

# CEREMONY CENTRAL

## Unique Ceremonies for Families

### What is an independent celebrant?

An independent celebrant is a professionally trained and fully insured officiant who creates completely bespoke and personalised ceremonies. To be independent means that I provide these ceremonies independently on *your* behalf, and not as a registrar, humanist, minister or representative of any organisation which may have its own obligations about how the ceremony is conducted. Your wishes, therefore, are truly central to the ceremony.

### What is a Naming Ceremony?

A naming ceremony is a wonderful way to welcome your child into your family, especially when you want something more meaningful than just wetting the baby's head. It is a gathering of family and friends who join together to promise to support the child as they grow up. Parents make promises to be the best parents they can be, and so strengthen their family ties. Other significant people in the child's life can also take part, and the family support circle becomes stronger.

### How is a naming ceremony different From a Christening?

A Christening or dedication ceremony is a special way of welcoming the child into the church community, and is hugely important to families who practice their faith. A naming ceremony is held to welcome the child into the family, and usually takes place instead of a Christening because you have chosen not to have a ceremony in church. However, a naming ceremony can also be held in addition to a Christening, and can be a helpful choice if the family is very large, includes people of different faiths or no faith, or has lots of young children.

### Can we have Godparents? Or prayers?

Godparents, guide parents, even odd parents! This can be an important way of honouring significant adults who would want to make their own promises to support your child. And I'm always delighted to include a prayer or blessing if you would like me to. You have complete freedom to choose whether or not you would like to do this.

### Can the ceremony can take place anywhere or anytime?

Yes it can. You can select the time you want, without restriction on time slots or location. You could opt for an early afternoon ceremony at home, but might prefer something less expected. Any venue can be chosen, from your own living room or garden to a local hall or even a stately home, at whatever time of day suits your family routine.

### Is our child too old to have a naming ceremony?

Naming ceremonies can be written for children of any age, and parents often wait until their child is older. There is no right or wrong age. An older child might even be able to take part in the ceremony, for example by reading a poem. Every ceremony is unique, individually written just for you, and will reflect all your hopes for your child whatever age they are,

### How long does a naming ceremony last?

That's entirely up to you! I usually recommend around twenty minutes to half an hour because this allows for a very personal time of sharing with guests but doesn't feel over-long. A naming ceremony should be a warm, intimate occasion, and I enjoy writing ceremonies which include creative elements and personal contributions from family or friends, so that everyone taking part has a role in supporting you.

## **Can we have readings in a naming ceremony, or something symbolic?**

Yes, and this works well if there is a reading which is special to you. I can help you choose something suitable. If you are looking for something really special we can include a cultural or family tradition, which can involve your guests as well, and I will work with you to ensure that it will be individual to you. Siblings, aunts and uncles, grandparents, family and friends can all be included.

## **What about music?**

Music can be important in setting the tone for your ceremony. It can be fun, elegant, spiritual or grand. I'll talk through various music options with you in advance. There are no restrictions when it comes to music during your naming ceremony at all and so you can opt for something that you love.

## **Will we have something to sign to commemorate the ceremony?**

You can sign a commemorative certificate which can be kept as a beautiful keepsake. Grandparents, siblings and other supporting adults can join you to complete the signing if you wish. In addition, as my own gift to you I will also present you with a beautiful copy of your complete ceremony in a hard-bound white linen book.

## **What if it's an adopted child or step child? Single parent family? Same-sex parents?**

Today's families can be so diverse there isn't room here to list all the possibilities! Naming ceremonies are for all families however they have grown, and can always take account of your unique family structure. Parents can be birth parents, step parents, foster parents and surrogate parents, among others. Children can have step brothers, half-sisters, foster siblings and all sorts of other surrogate and courtesy relatives. All that matters is that you are a family, and want to have a ceremony to welcome your child- or children!

## **What kind of promises would we make to our child?**

This is the central and most important part of the ceremony, and we'll work together to get it exactly right. There are three main styles. "We do" involves me asking you questions, and you answering with "We do". 'Repeat after me' promises are where I read one sentence at a time and these are repeated by you in turn. Personal promises are read by you from a card. You can include a combination of these three styles, and whichever you choose they can be written either by you or with my help. I consider it to be the most important part of my job to help you say just the right words in just the right way and make your ceremony truly unforgettable.

## **Are you expensive?...**

If you compare my prices you'll see that I charge much the same as other celebrants. However, I'll go the extra mile to make sure your ceremony is truly special and unique. Before I write a single word of your ceremony I'll conduct a ceremony workshop with you to ensure I've collected all the information that's important to you. I often spend weeks personally writing your promises or researching the perfect addition to your ceremony. I also personally print and bind your souvenir ceremony book and certificate. I'm committed to giving you great value for money.

## **What do we do to find out more?**

I'd love you to get in touch! You won't be committing yourself to anything and there's absolutely no obligation.

Call me, Facebook message me, send me an email or visit my website for more information.

Phone 07873 777992

Facebook @ceremonycentral or [www.facebook.com/ceremonycentral](http://www.facebook.com/ceremonycentral)

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