



St. John the Evangelist Church Hazelwood

Weddings

Introduction

A wedding is one of life's great moments, a time of solemn commitment as well as good wishes, feasting and joy.

Christians believe that marriage is a gift from God and it is intended by God to be a creative relationship, as His blessing enables husband and wife to love and support each other in good and bad times in a self-sacrificial way, putting the needs of your partner before your own.

For Christians, marriage is also an invitation to share life together in the spirit of Jesus Christ. It is based upon a solemn, public and life-long covenant between a man and a woman, declared and celebrated in the presence of God and before witnesses. The marriage ceremony gives you a new legal status as husband and wife and a new stability within which your relationship can flourish and grow.

Why Get Married in Church?

A marriage service, wherever it is held, is a public declaration of love and commitment to your partner. By choosing to get married in church, there is an added dimension - the assurance that God cares about your relationship and that his resources and strength are available to help you. Including God in your marriage doesn't mean that you will avoid all the usual ups and downs, but you will know that you can look to God for help and guidance and that his love will sustain you. You will also have the support and encouragement of the Christian Church family.

The Parish Church welcomes your enquiry and hopes to provide a user-friendly approach in ensuring that you see your marriage preparation as a happy and memorable time. The Vicar will guide you in the choices you will want to make around the timing and nature of your service and the necessary preparation before your wedding day.



Some Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I get married?

The law entitles you to be married in the Church of England Parish Church where either of you lives. If you are an active, worshipping member of another church congregation, it is usually possible to be married there.

From October 2008, the national legislation was changed and now stipulates that to get married in a particular parish church you need to have a 'qualifying connection' with that parish. In the first instance this would be living in the parish, but if you are not a resident, you would need to show another connection. This could be any one of the following:

That one of you:

-has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months or

-was baptised in the parish concerned or

-was prepared for confirmation in the parish or

-has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months or

That one of your parents, at any time after you were born:

-has lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months or

-has regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months or

That one of your parents or grandparents:

-was married in the parish.

If none of these apply it is still possible to qualify by way of attendance. You would need to attend services regularly over a period of six months prior to your wedding date (and by regularly it means at least once or twice a month – 10 times over six months) and this would then fulfil the necessary requirements.

In certain circumstances you can apply for a Special Licence. At the moment you can only have a Church of England wedding in a parish church or some other place of worship - normally one licensed by the Bishop. It is not possible to have your church wedding in other venues like a hotel, or a hot air balloon!

What are the legal requirements?

You must have your banns read out in church for three Sundays during the three months before the wedding. This is often done over three consecutive Sundays. Banns are an announcement of your intention to marry and a chance for anyone to put forward a reason why the marriage may not lawfully take place. Banns need to be read in the parish where each of you lives as well as at the church in which you are to be married if that is another parish. It is usual for couples to be in church to hear there banns being read on at least one occasion, and preferably on all three occasions.

A copy of the banns application form is available from the Vicar.

If you are under the age of eighteen, you must have your parents' consent to marry.

There are special guidelines on church marriage if you have been divorced: see the separate question on this issue.

How much will it cost?

Weddings are expensive as you will probably already have found out! The cost of the marriage ceremony in church is divided between the legal fees, which cover the publication of the banns, certificate of banns (if necessary), the marriage service and a certificate of marriage, and the charges set by the church. These cover payment to the organist, heating, lighting, cleaning, organ maintenance, buildings insurance etc. The fees must be paid prior to the day of the wedding - at the rehearsal is usually convenient. Ideally, we ask you to pay in cash.

Fees and Charges for 2011

Statutory Fees, (authorised by Parliament and payable by law):	£287.50
Church Fee ⁽¹⁾ :	£46.50
Minister's expenses:	£19.00
Printing ⁽²⁾ :	£18.00
Video ⁽²⁾ :	£43.00
Organist ^(2,3) :	£67.00
Bells:	donation
TOTAL	

Notes:

1. includes heating, lighting, cleaning, flower arrangement facilities, organ maintenance, buildings insurance, etc.

2. only paid if required.

3. an extra charge may be made by the organist for rehearsals with soloists, minimum £30.00

Fees increase on 1st January each year. If your wedding is to be next year, please ask for a revised schedule in January.

What if one of us is divorced?

The Church of England teaches that marriage is for life. It also recognizes that, sadly, some marriages do not work as planned. The Church accepts that, in exceptional circumstances, a divorced person may marry again in church during the lifetime of a former spouse.

The Bishop of the Diocese of Derby has issued guidelines to follow for clergy, who may be willing to conduct such a marriage in church, if it appears following these guidelines that a marriage in church would be appropriate.

The parish priest will want to talk to you frankly about the past, your hopes for the future and your understanding of marriage. Please note that remarriage in church is not an automatic right. If it is not possible for your proposed marriage to take place in church, your priest may consider other alternatives with you, such as a Service of Prayer and Dedication after a civil ceremony.

How can I change my passport name before I get married?

If you are planning to change your surname after your marriage and would like to travel on your honeymoon with it, you can collect a form PD2 from the post office and bring it to the minister conducting your ceremony to sign.

Planning the Wedding

As you are planning your wedding, it is a good idea to come along to a Sunday morning service to meet the ministers and congregation, and to speak to the minister about the arrangements that need to be made.

When should we have a rehearsal?

A wedding rehearsal is held in church usually during the week of the marriage service, and a convenient date and time will be discussed with you. At the rehearsal you should try to have the Best man, Bridesmaids and the person who is 'giving away' the Bride present, if possible. This is a time to walk through the service and put you all at ease. The fees should be paid no later than this time.

Bridesmaids and page boy

Do we need to have them? No, is the simple answer! If you are having some, then there are no set numbers. Bridesmaids are there to tend to the needs of the bride throughout the service, for making sure that your dress is arranged properly, and to 'wait' on you. The Bride will pass her bouquet to the chief bridesmaid at the beginning of the service and if she is wearing a veil, a bridesmaid would normally help to take it back at the beginning of the service. Traditionally you once made your vows with the veil over your face, in case the groom changed his mind! Now, you take your veil back at the beginning of the service to make sure the groom is marrying the right person!

Best man

He will be there to assist the Groom. Tradition held that if the Groom failed to appear the Best Man was obliged to marry the Bride! It is possible to have more than one best man. A best man should remember to untie any rings from a cushion, or take them out of the box before handing them to the priest!

Vows

The vows today reflect the equal commitment to partnership and responsibilities within a commitment to love and cherish one another. It is still possible for a Bride to include the word 'Obey' in her vows, but don't do it for tradition's sake! If you wish to discuss this, please mention it to the minister. If the bride does say 'obey', the Groom will promise to 'worship' the Bride.

Ushers and seating

It is helpful if you provide one or two ushers who will welcome your guests and assist people as they arrive. Ushers should be present forty minutes before the wedding and distribute the booklets for the service. They will also escort people to their seats. It is traditional for the family of the Groom to sit on the right side of church as you walk in, behind the Groom. The family of the Bride sit on the left, with a

space saved for the person 'giving away' the bride. However, you do not have to follow this tradition, especially if one family is very small.

Photographs

Photography is allowed during the ceremony at certain points- usually before the Bride enters church; the signing of the registers and as the Couple leave. The official photographer is encouraged to liaise with the officiating minister before the ceremony begins. Photographers are not allowed to move around church during the service, or to use flash photography, except at the signing of the registers.

Rings

A wedding ring is a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, and of the commitment you are making to each other. It is entirely up to you whether you have one ring or two. It has become increasingly popular for both partners to be given a ring. There are appropriate vows for whatever you decide.

Signing of the registers

This usually takes place at the front of the church after the Blessing of the Marriage. After the signing, the photographer will normally want you to pose for some special photographs. The officiating priest will issue a marriage certificate which will be signed by both of you and two witnesses whom you will appoint. The witnesses must be over 18.

Length of the service

The service in church is approximately 35-45 minutes. It is normally possible to come back into church after the service for any internal photographs, particularly if the weather is inclement. This may not be possible if another wedding follows your service. Please check with the officiating minister should you wish to use the inside of the church for photographs.

Please don't be late as there may be another ceremony following yours. Don't listen to the tradition that the bride must always be late! Lateness often leads to a restless congregation, especially if there are a lot of young children present. It also could mean that the service length would have to be shortened.

Confetti

Your guests may throw confetti – but please wait until you are outside the gates of the church. Usually the photographer is the one to give permission, so as not to spoil his photographs! If at all possible we recommend the use of bio-degradable confetti.

Orders of service

Couples usually like to have their own Order of Service printed. This would have the words of the hymns included and it may be a good 'keepsake' afterwards. A simple Order of Service can be printed by the church should you wish. Please discuss the Order of Service with the clergy to ensure accuracy.

Please entrust your Orders of Service to a reliable person on your wedding day to ensure an early arrival at church and that they don't get locked in a car boot or forgotten! A template for an Order of Service is available from the Vicar

What do I do about flowers?

It is always a good idea to brighten up the church with some flowers for your wedding, although there is no need to be extravagant. Do have a word with the Church Flower co-ordinator, Mrs Margaret Harris (01332) 841530 to discuss your thoughts on flowers. We do ask that you leave some of the flowers in church after your ceremony for the church community to enjoy.

What music should I choose?

Most people prefer traditional wedding music as the bride enters and leaves the church - however there is a wide choice of other suitable music to choose from. It may be helpful for you to discuss your

music requirements with the minister officiating at your service. We do encourage you to be involved in the choice of music and hymns. Two or three hymns would normally be suitable. A list is below of some suggestions but it is only to help and not meant to limit your choice.

Hymns

Choosing hymns can be difficult. Choose well known hymns your guests will know - here are some possibilities to help you try to decide.

A new commandment I give unto you
All things bright and beautiful
Amazing grace
And did those feet in ancient time
At the name of Jesus
Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Bind us together, Lord
Blest are the pure in heart
Come down, O love divine
Dear Lord and Father of mankind
Father, hear the prayer we offer
Give me joy in my heart
I danced in the morning
Immortal, invisible, God only wise
Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
Let all the world in every corner sing
Lord, for the years
Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy
Love divine, all loves excelling
Make me a channel of your peace
Morning has broken
Now thank we all our God
O for a heart to praise my God
O Jesus, I have promised
O perfect love
One more step along the world I go
Praise, my soul, the king of heaven
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
Take my life, and let it be
The king of love my shepherd is
The Lord's my shepherd



Please make sure that the tune is the one you want!

Traditional entrance music

Bridal March from Lohengrin - Wagner
Trumpet Voluntary - Jeremiah Clarke
Trumpet Tune and Air - Purcell
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - Bach
The arrival of the Queen of Sheba - Handel
Canon in D – Pachelbel

During the signing of the registers

Sheep may safely graze- Handel
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - Bach
Morning - Grieg
Largo – Handel

Traditional music to leave

Wedding March - Mendelssohn

The website <http://www.yourchurchwedding.org> has lots of useful information, advice and helpful tips for planning your wedding.

The Ten Commandments!

Here are some important things that will help you:

1. For a wedding when one partner lives outside the Parish, arrange for the banns to be read in their local Church of England Parish. You won't be able to do this if you are qualifying for the Electoral Roll, until your name has been included on the roll. Don't forget to pick up the banns certificate after the third calling at another church and show it to the Minister performing the service at Melbourne.
2. Discuss the content of the Order of Service with the parish clergy performing the marriage. Make sure they arrive on time on the day of the ceremony.
3. Contact the Vicar or organist if you would like help in choosing your music and hymns for the ceremony, and in any case to let them know your choices.
4. Contact Margaret Harris about flowers as soon as possible to discuss your thoughts on what you might like.
5. Tell the Parish clergy immediately if any circumstances change - such as your address, or if you need to change dates/times of the ceremony.
6. Arrange to meet with the Vicar or officiating minister
7. Arrange for the officiating Minister to sign form PD2 for a honeymoon passport if you are going abroad.
8. Ensure that a photographer speaks to the parish clergy for instructions before the service.
9. Don't forget to bring the fees for the wedding to the rehearsal. Payment in cash is preferred.
10. Keep in touch with the clergy before the wedding - we like to hear how things are going.

And finally...

A wedding is one day - a marriage is a lifetime

You have probably already spent many hours planning your wedding. There are so many things to think about - the dress, the cake, whom to invite, the honeymoon. All of these are important, but the wedding is just one day, while marriage should last for the rest of your lives.

Alongside the wedding preparations it is also important to spend time as a couple talking through your expectations of marriage. However much you think you have in common, you are still two separate individuals with different backgrounds, personalities, experiences, hopes and fears.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 Corinthians 13.4-7