



Uniquely Personal Ceremonies

Created with Care and Led from the Heart

Examples of Symbolic Actions

*Symbolic actions can add depth and meaning to your ceremony.
You can use them to personalise your ceremony and make it unique to you.*

Here are some ideas for symbolic actions that you can incorporate into your ceremony. These are a way of bringing an extra element to the ceremony that goes beyond words and visibly *demonstrates* what you mean to each other and the commitment you are making.

As you consider the ideas in this list ask yourself - what symbolises your commitment to each other, what is meaningful for you, and what would feel a special way to demonstrate your bond and commitment to each other and your guests.

You might see something here that you like...or this list might inspire you to do something totally different that is your original idea.

❖ Exchange of Rings

This is of course the most well-known symbolic action. However you can add to what is quite traditional and make it your own in a variety of ways. This can include *special wording* that you write yourself to express what the rings mean to you, which you say as they are given and received. Some examples of possible wording are available on a separate document that I provide.

Some couples like to have the *rings blessed*. This can be through words just said by me, or it can involve a 'repeat after me' blessing which all your guests join in saying.

Another idea is known as *ring warming*. This is most suited to a small gathering of guests as it involves the rings being passed around them. They warm the rings in their hands and imagine all their love and good wishes going into the rings before you give them to each other. There are special ways we can make sure this is safe and the rings don't go missing at the most important moment, so if you are interested in this idea let me know and we can discuss it.

In the traditional approach to exchanging rings, it is typical to have a ring bearer. However if you have a special pet, who you want to be involved on the day – they can be the *ring bearer*!

❖ Giving of Gifts

You can give each other gifts that have special meaning. It works well if these are wrapped simply and also if there is a bit of explanation about why the gifts have been chosen.

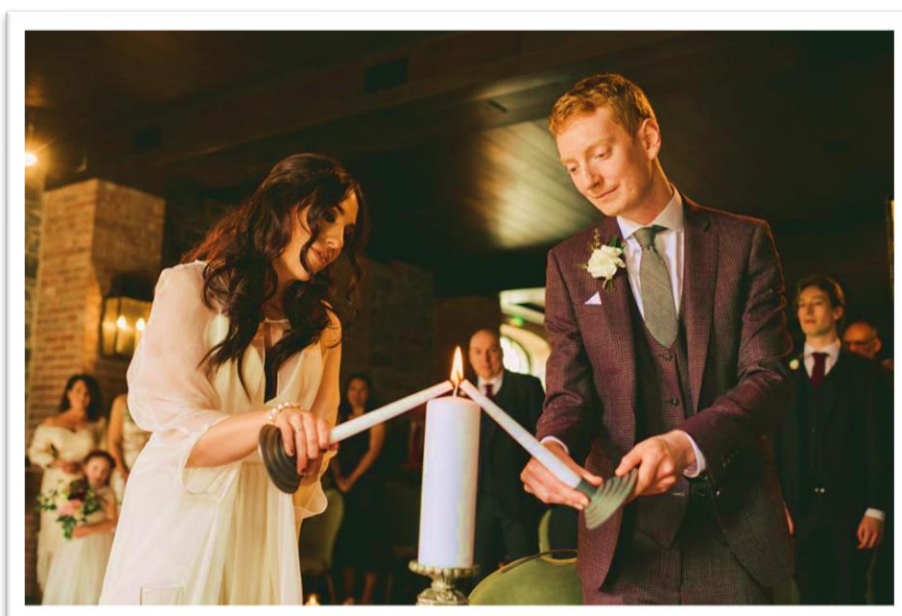
❖ Unity Candle

This symbolic action has a lot of meaning and is also visually beautiful.

You start with two candles that you each individually light.

Then you take the light from these two candles and blend it together to light one larger candle.

During this I talk about the light of the candle symbolising what lights up your relationship. Or you can write words yourself that you would like to say, as you light the candle.



If you choose this we would have to check with the venue that they allow candles to be lit. Also this ritual doesn't work so well for outdoor weddings as even a gentle breeze can blow the candles out.

❖ Handfasting or Joining of Hands

This symbolic action goes back to ancient times and can be done in a number of ways. It can be done simply with just one ribbon and the emphasis on the words as the symbol of your joining. It can be done with several ribbons and can be quite intricate and complex, but very beautiful. Or it can be anything in between. You can also involve family members and friends in this as they each wind the ribbon around your hands.

Here is a link to a YouTube video giving you one example of how to do the handfasting process. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q2ppN-LSoGo>

❖ Sand Ceremony

This is another visually appealing symbolic action which can also be fun to do. It works through having a beautiful container that the sand will be layered into. This is something that you can keep forever. You each choose colours of sand that you feel represent you and have them in smaller containers that will pour the sand easily.



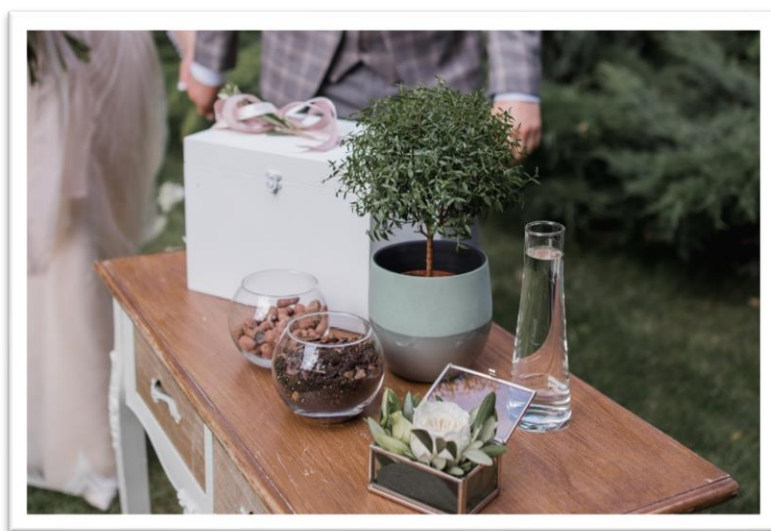
You take turns in layering the sand into the container, while I talk about how this represents the blending of your two lives - because sand that mingles cannot be separated.

Family and friends can join in too as they add a layer of sand.

❖ Tree Ceremony

This symbolic action represents the growth of your relationship, and the sense that you are establishing something strong that will have deep roots. If you are doing it indoors it can be done with a small tree that you plant in your garden later. You can involve family and friends - with each person watering the tree once it is planted in its special container.

There is a lot of symbolism surrounding trees generally, and it's lovely to choose a particular type of tree that means something to you both. For example, Apple trees represent goodwill, happiness, and the bounty of life. Cherry trees represent love and romance, and Birch trees represent new beginnings.



❖ Stone Ceremony

This ritual is an easy way to involve all your guests in your ceremony. For this you gather pebbles that are smooth and nice to hold. They are placed on your guests chairs before the ceremony. We invite your guests to hold the stones through the ceremony and pour all their good wishes into them. As they leave at the end of the ceremony they are then directed to place them in a beautiful bowl which you can keep as a reminder of the day.

*These are just a few examples of what you can add to your ceremony.
Use this list for ideas and inspiration - and of course I can help you tailor it
so it feels just right for you.*