



When Life Changes

ceremonies for remembering and celebrating life

What is a Naming Ceremony? and other Frequently Asked Questions

A Naming Ceremony is a service or gathering that celebrates life and welcomes babies and children into a family. It is not a formal or legally binding ceremony and is designed and created entirely around parents' beliefs, values and ideals.

Some people think of them as an alternative to a christening or church blessing. They are ideally suited to people who are not very religious or who are non-religious but still want a way of celebrating their family and offering promises, commitments and wishes for their child (or children) and their future.

What does a Naming Ceremony involve?

It is up to you. Often a ceremony will include formally announcing a child's name, welcoming them into the world and your family, the reasons for choosing a name and its meaning, promises or commitments from the parent(s), announcement of any godparents or equivalent, a toast, good wishes and thanks. There can be poetry, readings, music, and the presentation of gifts.

What other things can a ceremony involve?

There could also be a symbolic element to make the ceremony really special such as planting a tree, scattering seeds, lighting candles, blowing bubbles, releasing balloons, using sand or unity vases, writing wishes and hopes for the future. The occasion could be part of a tea party, garden party, dinner party, picnic or a celebration in your home or hired venue. The ceremony may even form part of another family occasion such as a birthday, wedding or anniversary.

Where can a Naming Ceremony be held?

Almost anywhere. A naming ceremony can be held in your home or garden, a hired venue in a restaurant, pub, village hall or stately home. It can take place in a park, in a wood or even in the middle of a field. The options are almost limitless.

Who conducts a Naming Ceremony?

A naming ceremony can be conducted by anyone including you, your family or friends as it is not a legal requirement. But a fully trained and experienced **civil celebrant** like myself can prepare and conduct a ceremony for you.

Can people be involved? Can we have Godparents?

Yes and yes. The ceremony will be created for you and can involve family of all different ages and roles. Children can be included in the ceremony in many ways and friends and relatives can be declared as having a special role in the support and upbringing of a child such as a 'godparent', 'goodparent', 'guardian', 'mentor', 'supporting adult' or anything else you can think of.

Does a Naming Ceremony have to be for babies only?

No. A ceremony for a child or children can be held at any age and the name of the ceremony can be changed accordingly – such as a family welcoming or celebration ceremony. You can have a ceremony for all your children at the same time and siblings can be involved in the service. If you are bringing families together, such as in a second marriage or partnership, a service can be designed to celebrate the creation of a new family and bond. Services can also be created to welcome adopted children declaring their position and place in your family and your commitment to them.

Do I have to have a Naming Ceremony?

No, the only thing you have to do upon the birth of a child is register them at the registry office.

How much does it cost?

A naming ceremony doesn't have to cost a fortune as you have a hand in the venue, catering, decorations and everything. It can be a simple, intimate gathering, a tea party where everyone brings a cake. or a huge and expensive affair. I can provide a script only service or a full service that includes me conducting the service for you. Contact me to find out about my fees.

Why use a Civil Celebrant?

A celebrant will tailor a ceremony for each family and will bring experience and a level of credence to the proceedings which can help make the event more meaningful, special and less stressful for you. With a **civil celebrant**, a service can be entirely non-religious but, unlike a humanist or registry ceremony, there can be religious elements too. So this kind of ceremony is flexible, meaningful, and reflects your own values and beliefs.

What do you offer as a Civil Celebrant?

I will work with you to create a unique ceremony and can contribute with ideas, readings, poetry and ways to make the ceremony symbolic, meaningful and memorable. I will draft the service, seek approval before it is finalized, conduct the ceremony on the day, provide a certificate(s) and a beautiful copy of the service as a keepsake. A script only service can also be provided. I can offer a level of event planning and design and print invitations and booklets. This would be at an additional cost and would be agreed beforehand.

About Me

I am a creative, qualified Independent Civil Celebrant and a member of the Fellowship of Professional Celebrants.

I am passionate about ensuring that life events can be celebrated meaningfully even if you are not part of a specific religion or community.

I have come into celebrancy because of my own life experiences and my desire to be able to celebrate life in a way that is right for each and every person and occasion. I offer other types of ceremony to celebrate life including wedding and partnership celebrations, vow renewals, memorials, and funerals.

Please contact me

If you have any questions or want to talk about ideas you may have, just get in touch.

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