uphold you with my strength, to love your body as it ages, to weigh the effects of the words I speak and of the things I do, to never take you for granted, but always give thanks for your presence.

As our lives unfold together, I promise to be faithful, to always express my emotional truth, and to embrace you as both teacher and student as we do what life calls us to, individually and in relationship.

THE BLESSING OF THE RINGS

Minister: As God is a circle whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere, so let the seamless circle of these rings become the symbol of your endless love.
THE EXCHANGING OF THE RINGS

The first partner gives the ring to the other, and then vice versa.

Beloved ________, I give you this ring as a symbol of my steadfastness and joy in loving you, and as a pledge to honor you with all that I am and all I shall become for my whole life.

THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF MARRIAGE

Now that you, ______and you, _______, have promised to give yourselves to one another and to love each other through your sacred vows and through the giving and receiving of these rings, by the power invested in me by The Bishop of the Church of Tzaddi and the State of ______ I now pronounce you husband and wife.

Those whom God has joined together may He generously bless forever.

THE KISS

You may now kiss one another.

I now present to you for the first time Mr./Mrs./etc. _______!

THE BENEDICTION

Rest in the comfort of knowing that you are chosen through one another to serve the highest purposes of love. Depart in peace, recognizing that what you undertake together will bring you inestimable joy, and that the love you share can truly help to change the world. Now go forth from this place with jubilation in your hearts and gladness in your feet. Amen.

THE RECESSION

The couple and their attendants leave first to joyful music and then the community of witnesses.
CHILD RITES

Dedication, naming, christening, and baptism ceremonies—these different styles of ceremonies have much in common—naming the child, the presence of parents and godparents or spiritual guardians, and the use of water.

In the Christian tradition, sometimes people lump all these ceremonies together. Other people make a distinction between dedication, naming, and christening on the one hand, and baptism on the other hand. For those people, baptism is a spiritual cleansing of the mind. It takes time and maturity and is not for babies or young children. Accepting baptism is an admission that the power of cleansing works and that the individual is prepared to see and discern spiritually.

Be sure to discuss the family’s beliefs when you are planning the ceremony. Honor the beliefs of the people you are serving. Give them options and let them choose the ceremony they want for the child and the family.

A nice interfaith, interspiritual ceremony is dedication. In this celebratory rite, the parents and godparents/spiritual guardians dedicate themselves to the protection of the child. If there are faith avowals that the adults want to make, they can dedicate themselves with those as well.

Dedication, naming, christening, and baptism ceremonies may be done alone or may be incorporated into a worship service.
SETTING THE SPACE

First prepare an altar which should include, but not necessarily be limited to: a table with a white altar cloth; a white candle or candles with matches to light them; altar flowers; a dedication or naming certificate; and if you are not immersing, a small crystal or cut glass bowl filled with spring water. If you are immersing, use the same altar setup but place the altar near the immersion area. If you would like, you may include on the altar a keepsake for the candidate(s) in memory of the day to be presented at the end of the ceremony.

Burn purifying incense, such as sage in an abalone shell, to cleanse the space. As you smoke the room, the guests, and the candidate(s), you can explain that this creates sacred space.

If the room is big or sterile or if the ceremony involves an immersion and is being held out-of-doors, create a sacred space by arranging the chairs in a semicircle using just enough chairs to seat each guest. There should be no empty chairs. The immersion setup should be part of the sacred space. Green or flowering plants can also be used to create an intimate and sacred environment by outlining the sacred space.

Prepare the participants and guests by having ushers or the family greeting them warmly and introduce them to each other if unknown.

Provide a program of the ceremony that includes participant responses, prayers, and clear instructions.
MINISTERIAL ADDRESS

Formal introduction to the ceremony.

Then MINISTER takes the child into his or her arms and says, Our lives are a journey. We mark the important events of this journey by circumscribing them in our memories with the use of rituals, ceremony, and celebration. Today we are participating in a celebration of such an event, the birth of a new baby into the ______ family.

Most importantly, we are gathered here to dedicate this child to the Creator. This is an occasion for wonder at the mystery of new life as we gaze upon this beautiful child of the Universe, and we celebrate the gift of a new creature to the whole human family. It is also a time to remember that the Creator offers each of us the possibility of transformation, of a continuing process of rebirth of body, mind, and spirit as we each pursue our spiritual path.

PARENT(S), Using a lighted candle from the altar light the candles of all the guests and then return to the Minister's side.

THE RITUAL

The basic elements are naming the child and a water ritual.

MINISTER: By what name shall this child be known?

PARENTS: ______ (Child's name)

MINISTER touches the child's head lightly with spring or holy water and says, I name you ______ in the name of Father/Mother/God (or use the language that is appropriate for this family's beliefs) and dedicate you to the Creator. With this water may you know the mysteries of the seas, the rivers, the springs, and the life-giving rain.
ALL: ______(Child's name) may you always live in the light with the element of WATER.

MINISTER holds the child in such a manner that rays of sunlight fall upon him/her and says,

I place you in the rays of the sun that you might know the sun and receive her life-giving rays.

NOTE: If there are no sunbeams in the room, hold the child in such a way that the light from the candle is in its line of vision, being very careful not to get close enough to set his/her garments afire and say,

I show you the flame of this candle that you might know the sun and receive her life-giving rays.

ALL: ______(Child's name) may you always live in the light with the element of FIRE.

MINISTER blows gently into the child's nostrils and says,

I give you breath that you may always celebrate the gift of life; know the wind and the energy-giving air.

ALL: ______ (Child's name) may you always live in the light with the element of AIR.

MINISTER places the circlet of flowers or the nosegay upon the child and says,

I give you fresh flowers that you may know your Earth Mother and all that she gives you through her bounty.

ALL: ______ (Child's name) may you always live in the light with the element of EARTH.
THE CHARGE TO THE PARENTS

MINISTER: ______and ______(parents’ names), the Creator has placed this beautiful child, ______(child’s name), in your loving arms and has charged you with the responsibility to protect, love, and guide him/her to best of your ability. This includes teaching him/her of the beauties of our Earth, the care and use of his/her physical body, and the limitless boundaries of his/her spirit and soul.

Do you _______ and _______(parents’ first names), accept this responsibility?

PARENTS: We do and we will be as teachers to ______(child’s name). We promise to love him/her and with this ceremony affirm our inseparable bond with him/her.

THE CHARGE TO THE GODPARENTS OR SPIRITUAL GUARDIANS

MINISTER: ______ and______ (Godparent's first names), you have been chosen to fulfill the mission of the parents of this child if anything should cause them to be unable to carry out their responsibility, and of watching over the child during your life, especially for spiritual care. Do you accept this responsibility?

GODPARENTS: We do accept the responsibility of assuring that this child is taught the beauty of the world, the care and use of his/her body, and the boundless limits of his/her spirit and soul.

PRAYERS, THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

Selections chosen by the parents, community, etc—may include such things as a musical introduction and/or closing, a candle ritual, special songs, especially written prayers by the parents.
ENDING

MINISTER holds the child up to heaven and says, Mother/Father/God, (or Creator) this is______ (child’s name).

ALL: Song
SETTING THE SPACE

MINISTERIAL ADDRESS

The rite of baptism is a most ancient of ceremonies. It is symbolic of purification, dedication, and an acknowledgment of oneness with Creation. Through the ritual of baptism we join the conscious personality with the eternal beingness of the soul. Through the rite of baptism we invite the elemental spirit of WATER to purify the body as the Holy Spirit purifies the heart and soul with FIRE.

Through the ritual of baptism we acknowledge the divine essence of the Christ within and claim our birthright of wholeness, uniqueness, and perfection. Through baptism we cleanse from our beingness old patterns and attitudes which prevent the connection to the Christedness within. In so doing, we unite the body, mind, and spirit so that the Trinity can be expressed.

Baptism confirms the work of grace already operating in the regenerated soul. Baptism is a sacrament, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also represents to the baptized a sign and seal of the law of grace, of the Christedness within, and of regeneration; a dedication to Creation to 'walk in oneness' integrating body, mind, and spirit. The word 'baptize' comes from the Greek meaning to immerse or sprinkle. It expresses the view that any application of water in the name of Mother/Father/God constitutes baptism.

At this time we have ________ (number) candidate(s) ready for baptism.
THE BAPTISMAL RITUAL

Matthew 3:11, 13-17 may or may not be read first.

Presentation of candidate(s).

Candidate's affirmations and pledges.

Water ritual—sprinkling or immersion.

MINISTER: ________ (Candidate's name) you have declared that you are ready for baptism. Do you ________ (candidate's name), affirm your belief in Mother/Father/God, in the eternal being of soul, and universal Creative love?

CANDIDATE: I do.

MINISTER: Do you ________ (candidate's name), affirm before Mother/Father/God and these witnesses your desire to walk a path of truth, love, and enlightenment inspired by Mother/Father/God as taught through the teachings of the Nazarene, Jesus the Christ?

CANDIDATE: I do.

MINISTER: Will you deepen your spiritual understanding by practicing truth in your words, actions, and deeds?

CANDIDATE: I do.

MINISTER now sprinkles or immerses the candidate with or in water saying,

I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Let us pray.
PRAYERS, THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

Selections chosen by the parents, community, etc—may include such things as a musical introduction and/or closing, a candle ritual, special songs, especially written prayers by the parents.

ENDING

MINISTER: Mother/Father/God, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon this your servant the forgiveness of sin and have raised him/her to the new life of grace. Strengthen him/her with your presence, enfold him/her in the arms of your mercy, and keep him/her safe forever. Amen.  

MINISTER: To the newly baptized: Having been buried with Christ in baptism, you are raised to live a new life. Applying all diligence in your faith, supply moral excellence; and in your moral excellence, knowledge; and in your knowledge, self-control; and in your self-control, perseverance; and in your perseverance, godliness; and in your godliness, brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness, love.

For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:
For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:10,11)
SETTING THE SPACE

Table and cloth
Two white candles
Something that symbolizes the presence of Jesus
Dish to hold bread
Glasses for juice/wine
Bread or crackers

Place supplies on the altar in a pleasing arrangement. Place the decanter filled with the grape juice, glasses and dish containing bread towards the front of the altar. Pour the juice/wine into the glasses before the ceremony. Fresh flowers always add to the beauty of the altar.

WELCOME

We are gathered together today to renew ourselves. All people can awaken themselves in the Christ Consciousness. The purpose of this communion is to assist us in raising our vibratory rate so that we may receive the Christed (anointed) energy from Jesus the Master. It is a ceremony that can be used alone or with a group. It restructures and aligns our body, mind, and spirit.

The gathering to 'break bread' is one of the most ancient and beautiful traditions associated with religion, family or community togetherness, and unity. This supreme feast nourishes our souls and brings us closer together.

When we speak of Holy Communion we mean that we are partaking of Oneness with the Divine. Holiness is not a way to Jesus, Jesus is a Way to Holiness. He feasted to feed souls as well as bodies. And the material feast, bread and wine, are a replica or symbol of a spiritual feast.
BIBLE READINGS

MINISTER OR CONGREGANTS: And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. Mark 14:22-23

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. 1 Cor:10, 16-17.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. 2 Cor:13-14

INVOCATION

MINISTER: We shall begin with a short silent meditation/prayer.

After a few minutes says,

I invoke the presence of the Living Christ Consciousness. Experience this presence now, at the center of the circle, activating the Christ Consciousness within each member of this circle.
THE RITUAL SHARING

MINISTER: says these words before the bread is passed:
As a symbol of our oneness we now celebrate in ritual our humanity. As our ancestors before us, let us break bread and drink of the grape together, sharing the bountiful harvest of the Earth.

May this sharing nourish our souls, renew our minds, spirits, and bodies and serve as a reminder to each of us, that even in our differences, WE ARE ONE.

As the bread is passed MINISTER states, This is to remind us that we are one body, one mind, and one spirit in the Lord.

As the drink is shared, MINISTER states. We are now renewed in the Spirit and endowed with strength and knowledge that we are One.

CONGREGANTS: We have taken of this bread and wine and we are renewed.

OR: A simple ceremony could be the following: CONGREGANTS: May you never be hungry, as the bread is passed to each person; and, May you never be thirsty, as the juice/wine chalice is presented to each person.

CLOSURE

Song such as Amazing Grace or other appropriate hymn would be one way to close. Hugs and conversation can also follow.
MARI’S WICCAN
CRONING CEREMONY

This ceremony is to celebrate the rite of passage of a woman into her elder years (usually to mark the stop of menses).

MINISTER: We are here today to celebrate a passage in _____’s life. She is moving now from the power of the mother in organizing and directing to the power of the crone in advising and guiding. It is time to honor the wise one. All honors due the crone will come to ______ today. She begins our rite by creating a sacred place of power.

WOMAN_______ for whom the ceremony is being held casts the Triple Circle:
Chant a tone, then first pass:
Crone of wisdom, Crone of power
   I call you down from Karma’s Tower
Chant a tone, then second pass:
   Crone of power, Crone of strength
   Be my guest and stay at length
Chant a tone, then third pass:
   Crone of strength, All powerful one
   Enter Now! So be it done!

MINISTER:
By the Air that is Her sacred breath (East)
By the Fire that is Her bright spirit (South)
By the Water that is Her blood (West)
By the Earth that is Her holy body (North)
Our circle is cast, a sphere set apart
Circled by shields of spirit
And guarded by the Goddess
We invite you in, oh Crone
MINISTER lights candles, saying:
    We light the fires of wisdom
    We invite you in, oh Crone

MINISTER lights the smudge saying
We light the fires of power
We invite you in, oh Crone
And smudges ______ front and back, then holds mirror in front of ______

MINISTER puts a crown on her head saying:
We welcome you Crone with wide open arms
See your crown of wisdom protection from all harm

MINISTER winds a cord around her waist saying:
We offer friendship and bid you come in
Share hopes and dreams share life till its end
Offer the Crone love step forth a new start
Open to the Crone both your life and your heart

MINISTER tells ______: Repeat after me:
    I accept the symbols of your wisdom
    Forever with my measure
    I am whole for we are one
    I accept you, Crone, with pleasure

WOMAN ______ may share here her personal thoughts about croning

MINISTER raises peppermint candies saying:
    Share with us this bit of ice and fire
Blessed with Crone’s wisdom, joy and laughter
    Let it now rekindle our spiritual flame
And let us be wisely guided ever after

MINISTER passes the candy to all taking part saying:
Share the Crone’s wisdom
MINISTER:
   Now by the Earth that is Her holy body
   And the Water that flows as her blood
   And the Fire that is her bright spirit
   And the Air that is her sacred breath

WOMAN______(Crone):
   May this sacred circle now be opened
   By my Crone and I together
   We are joined from this day on
   By bond of crown and tether

Share Feast and Crone stories
The Minister begins and ends this ceremony and can do all of the readings for the seven rays. It is however, very appropriate to ask family and friends to do the lightings and the readings.

MINISTER

Mother/Father/God, as we light these seven rays of candle light, we ask for the bringing into balance and divine order of all conditions and of all things throughout this universe. We request that grace be bestowed on the soul of______, his/her family, and friends present here, and those who are here only in thought on this occasion of the transition of his/her soul. We gather to dedicate his/her life, light and service to your keeping.

We light the first Ray of Light, White, which stands for PURITY AND DIVINE ESSENCE. May the purity and divine essence that has been the guidance of your servant ______ guard him/her as he/she makes the crossing into your kingdom and glory.

We light the second Ray of Light, Pink, which stands for DIVINE LOVE AND PEACE. Divine love and peace were the essence of the soul of ______. May the Divine love and peace of God be a guiding presence in the days to come for the family and friends of ______. May God's perpetual love be of sustenance to this family and these friends as they go forward in their lives.

We light the third Ray of Light, Blue, which stands for SPIRITUAL WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING. It is through God that our spiritual wisdom abides. May the guidance and direction of God, the ascended masters, and the angelic realm be ever-present for the family and friends of ______ as they endeavor to understand the mystery and need of this passing.

We light the fourth Ray of Light, Green, which stands for DIVINE HEALING. May this green ray of divine healing be ever present and available to this family and
these friends in the days of mourning and healing which lie ahead. May Divine healing be present for all those who seek assistance and guidance through God. May this ray of healing strengthen everyone here in their resolve for new growth and spiritual expansion. May this ray be ever-present with each of us.

We light the fifth Ray of Light, Gold or Yellow, which stands for DIVINE PROTECTION. May divine protection ever surround ______ and his/her family and friends, as the light of God surrounds each of us and gives us faith in all things. As ______ formally embarks on this journey, we ask that perpetual light and protection enfold him/her for all eternity. Additionally, we who are present ask that your light form a protective shield around us and guide us along our various paths.

We light the sixth Ray of Light, Red, which stands for DIVINE POWER, to flow throughout the Universe. This power was always present with ______ as he/she walked this Earth. May the power of the red ray be ever-present in and available to all who are in need, to provide us with STRENGTH, courage, and the conviction of purpose to follow our life path.

We light the seventh Ray of Light, Purple, which stands for KNOWLEDGE and is the ray of TRANSMUTATION AND CLEANSING. Through the purple ray all things are transmuted to transcend beyond our third dimensional plane into divine happiness and the unlimited supply and healing of all conditions. May this ray be ever present with this family and these friends to assist those who seek Divine presence and countenance in their lives.

MINISTER: As Jesus at his moment of death beseeched his Father, we now commend the soul of ______ into the hands of God. May all the saints and loved ones of ______ who have passed before him/her be there in the garden of Paradise to greet him/her as he/she joins with the eternal God this day.
COMMITTAL SERVICE

1. Assemble at graveside. As the casket is carried from the hearse to the graveside, it is customary for the minister to walk in front of the casket.

2. Opening remarks and scripture or poem

3. Committal Address

4. Final Prayers

5. Leave graveside: The minister sets the tone for leaving the graveside. The minister may wish to go to the primary members of the family and escort or assist them away from the graveside.
In our modern-day society rites of passage like births, weddings, and deaths are observed with ceremony, sacrament, and ritual. In the main stream of society abortion has been largely ignored and/or hidden. Yet the trauma and the loss surrounding abortion can be a source for an individual to seek pastoral counsel and solace.

Tzaddi neither condones nor solicits abortion. It is an individual issue for each individual to consider within his or her truth of expression. Many women and their partners who go through abortions experience ambivalence, uncertainty, and sometimes guilt or sadness. There can be a lot of psychic, spiritual, and emotional energy involved with the decision about abortion, the experience itself, and the aftermath.

A good ritual experience helps those involved grow through the experience. Rather than prescribe rigid lock-step requirements, this section is offered as food for thought about possible alternatives, which may be adapted to individual need. Involvement of all parties concerned can increase the healing benefit.

Five basic considerations should be addressed in an abortion ritual:

- What divinities are involved (what are the parents’ beliefs) and how should they be addressed?
- If a new spirit or potential new personality is started in a pregnancy, how should it be treated?
- What should be the treatment of the self for the woman involved?
- Around the event of the abortion itself, what rituals should be done?
- How should the woman's partner in the starting of the pregnancy be involved in its termination? (if the partner is friendly)
Divinities

For those who believe in angels, there are Laila, "angel of conception", Michael, who leads souls into the eternal light, Oriel, angel of destiny, Manu, angel of fate, Raphael, Sureel and Ossul, angels of healing, Phanuel, angel of hope, and Senui, angel of pregnancy. The Holy Mother Mary may be appropriate for many.

In addition to the Mother/Father God, for those of Pagan beliefs, several names and aspects of divinities might be invoked for blessing in an abortion ritual. Aphrodite as Goddess of love, Artemis as protector and huntress, Hecate as empowered, Phaeton as spirit of what is not to be, and Oye, the Goddess of the graveyard and/or Armesael, angel of the womb. (Invocation: I ask you, Armesael, angel who governs the womb, that you help this woman and the child in her body.). Some supportive male divinities may be considered. Hermes as the comforter and transporter of souls and horned hunter, Parmetheus as the bringer of Light (in the form of fire) to humankind, symbol of service through self-sacrifice, and Jupiter are possibilities.

The manner in which to address the divinities is to ask guidance and help, protection through them and empowerment from them. The ordeal of surgery can be shared with or offered to the divinities. Identification of the woman or the couple with the divinities in their myths of struggle might be stated. It might be beneficial to state any lessons learned from the experience.
The Spirit

If a new or recycled spirit is started in a pregnancy, how should it be addressed?

Some suggestions: Name the spirit and tell it that it can start new life in other ways, in another place, with another parent, or at another time. Express faith that the spirit will return. Give it a gift in the spirit realm. Make a gift in its name to a child-care agency. Affirm that it will exist. Tell it that other places or situations would be more positive for it. Return it with thanks to the Mother/Father/God. Explain to it your reasons for this choice. Tell the spirit that it is empowered and free to choose another mother at another time. Tell it that your rights as a woman must come before its rights in your life. This should be done in a cooperative attitude, rather than banishment, exorcism, or form of attack. Ask those souls in spirit that know this aborted spirit to come and lead it in love and light back to Creative Source.

Connect with a possible past life linkage or future life linkage. Consider a linkage with female ancestors.

Hypnotic trance work or etheric communication with the aborted spirit can be helpful, even for those who had abortions years ago. The trance work might be in the form of a dialogue.
Abortion Ritual and The Self

As in any rite of passage, the self undergoes transformation in abortion. Abortion is, in addition, a physical ordeal that is sometimes painful. Again, the classic myth of empowerment at the end of ordeal suggests its reenactment in ritual.

The abortion can be seen as an empowerment of the woman, literally over her life and her destiny. This power can be claimed, affirmed, and received in an abortion ritual. Ritual designers should express unity with their chosen divinities and claim the empowerment the divinities promise. (Etheric plane communication may be beneficial here by having the individual communicate with the divinities). That claim may well be the strongest part of your abortion ritual. Questions to ask in designing this part of the ritual could be ones like "How am I stronger, more understanding, and more compassionate as a result of this entire experience?"

Another empowerment is from the friends and family who join in the ritual. Their support and acceptance before, during, and after the event enrich the lives of all concerned.

Some women may express the need to deal with the emotions of either guilt or regret; if so, can be addressed ritually. Feelings of guilt might be encouraged by secular society or by a feeling that a mistake was made in the conception. Sometimes regret about the necessity for the abortion is experienced. In such cases a statement of these emotions could be made along with a statement of self-forgiveness. Some participants may suggest a reclaiming of innocence as well.

Another empowering element for the self is a statement of responsibility for the choice being made, abortion and identification with a divinity that affirms that choice. Empowerment of the woman in abortion means new life and better quality of life to her.

Another suggestion is for the ritual participants to remember their sisters who sought abortions in other times and the struggles and difficulties they faced. A blessing and a statement of affinity with them and their struggle could add perspective and a sense of history.
Ritual Work Around the Abortion Procedure

The secular culture tends to regard the woman as the passive recipient of the medical care system, the "patient."

Many mythical ordeals repeat the same idea.

A woman can make some of this empowering. Consecration of the self at the time of the operation, consecration of the operating space (even before arrival), and prayers or blessing for the medical personnel and even the instruments and medications would be helpful.

Abortion Ritual and the Biological Partner

While sometimes it may be important for the healing process to exclude men from the abortion ritual work, it might be suggested the inclusion of a friendly partner in the ritual adds more spirit and empowerment and blessing for the woman. It also allows a healing process for the biological partner as well. The deciding factor would be the individuals concerned.

A hostile biological partner, such as in the case of rape or incest would not be included, even negatively. Rather the substitution of a friendly male partner for a hostile male might serve the purpose of male support to the woman. The partner would act ritually in a spirit of cooperation and support.

Conclusion

The process of ritual design and practice around abortion can deepen the power and the spirit and the faith of those who participate.
PREPARATION

Let us prepare ourselves for the twelve days starting December 26, in which time we can receive the twelve months’ instruction from the Hierarchies, by visualizing our bodies becoming One Great Light with God.

1. Let's close our eyes now and let us see our head becoming illumined as a great light. Let us say together. "Behold, I make all things new." Revelation 21:5. Hold this thought in your mind.

2. Now center your thinking upon your throat becoming luminous and speaking from the Divinely Created Word, and let it be your word at all times. Start disciplining your word at all times now by saying together: "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." John 4:16. Every word that is uttered out of the mouth is of love—remember.

3. Now we come to the hands, see your hands as flower centers, fragrant, luminous, as conduits for God's healing and blessing to others, saying together "Be Still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10.

4. We come to the solar plexus where our soul resides. Let us see that part of our bodies purified and say together: "But if we walk in the light as He is the light, we have fellowship one with another." John 1:17. "We will learn true fellowship and kinship to all mankind."

5. We come to the heart, and circumcision means a purification of the heart. See the Divine light shine as a star shines in your heart and say together: "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Romans 13:10.

6. In the stomach area, see the intestinal tract cleansed. Prepare yourselves to serve others by being your true self, and say together: "I shall serve Thee." "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant."
7. See the adrenal glands working properly, seeing perfect balance through each organ and its processes and say "I know the truth and the truth shall set me free." John 8:32.

8. We come to the generative system, see ourselves becoming spiritualized individuals and we say together: Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8

9. Next we come to the Path of discipleship, the sacral plexus located at the base of the spine along the spinal cord connected with the brain. Let us see this spirit-fire go to the brain as a great light, lighting up the brain as a great light, lighting up the two glands the pineal and the pituitary to become Christed and let us say together, “I am one with ‘Ye are the Light of the World.’” Matthew 5:14

10. Our next attainment is the Christ consciousness, which lights up our whole bodies. See our knees illumined as a foundation holding us up where the energy fields circulate freely. The light glows as a pure Christ Light through the bloodstream. Let us say together: "Let the Christ be formed in me." Galatians 4:19.

11. Love is the greatest commandment of all. We see and feel the two lower limbs illumined and we meditate upon these words: "Ye are my friends." John 15:4

12. Our attainment is the Godlike man, the cosmic pattern. This glorified body is the wedding garment. Our spiritual center is the feet, we stand firmly upon our feet and see them illumined. Let us meditate upon these words together: "I Am that I Am." "So God created man in his own image." Genesis 1:27.
MEDITATION LESSON

Philippians 2:9 “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.” Humbleness is the way to exaltation. We are learning to be humble by controlling our thoughts, words, and deeds. Let us meditate upon these words: I will face all situations with courage this year. I am my own thoughts made manifest. I am what I think. I am and it is all good. I think of peace and I know this great Power of energies is now released within and I am daily changed.

When as individuals we begin to awaken to the truth that we are here in service to activate the essence of Divinity and oneness, we adapt an attitude of appreciation and gratitude. We strive to maintain the essence of the “watcher,” and center the eye of consciousness on Sacred Presence and strive to maintain that presence.

We become more receptive to the inspiration of Spirit. This assistance or guidance can come in many forms and the development of this connection is essential to the spiritual counseling provided by a Tzaddi Healer Counselor. While there are various avenues to enhance this development, meditation is a foundational component.

ACTION

Create a meditation place and meditate daily for two weeks at the same time each day. Record your insights and experience. You may chose one specific form of meditation or experience different formats of meditation to determine which works best for you. Meditation is a time of quiet, calming that allows Divine essence and inspiration to come forth.
FOUNDERS’ MYSTICAL RITUAL: TZADDI
TWELVE HOLY DAYS

Preparation for the Twelve Months Of The Coming New Year

Each of the Twelve Holy Days is under the direct supervision of one of the Twelve Zodiacal Hierarchies.

The Twelve Disciples are correlated with these Twelve Holy Days, as are the Twelve Spiritual centers through which the Twelve forces operate in our human body temple.

Set up your rituals - Candles in a triangle facing East - White Candle at the top. (This can also be done as a mental visualization.)

Candles needed for all twelve days: 12 white, 6 pink, 6 yellow, 5 blue, 3 purple, 2 green and 2 red. Plan to let the candles for each day burn down completely after your daily meditation.

See each Spiritual Center completely illumined as you say the Rubric Power Words (Thought Meditation) at daily.
DECEMBER 26TH:

ZODIAC: ARIES March 20th to April 21st

DISCIPLE: James, Brother of John

CANDLES: White, Pink, Yellow

ATTAINMENT: Seeing Divine in all and seeing the Godward side.

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Head

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "Behold I make all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

DECEMBER 27TH:

ZODIAC: TAURUS April 21st to May 22nd

DISCIPLE: Andrew

CANDLES: White, Yellow, Purple

ATTAINMENT: Perfecting the body as a channel of Love, harmony, and humility.

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Throat; know each word spoken is of divine love sent forth.

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God." (I John 4:16)
DECEMBER 28TH:

ZODIAC: GEMINI May 22nd to June 22nd

DISCIPLE: Thomas

CANDLES: White, Pink, Green

ATTAINMENT: Visualizing hands as illumined centers of healing, peace and understanding.

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Hands

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)

DECEMBER 29TH:

ZODIAC: CANCER June 22nd to July 23rd

DISCIPLE: Bartholomew

CANDLES: White, Blue, Pink

ATTAINMENT: Transformation, Soul as the revealer of Truth

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Solar Plexus

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." (I John 1:7)
DECEMBER 30:

ZODIAC: LEO July 23rd to August 24th

DISCIPLE: Judas

CANDLES: White, Pink, Purple

ATTAINMENT: The transforming power of Love. Put off the old and put on the new.

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Heart

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "Love is the fulfilling of the law." (Romans 13:10)

DECEMBER 31ST:

ZODIAC: VIRGO August 24th to Sept. 23rd

DISCIPLE: James - the Just

CANDLES: White, Purple, Green

ATTAINMENT: Love leads to service by purification

SPIRITUAL CENTER: The Intestinal Tract

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matthew 23:11)
JANUARY 1ST:

ZODIAC: LIBRA Sept. 23rd to October 24th

DISCIPLE: St. Jude

CANDLES: White, Yellow, Blue

ATTAINMENT: Beauty in all things, expressing divine attributes as a devotee.

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Adrenal Glands

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

JANUARY 2ND:

ZODIAC: SCORPIO October 24th to Nov. 23

DISCIPLE: St. John

CANDLES: White, Yellow, Pink

ATTAINMENT: Transmuting matter into spirit, that we never know death; compassion.

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Generative System

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.” (Matthew 5:8)
JANUARY 3RD:

ZODIAC: SAGITTARIUS Nov. 23rd to Dec. 22nd

DISCIPLE: Phillip

CANDLES: White, Yellow, Red

ATTAINMENT: Path of Discipleship

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Sacral Plexus. The spinal cord which connects the sacral plexus with the brain.

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "Ye are the Light of the world." (Matthew 5:14)

JANUARY 4TH

ZODIAC: CAPRICORN Dec. 23rd to Jan. 20th

DISCIPLE: Simon, Brother of James and Jude

CANDLES: White, Yellow, Blue

ATTAINMENT: Christ Consciousness

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Knees

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "Let the Christ be formed in you (me)." (Galatians 4:19)
JANUARY 5TH:

ZODIAC: AQUARIUS Jan. 20th to Feb. 19th

DISCIPLE: Matthew

CANDLES: White, Pink, Blue

ATTAINMENT: Love as the fulfilling of the law

SPIRITUAL CENTER: The two lower limbs

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "Ye are my Friends." (John 15:14)

JANUARY 6TH:

ZODIAC: PISCES Feb. 19th to March 20th

DISCIPLE: Peter

CANDLES: White, Red, Blue

ATTAINMENT: Godlike man the cosmic pattern. This glorified body is the wedding garment.

SPIRITUAL CENTER: Feet

THOUGHT MEDITATION: "I am that I Am." "So God created man in His own image." (Genesis 1:27)
SOME RESOURCES

John O'Donohue, To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Blessings (New York: Doubleday, 2008)

Bernard Cooke, Sacraments & Sacramentality (Mystic: Twenty-Third, 1995)


Daphne Rose Kingma, Weddings From the Heart: Contemporary and Traditional Ceremonies For an Unforgettable Wedding (New York: MJF, 1995)

Al Cadenhead, Jr., The Minister’s Manual for Funerals (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1988)


Larry E. Dyer, Baptism (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2000)


Kenn Gangel, Ministering To Today’s Adults (Nashville: Word, 1999)

NOTES


2 “The drum was the means our ancestors used to summon the goddess and also the instrument through which she spoke. The drumming priestess was the intermediary between divine and human realms. Aligning herself with sacred rhythms, she acted as summoner and transformer, invoking divine energy and transmitting it to the community. The drum was the primary trance-inducing instrument in transition rites...the drum signaled the release of outmoded behavior patterns and the transition to a new status in life.” Layne Redmond, When the Drummers Were Women: A Spiritual History of Rhythm (New York, New York: Three Rivers Press, 1997), p. 21.

3 Given by the guide of light Athabascar, channeled by Amy Skezas.

4 See Founding Bishop Amy Kees, Developing Spiritually Volume 2 (Garden Grove, California: The Church of Tzaddi, 1980), end pages (not numbered).

5 Given by the guide of light Athabascar, channeled by Amy Skezas.

6 Created by Caridwyn Aleva and Mari Aleva.

7 Created by Caridwyn Aleva and Mari Aleva.

8 From Jan Nagy.


10 Created by Jan Nagy.

11 Created by Marion Lamb.

12 From Prayer Book and Hymnal, According to the Use of The Episcopal Church, p. 314.


14 Created by Jan Nagy.

15 Created by Mari Mills.

16 By Founding Bishops Amy Kees and Dorothe Blackmere.
“During the twelve Holy Days between Christmas and the Twelfth Night the earth is enveloped by the light of the archangelic Christ. . . . The fragrance of His transcendent aura permeates the planet with a rare perfume, like an intermingling of the breath of fairest roses and purest lilies . . . The radiant light and healing fragrances are gradually absorbed by the earth during this sacred interval...Making it an ideal time for soul dedication to the Path of Holiness.” Corinne Heline, Mystery of the Christos (Santa Monica, California: New Age Bible and Philosophy Center, 1988).

Reprint of a booklet by Founding Bishop Amy Kees.
See also http://mount_ecclesia.tripod.com/the_twelve_holy_days.htm.