Blended families...

Often there are couples getting married for the second time and they have families being blended together by the ceremony. These families can include children from previous relationships and sometimes adopted children.

There are many ways to celebrate the blending; sand ceremonies, flower ceremonies, medallion ceremonies, pouring ceremonies and of course, vow taking. I have performed many ceremonies in this fashion and it is a touching and heartfelt way of showing to the world that you are in fact, not just signing a paper to make it all 'legal' or the two people 'just happen' to have more to them. The faces of younger children standing in their designated spots waiting to be part of this momentous occasion say it all.

At one wedding, which was outdoors on a private lake front beach [very tiny], the children were small. There was one child from the mother and two from the father. The children were solemn, dignified and poured their sand as if each grain was indeed a part of their spirit. They were thrilled with the large container that had a part of each of them in it, blended in an harmonious pattern. We later poured sealing wax on the top of the bottle to close it. Normally I use a stopper that can be waxed in, but with really small children the neck of the container should be large to give them a better aim. Just fill the top with melted wax. Many onlookers came up to me after the ceremony and told me how touching the sight had been, and the ceremony would remain in their minds and hearts for it's beauty. As an officiant it is wonderful to hear that the emotions intended to be expressed, had been interpreted successfully.

Performing a blending ceremony is not just for weddings…if you are welcoming new members to your family, through birth, adoption, fostering etc., it makes a great day and warms the hearts of those involved.

Sand Ceremony
After the minister reads the statement below, pour two containers of sand into a third, wide- mouthed, container simultaneously:

_____ and _____, today you join your separate lives together. The two separate bottles of sand symbolize your separate lives, separate families and separate sets of friends. They represent all that you are and all that you'll ever be as an individual. They also represent your lives before today. As these two containers of sand are poured into the third container, the individual containers of sand will no longer exist, but will be joined together as one. Just as these grains of sand can never be separated and poured again into the individual containers, so will your marriage be.

OR

Marriage is a promise, made in the hearts of two people who love each other, which takes a lifetime to fulfill. Within the circle of its love, marriage encompasses all of life's most important relationships. A wife and a husband are each other's lover, teacher, listener, critic, and best friend.

It is into this state that Bryan and Alexandra wish to enter, and create together a new family that includes their love of _____.To celebrate this special bond I would like to invite the new family to perform a Sand Ceremony to signify that once joined, each of them remains as individual as a grain of sand, and yet once blended are inseparable for all time.

I place a layer of white sand to signify that Love has blessed this union and that Love is a basis upon which we build. Bryan and Alex, I ask you to add sand to signify yourselves and the bond of love that shall not be undone and which is the strength and foundation of this new family, Children, I ask you to add your sand to complete the family that once joined shall never be separated. I add the final layer to seal the bond that this new family has created. With love this bond is made.From this day forward they shall be a family whose strength is founded upon love, friendship, honor and trust.

I highly recommend sand ceremonies as they easy to prepare and can be done over if there is an accident. They are much safer than candles where children are concerned.