

Leanne Smith



MARRIAGE CELEBRANT

## *Including Ritual in your Ceremony*

The rituals listed below are just a few ideas that you may like to include in your ceremony. You may choose to look to your family background to find symbolism and ritual that is appropriate for your family. There are lots of others you may choose, too (just have a look on the internet) Or we can work together to create something unique for your ceremony.

### **Hand fasting**

An old Celtic tradition, a coloured ribbon or cord is tied around the couple's joined hands for each promise they make when exchanging their vows.

### **Hand Cleansing**

Starting life together anew, the marrying couple wash each other's hands as they forgive themselves and each other for any pain in the past. Acknowledging human imperfections and having their hands dried by each other signifies a willingness to achieve the greatest intimacy and possess the courage to be open and vulnerable to each other.

### **Unity Candle**

At the beginning of the ceremony Candles are lit by the couple's parents to represent their lives to this moment. After their vows have been exchanged the Bride and Groom light the centre candle to symbolize the union of their lives.

### **Sand Ceremony**

A Native American tradition, sand blending offers a beautiful and meaningful symbolism and can be undertaken outdoors. At the appropriate point in the ceremony, the couple each takes a vial of coloured sand and pours their sand into a central vessel. This symbolises the importance of the individuals within the marriage and the joining of two lives into one entity. The grains of sand can never be separated. Children and other family members can be included.

### **Ring Warming**

Before the rings are exchanged the best man will bring them to the guests in turn and invite them to hold the rings and make a wish or blessing for the couple.

### **Oathing Stone**

Taken from the ancient Celtic custom of setting an oath in stone, a sacred symbol across cultures. In the Scottish tradition an oath given near a stone or water was considered more binding. The couple hold the Oathing Stone in their hands as they exchange wedding vows.

**Rose**

The Groom and the Bride present each other with a rose as the first gift they will give each other in their marriage.

**Pebble Casting**

After their vows have been exchanged the couple move together to the water's edge and cast their pebbles into the water, where they will lay together on the ocean or riverbed for all time.

**Truce Bell**

After the exchange of the rings, the couple give their truce bell a mighty ring, and are reminded to use it during their marriage whenever a disagreement requires a truce be called.

**Wine Toasting**

Using a single glass, or being served a glass each, the couple toast each other to seal the commitment they have made, acknowledging that from this point on they will eat from the same table and drink from the same cup, sharing whatever the future brings, bitter or sweet.

**Remembering Those not Present**

At the commencement of the ceremony, a rose is placed, or a candle is lit in acknowledgment of those family members and friends who are not present.

**Including Children & Blending Families.**

Many of these rituals can be adapted to involve children and symbolise the joining of families, other rituals can also be created.