

Getting married at St John's

A prayer for those prepared to marry

Lord, help us to begin our life together as we mean to go on, and to cherish the love that we have for one another, knowing that it comes from you. Guide us into that unity of life that is your promise to every husband and wife. Bless our preparations for our wedding and our future life, that, held in your love, we may find true joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Can we get married at St Johns?

You can marry at St John's if either you or your fiancée

were baptised or prepared for confirmation in the parish.

has ever lived in the parish for six months or more.

has at any time regularly attended public worship at St Johns for six months or more.

or if

your parents or grandparents were married in the parish.

one of your parents has lived in the parish for six months or more in your lifetimes.

one of your parents has regularly attended public worship at St John's for six months or more in your lifetimes.

If in doubt, give us a ring or drop us an email.

What if we have been married before?

Make an appointment to see Fr Stephen. He will talk to you about your previous marriage and will then make a decision about whether he is able to marry you in church or not.

How do we arrange a wedding at St Johns?

The first thing to do is to ring Fr Stephen and make an appointment to see him. You will both need to bring some proof of your identity and your address with you. Fr Stephen will check with you whether you qualify to get married at St

Johns, and all being well, he will ask you to fill in a form to book the wedding. There is a deposit of £25 payable at this stage and Fr Stephen will tell you how much the total cost is. He will also arrange to see you nearer to the date of the wedding to think about the marriage service and what it means. He will also arrange a date for a rehearsal for the wedding and the dates for the reading of your banns.

When will our banns be read?

The banns are a formal announcement in church on three consecutive Sunday mornings that you intend to marry. The banns have to be read within 12 weeks of the date of your wedding. It is good to come along to hear your banns being read as well – see our home page for service times. If one of you lives outside the parish, you will also have to have your banns read at the parish church nearest to where he or she lives. There will be a charge made for this. In this case, you will be given a certificate to prove that the banns have been read, and you have to give this to Fr Stephen before your wedding.

What happens next?

Why not come along to the church to attend a service? This will help you understand how the church works and introduce you to some of the people who will be praying for you both in the lead-up to the big day. But please feel free to contact us at any time if you have any questions.

Can we have a look at the service?

The marriage service is available in full at the Common Worship web site:
<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/texts/marriage/marriagefront.html>

Why not have a look at the photographs on this website which will take you through the service and give you an idea of what happens?

Are there things we need to be thinking about?

Try to make sure that you get as much arranged as early as you can. For the church service, you will need to start thinking about readings, hymns and music for the service.

Readings

There will usually be one reading from the Bible during the service, a reading that refers to love, commitment or the best foundations for living. Some deal more specifically with the love of God and the example Jesus gave us.

Here are some readings that you could be looking at. Try to pick one that speaks to you both and has some meaning for you both. Does it make sense to you? Are there words, phrases or sentences that particularly appeal to you? Does it reflect what you hope for in marriage?

Genesis chapter 1 verses 26 to 28 and 31

Genesis chapter 2 verses 18 to 24

St John's gospel chapter 2 verses 1 to 11

St John's gospel chapter 15 verses 9 to 12

St Mark's gospel chapter 10 verses 6 to 9

St Matthew's gospel chapter 7 verses 21 and 24 to 27

St John's first letter chapter 4 verses 7 to 12

St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians chapter 13

St Paul's letter to the Colossians chapter 3 verses 12 to 17

St Paul's letter to the Ephesians chapter 3 verses 14 to 21

St Paul's letter to the Ephesians chapter 5 verses 21 to 33

St Paul's letter to the Romans chapter 12 verses 1 to 2 and 9 to 13

You can also have another reading of your choice during the service which does not have to be from the Bible, but this must be agreed with Fr Stephen well in advance. Why not see if one of your friends or family would be willing to read your chosen reading at the service?

Hymns

There are three hymns in the service. Try to pick hymns that have a meaning for you both and that you think your family and friends will be able to sing. Some hymn tunes (like "Morning has broken") have alternative words specially written for weddings – have a look through the internet for ideas. There are some hymn

sites on the web which will let you hear the tunes as well! Here is a selection of hymns for you to start thinking about, but there are many other hymns that you might choose from. Why not borrow a hymn book to browse through?

All my hope on God is founded
All things bright and beautiful
Amazing grace
Angel voices ever singing
At the name of Jesus
Be thou my vision
Christ is made the sure foundation
Come down O love divine
Dear Lord and Father of mankind
Give me joy in my heart
Glorious things of thee are spoken
I vow to thee my country
Immortal, invisible
Jerusalem
Lead us heavenly Father
Let all the world
Lord of the Dance
Love divine all loves excelling
Make me a channel of your peace
Morning has broken
Now thank we all our God
O Jesus I have promised
O praise ye the Lord
Praise to the Lord
Praise my soul the King of Heaven
The King of love my shepherd is
The Lord's my shepherd
The love we share (to the tune of the Londonderry Air)
Thy hand O God has guided
We gather here (to the tune of Jerusalem)

Music

Music is played as the bride enters the church and as the couple leave. Most people have the traditional music at this point:

Bridal march from "Lohengrin" by Richard Wagner to enter

Wedding march from "A midsummer night's dream" by Mendelssohn to exit

But you don't have to have these! There are many CDs of wedding music available that you might want to explore, but if you would like a particular piece of music please check with us well in advance to make sure that we have the sheet music available and that our organ is suitable for the music to be played on.

If you have a favourite song on CD or tape that you would like played during the service, please do mention it and we would usually be only too pleased to play it for you.

But don't panic if you cannot decide what readings, hymns or music to choose! We can help – just ask if you would like some assistance in making your choices.

Who needs to come to the rehearsal?

We obviously need the bride and groom to be there! We also need the best man, the person escorting the bride, bridesmaids and pageboys. However, anyone is welcome to come along. The rehearsal takes place in church.

What about flowers in church?

You will obviously be providing your own personal bouquets and button holes, but we will ensure that the floral decorations in church match your colour scheme on the day. However, if you wish to decorate the church yourselves you are very welcome to do so.

What about our orders of service?

We will produce your orders of service for you if you wish (this is included in the total cost of the wedding), but if you want to produce your own, please feel free to do so, but Fr Stephen will need to see a copy before it is printed.

When do we have to pay for the wedding?

We would like the wedding to be paid for in full by the date of your rehearsal. If you want to pay by instalments, please ask.

How many people does the church hold?

We can comfortably seat around 160 people. We do have a small children's area in the church equipped with books and colouring sheets for young children, but we do ask that their parents supervise them in this area.

What about photographs and videos?

There is an additional charge if a video of the service is made. We do not encourage the congregation to take photographs during the service but Fr Stephen will agree with your official photographer about what he or she can do during the service. You can have some photographs taken in the church after the service.

What about confetti?

Encourage your family and friends to bring confetti – but ask them to make sure it is bird friendly and eco friendly, and that they throw lots of it, but away from the doors of the church and not in the church at all!