

*A guide to weddings at  
St Mary's Chartham*



*An all you need to know guide (we think) to getting married at St  
Mary's Church in Chartham.*



Let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

### ***This Booklet***

Within the pages of this booklet there is all the information that you should need when organizing your wedding at St Mary's Chartham. If there is any question that isn't covered here, please ask. Contact details are below.

### **Vicar**

We don't currently have a permanent vicar; however, please direct any query to Pippa and she will find someone who can give you an answer.

### **Weddings Administrator**

Pippa Kiss  
[Pippalou26@aol.com](mailto:Pippalou26@aol.com)

### **More information**

Can be found at our website at

[www.stmaryschartham.org](http://www.stmaryschartham.org)

## ***What is a wedding?***

A wedding is one of life's great moments, a time of solemn commitment as well as good wishes, feasting and joy. St John tells us how Jesus shared in such an occasion at Cana, and gave there a sign of new beginnings as he turned water into wine.

Marriage is intended by God to be a creative relationship, as his blessing enables husband and wife to love and support each other in good times and in bad, and to share in the care and upbringing of children. 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.

On their wedding day the bride and bridegroom face each other, make their promises and receive God's blessing. The congregation are witnesses of the marriage, and express their ongoing support by their presence and prayers.

*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

## ***Who can get married in Church?***

You must be old enough. If you are under 18 years old you will need your parents' consent to marry and by law you cannot be married in the UK until you are 16.

You can marry in any Church of England church (of which St Mary's is one) if you can show:-

### **❖ 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

Regularly attending normal church services in the parish would be being at either 8am or 10am services twice a month over the course of 6 months.

## *Love is....*

*patient, love is  
kind. It does not  
envy, it does not  
boast, it is not  
proud. It does not  
dishonor others, it  
is not self-seeking,  
it is not easily  
angered, it keeps  
no record of  
wrongs. Love does  
not delight in evil  
but rejoices with  
the truth. It  
always protects,  
always trusts,  
always hopes,  
always perseveres*

## **When can a wedding take place?**

To be legal the wedding must take place between 8am and 6pm. This is an historic rule introduced because there needs to be enough light to make certain that the person you are marrying is actually the person you thought you were marrying!

Although most weddings take place on Saturdays, Fridays and Sundays are also popular days. In fact any day of the week is possible as long as the church is available and there is a priest available to marry you.

Lent (the weeks between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday) is a 'penitential' season of the Church and there will be no flowers in church at this time. We would advise you to avoid this time if possible. Prince William and Katherine Middleton's wedding happened on 29th April 2011 deliberately to avoid Lent.

## **Who has to attend the wedding?**

It goes without saying that the Bride and Groom will need to be there, as well as a Priest to perform the ceremony. Apart from that you will need two witnesses who have attended the service and who are over 18 years of age to sign the registers to confirm that the marriage has taken place.

A Wedding is a public service and, as such, anyone is welcome to attend.





## ***Booking***

If you would like to book a wedding service please complete the form at the end of this guide. When you have completed this form we will check to see if the date and time is available for your wedding.

If any of your details change after you have booked your wedding **you must let us know**. Changes of address may affect the reading of Banns, and may mean that you have to change the way that you get the legal permission for your wedding to take place. If your phone number or email address changes it can make it difficult for us to contact you.

If you change your mind about your requirements for your wedding (such as music or flowers) we also need to know. Please let us know of changes in writing or by e-mail.

If you need to postpone or cancel your wedding **please also let us know in writing**.

Please be aware that, occasionally, the person taking your service may be changed due to unforeseen circumstances, such as illness, etc. We will inform you as soon as we can if this needs to happen.

## ***Banns***

If you are getting married after the calling of Banns (a public announcement in a parish church of an upcoming marriage between two specified persons), as most couples do, you will need to have your banns called in all of the following Churches:

- St Mary's Chartham
- The church in the parish in which you live, if this isn't St Mary's
- The church in the parish in which your fiancé(e) lives, if this isn't St Mary's
- Any Church where you or your fiancé's names appear on the electoral roll.

Please note your banns read must be read in a **Church of England** church; ie, Anglican Church.

You don't have to come and hear your banns called, but as part of the whole process of getting married, most couples like to do so. Banns are called 3 times in the 4-6 weeks before your wedding at the 10am service.

If you are marrying at St Mary's and are both resident in the parish, then the cost of Banns is in the cost of your wedding. If you need Banns to be read in any other church, this will involve also paying them an additional fee. You will need to contact that church yourself to arrange this.

Your full and proper names; ie, no shortened or nicknames - must be used on your Banns form. It is **vitaly important** to get a banns certificate from the other parishes where your banns are being read and hand these to us before the wedding. **We cannot by law marry you unless we have seen the banns certificates from the places where they need to be read.**

## **Cost**

The cost of the average wedding in 2020 was about £16,000. Only a small part of this is down to the Church fees. It's not necessary to spend an enormous amount of money on a wedding, as some of the best and most memorable weddings are done with a close eye on the overall cost. Asking friends and family to help with the preparations gets more people involved and each will enjoy helping you make your day really special as well as bringing the cost down.

A wedding really doesn't need to cost anything like £16,000. You can find more practical advice at [www.yourchurchwedding.org](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org)

Weddings are not there to make money for the Church but there are costs that you will be asked to meet. These costs are of three types:

- There are the statutory fees that help support the ministry of the Church of England and cover the legal cost of your wedding.
- There are local fees that help towards the costs of the parish Church.
- Any 'extras' that we might have supplied; eg, organist, choir and flowers.

There are occasions when a couple would like a friend who is an organist to play for their wedding or a choir that they are members of to sing. Please speak to the person taking your wedding about this. Musicians' Union rules on such matters are well known amongst musicians and in such circumstances the 'home' musicians are still entitled to their fee.

Fees are set at the beginning of the year so they can only be confirmed then. Fees should be paid in full at least two weeks before your wedding day. It is preferred if this is by bank transfer; however, cash or a cheque is also acceptable. Details of how to pay will be sent to you nearer the time.

## **Marriage Registration**

The way in which marriages are registered was changed in May 2021. You will no longer receive your marriage certificate on the wedding day itself. A "marriage document" is prepared and signed by you, the minister and witnesses; this is then forwarded to the local Register Office within 21 days. Once received at the Register Office, the marriage is registered in the electronic register, after which you will be able to apply for your marriage certificate(s).

Also, you no longer have to only record fathers' names for the marriage certificate. Each person getting married may now put **up to four names** in the section "parents" for the marriage certificate; this could be mother, father, step-parent or, perhaps, birth parent if either of you is adopted. You can also decide in which order you would wish them to appear on the marriage certificate.

## ***Insuring your wedding***

One area that people often overlook when planning their wedding is insurance. The pandemic of 2020, when many couples' wedding plans were thrown into disarray, showed how important this is. There are many insurance companies who offer this and it is well worth looking into.

## ***Service Sheets***

Many couples like to have a service sheet for their wedding and many people now either produce these themselves or get friends to help. While having a service sheet is not essential, if you do produce one, you will need to do this after you have talked about your service with the person conducting your wedding. The texts of the wedding service, Bible readings and the words of hymns can easily be found on the Internet and there are links to resources from our website.

When considering what quantity to print, bear in mind that the bridal party will need at least 6 copies and the choir (if you're having one) and organist may well need 9 or 10 copies.

An example sheet is available to look at as well as actual service sheets from previous weddings at St Mary's. Whoever is taking your service should be shown a mock-up of your service sheet **before** it goes to print. Please talk to the member of clergy who is conducting your wedding about this.

## ***Music***

Music often plays an important part in a wedding service. There is normally something played at the entrance of the bride, two or three hymns during the service itself, and then something else played as the couple leave the church. There is often music played when the registers are being signed. When choosing hymns, do read through all the verses of the hymns that you are considering and ask yourself if the words are appropriate for your wedding day. There are some suggestions on the next page.

## ***Organist***

It is useful to talk to the organist at an early stage about music for your wedding. If you would like help with choosing hymns for your wedding please do ask our organist or the person conducting your wedding. Contact details of our organist are available from the Vicar.

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*as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together . . .*

## **Choir**

Many couples like to have the choir at their wedding. The choir helps lead the singing at the wedding. However, please be aware that the choir may not always be available for midweek services.



### ***Some suggestions for music***

Here are some suggestions of music and hymns you might like to consider for your wedding. Don't forget to check the lyrics of the hymns to see if they are appropriate for your wedding. The list below includes some of the most popular sung at weddings.

#### **Entrance**

Bridal Chorus – Wagner (“Here comes the Bride”)  
Prince of Denmark’s March – Clarke  
Arrival of the Queen of Sheba – Handel  
Air on a G String – Bach

#### **Hymns**

Morning has Broken  
Praise my Soul the King of Heaven  
Be Still for the Presence of the Lord  
Amazing Grace  
Great is Thy Faithfulness  
Love Divine All Loves Excelling  
Shine Jesus Shine  
Lord of all Hopefulness

#### **Leaving**

Toccata from Organ Symphony No. 5 – Widor  
Wedding March – Mendelssohn

#### ***Readings***

The most popular reading from the Bible is from 1 Corinthians 13, the ‘love’ chapter. It is an excellent passage, but there are plenty more to choose from. We would recommend reading the following before you come to a decision:

Genesis 1:26-28  
Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7  
Jeremiah 31:31-34  
Romans 12:1-2; 9-13  
Colossians 3:12-17  
1 John 3:18-24  
1 John 4:7-12

If you don't have a bible at home yourself,  
[www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) is an excellent online resource.



## ***Other readings***

You may well have another reading that you'd like read at your wedding; maybe a piece of poetry or a passage from another book in addition to the reading from the Bible. It's an excellent way to get other family members or friends involved in the day if they do the reading.

Please show the reading to the priest who is to officiate at your wedding well before the day itself. We're certain that you have the most wonderful taste, but we would like to make sure that it will fit in with the tone of the service.

## ***Flowers***

We have a talented group of people who are able to arrange the flowers for your wedding. You can contact Dee Hickman to discuss these. If there are other weddings on the same day as your wedding it would be a good idea to coordinate arrangements for flowers with the other couples.

## ***Photography***

Most couples like to have a photographic record of their wedding. It is important that any photography is not a distraction on such a special day so it is vital to talk to the person conducting your wedding about this. Ideally the photographer should also speak to the priest who is taking the wedding before the service, at the rehearsal if they can be there. As it is a service of worship, we do not allow flash photography during the service, apart from the signing of the registers, and ask that the photographer remain in the same place throughout the service.

## ***Video photography***

If there is music in your wedding and you are having it recorded on video, then you will need a Limited Manufacture License available from PRS (Performing Rights Society). There may also be an additional fee to be paid to the organist if the service is being videoed. As for those taking still photographs, we ask that videographers remain in the same place throughout the service.

## ***Bells***

If you wish to have bells rung at your wedding, please specify on the intention to marry form at the back of this booklet guide. However, please be aware that the bell-ringers may not always be available for midweek services.

## ***Confetti***

If you have confetti, we ask that it is bio-degradable, and is thrown outside the church gates.



## ***Timing***

You may have heard that there is a tradition of the bride being late; however, it is important to start the service promptly, particularly if there is another wedding on the same day as you.

We would ask that:

- Ushers arrive at the Church about 30 minutes before the start of your wedding so that they can welcome guests and make certain that the guests are seated before the bride arrives.
- Groom and best man arrive 30 minutes before the start of the service to allow time for photographs and time to be seated before the Bride arrives.
- Bride arrives 10 minutes before the start of the service to allow time for photographs.
- The congregation should all be seated 5 minutes before the start of the service and it may be a good idea to put a note to this effect on your wedding invitations.

If you are very late then there will be a point at which those involved in your service; eg, choir or organist and priest, will need to leave. If this happens, we cannot promise that fees will be refunded.

So please be on time!



St Mary's Church, Chartham

**Marriage Application**

**Your Details**

	Man	Woman
Full Name <i>(including any middle names; no shortened or nicknames)</i>	First Names	First Names
	SURNAME	SURNAME
Home Address		
	Post Code	Post Code
How long have you lived here?		
	Home Telephone	Home Telephone
	Mobile No	Mobile No
	Email	Email
Your local Parish (see <a href="http://www.achurchnearyou">www.achurchnearyou</a> and contact your parish church for banns to be read there too if needed)		
Date of Birth		
Age at date of wedding		
Have you been previously married or in a civil partnership?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If "yes", how many times?		
Is your previous partner still living?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Condition <i>(please delete as appropriate)</i>  <i>Legal documentation will be required regarding annulment/dissolution of previous marriages/ civil partnerships</i>	Single Widower Previous marriage annulled Previous marriage dissolved Previous civil partnership dissolved	Single Widow Previous marriage annulled Previous marriage dissolved Previous civil partnership dissolved
Qualifying connection with St Mary's <i>(see notes, overleaf)</i>		
Occupation		
Nationality		
Are you related or connected by marriage?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If "yes", what is the connection?	
Signed		
Date		

Proposed Wedding Date					
Time					
Do you require any of the following: <i>Fees for these are agreed annually by the PCC – you can ask about them when you make your booking</i>	Organ	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Choir	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Bells	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Audio-Visual	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Name, surname and occupation of mother, father or parent**

You may each name **up to** four parents (for example, this might include a step-parent or birth parent if one of you is adopted). Where a step parent is included, this should be qualified by writing (step-parent) after their name. Where a parent is deceased, the word (deceased) should be entered after their name. If any parent is retired, details of their last occupation should be qualified by writing (retired) afterwards; this should be included even if the parent is deceased.

Please give the **FULL NAMES** of each person, with the **SURNAME IN CAPITALS**.

Please list the names in the order in which you wish them to appear on your marriage certificate.

	Man	Woman
Parent 1 full name	First Names	First Names
	SURNAME	SURNAME
Still living?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Occupation - Add (retired) if applicable		
Parent 2 full name	First Names	First Names
	SURNAME	SURNAME
Still living?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Occupation - Add (retired) if applicable		
Parent 3 full name	First Names	First Names
	SURNAME	SURNAME
Still living?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Occupation - Add (retired) if applicable		
Parent 4 full name	First Names	First Names
	SURNAME	SURNAME
Still living?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Occupation - Add (retired) if applicable		

Notes:

Qualifying connections with the Parish are as follows:

**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 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

\* Regularly attending normal church services in the parish would be at the 10am service twice a month over the course of 6 months