

Can the Church Help Me?

You want to be married. You've just had a child. You've just lost someone in your family. There are ways that we can help you through these events with both formal worship occasions and informal personal support



Getting Married?

Fixing the Date

Before doing *anything else* the date and time of your wedding must be arranged with this Church.

You can make enquiries in church after Sunday worship (at 9.30am or 6.30pm) or contact the Rector – The Revd. Clive Ashley on 01243 783364

The Interview

You must have a wedding interview with The Rector / Priest-in-Charge, as soon as possible when we can discuss and arrange the practical details.

An Application for Banns will be given to you, which you must complete and return to the Rector or Church Wardens.

Current Fees will be discussed and matters regarding Music, Hymns, Flowers and other important details.

The Banns

The Banns must be read in any Church of England Parish Church involved (even if you have a Roman Catholic or Free Church background).

Banns cannot be read until three months before your wedding, and must be read in each Parish Church where the parties live.

This may mean going to the other Vicar(s) involved and hearing the banns read on at least one of three successive Sundays. They do not have to be read out on the same day in each church.

Your wedding cannot take place unless the Vicar who is marrying you has your Banns certificate beforehand.

There is a charge of £12 for the certificate.

Rehearsal

There will be a rehearsal (lasting approximately thirty minutes) in the church to help ease the nerves and 'put everyone in their place', before the wedding.

The bride and the groom are essential for this, but the best man, bridesmaids, ushers and parents are much appreciated.

Banns certificates from other churches and fees (in full) will be received at the end of the rehearsal.

What will it cost?

Church Commissioners raise the fee each year.

There is an additional charge for video recording inside the church

What about the flowers?

Church members expertly arrange flowers in the church each week. If you wish for additional arrangements, we are happy for you to arrange for this with your florist. Please inform us of your plans.

Photographs/Videos?

Photographs may be taken coming in and going out of church and during the signing of the register. They are not permitted during the service and you are asked to make this clear to enthusiastic relatives! Video recording by family and friends is permitted, provided operators strictly obey the guidelines about where to stand.

What about the Service?

Start by exploring the meaning of Christian marriage using the service book, before you think about hymns, etc.

The assumptions about the meaning of marriage in the service, and in the Bible may be quite different from the views expressed in popular music, magazines or TV 'soaps'.

With the pressure of today's world, if your marriage is to be a strong one, then you must let God into your plans, your hopes and your fears too.

Only Jesus Christ, by His Spirit living in us, can give us the strength to love and go on loving.

Hymns

It is usual to have a hymn of praise at the beginning, a hymn of dedication in the middle and a hymn of looking forward to the future at the end. The exact arrangement and number of hymns is negotiable – two or three hymns is normal. Choose hymns that your families and friends will know.

Familiar, cheerful hymns will set the tone of the whole wedding day. We have a hymnbook covering most styles of music. You are free to borrow hymn and service books to decide.

Organ Music

The organist will play suitable voluntaries before and after the service and during the signing of the register. You may need to provide your own sheet music if we do not have it. If you wish to provide your own musicians of any kind, full organist's fees are still payable and permission must first be sought.

Printed Order of Service

You are strongly encouraged to make your own Order of Service – it is your day, so make every effort to contribute to the ceremony. Rough proofs of the order of service should be agreed with the Vicar presiding over the ceremony. Make sure that they are available in the church at least half an hour before the service begins.

But most importantly

We offer our best wishes for your wedding and your future happiness.

The Rector

Baptism and Dedication

The Church of England offers two different Services to parents at the birth of a child. They are the service of 'Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child' and the service of 'Baptism' (commonly called 'Christening').

Thanksgiving

The Service of Thanksgiving is specially an occasion to thank God for the child and to pray for him or her. There can be a hymn (on Sundays), a Bible reading and a short talk. The most important part of the service is when the minister receives the baby in his arms, just as Jesus did. He then does several things:

- Before God and before the congregation he officially names the child.
- He says a prayer of thanks to God for the child and for a safe delivery at birth.
- He prays for protection of the child.
- He prays for the child's parents, and for their home.
- He asks for God to bless the child.

This service need not take place on a Sunday. The difference that people usually notice is that there is no water, because, of course, it is not a service of Baptism. On the other hand, there is no obligation on the parents to attend church or be members of it. A certificate of Thanksgiving is given to say that the service has taken place. The child is then free later on to make up its own mind whether to get baptised or not.



Baptism

The service of Baptism is one in which the parents and the godparents stand up in church on a Sunday and make clear statements about their Christian faith.

They must say that they 'turn to Christ', that they 'repent of their sins', and that they 'renounce evil'.

They must also say that they believe and trust in God the Father who made the world, in Jesus Christ who redeemed mankind, and in His Holy Spirit who helps the people of God.

It is therefore a service in which parents declare that they have a strong commitment to follow Jesus and live each day by His teachings, praying often to Him and trusting Him for everything.

They are promising to teach their children to do the same and to be an example in this to them.

They are taking on a duty to bring their child to church and to be part of the church.

These declarations should not be made without serious thought beforehand.

Parents who wish to have their children baptised must either be members of the church family or signify their commitment by attending a preparation group with the proposed godparents.

It is also desirable that they attend church at 9.30am on several Sundays.

There is no fee for a service of baptism, but there is for the Certificate of Baptism and is £12.