

There's so much to celebrate throughout a marriage and how you mark special occasions after your wedding, whether your own or those of your wider family, might change.

There are all kinds of special events in our lives. Some are shared publicly, some are specific to you as a couple. Families have all kinds of traditions about celebration, whether Christmas, birthdays or anniversaries, and each of you may have very different expectations. Now is the time to build your own traditions and decide how certain occasions will be marked from now on.

Anniversaries

Anniversaries can be the big milestones that mark the passing years since your wedding day, or, they can be special dates that really mean something to you both, such as the day you first met, or the date you first started going out.

How would you like to mark these occasions? Will it be a simple card, a gift, going out or having a party? Which anniversaries would you like to invest more in? Have either of you thought about going to church on or near your wedding anniversary, either the church you were married in or your local church? Wherever you go, the church can offer prayers of thanks for your marriage and be there to celebrate with you.

Birthdays

Families can have very different expectations about birthdays. How important is it to you to celebrate and make it a special day? Will it be important to be at family parties to celebrate with others? Is it a day for pampering, to spend with your original family or friends, or is it a day you'd prefer to be low key?

Holidays

Day to day life can feel humdrum at times, following a regular routine, especially if you both work, but there will be lots of opportunities to take time out for just being together. How would you like to spend your weekends? Where do each of you like to go to 'get away from it all'? Would you like to reserve a little time apart during the year too, to recharge your batteries?

Festivals and big events

One of the biggest times of celebration for most families is Christmas, which is often laden with tradition and expectation from every direction. Take time to think about how you are going to spend what can be a long break together, and time to think about presents and parties. You might also think about going along to church as a family.

There are other big dates like Easter, Mothering Sunday, Harvest and Remembrance Sunday which might be or become special times for you as a

couple, perhaps by getting involved with your local church. You may want to go more often and develop your faith journey. But will you both want the same things from your church? Discuss this together with an open mind that you may differ.

It's also worth discovering if there are other special times that matter to each other's families – like big sporting occasions or other cultural celebrations, especially if you are marrying across different backgrounds.

Children

If children are, or become, a part of your family, they bring special times of their own. As well as their birthday, there'll be the first time they walked or talked, their first tooth and a host of milestones as they grow up. Watching children grow from the day they're born is a wonderful gift, a joy and a privilege. For many parents it heightens a sense of blessing and responsibility and it can prompt a need to say 'thank you' to God in some way.

The Church of England offers a simple Thanksgiving service to celebrate the gift of a child. Read more on this special website.

You might be thinking about your child's spiritual growth too and whether to have them christened. Visit our [christening pages](#) to help you think about what a christening means for the whole family.

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