



Your Guide To getting Married In the Saxonwell & Claypole Group of Churches

Legal Requirements for a Church Wedding

You can marry from the age of 18 onwards in a church wedding ceremony. If you're aged 16 or 17, you will need your parents' approval in England and Wales, but not in Scotland where it's legal without consent providing there are two witnesses. Church wedding ceremonies must take place between 8am and 6pm and be witnessed by at least two people. You've probably heard about 'having your banns read' in connection to a church wedding – this is required before the marriage takes place as it signifies your intention to marry. Your banns will be read out in the parish where each of you lives as well as in the church where you're planning on marrying for three Sundays during the three months leading up to the wedding. If you're marrying in a hurry it is possible to skip having your banns read, but you will need to apply for a common licence for this. They cost from £200. You may also need a licence if one of you isn't a British citizen or currently lives outside of the UK. In Scotland you're required to give 15 days' notice with the local registrar.

BANNS

Most Church of England marriages require banns to be read out in church before the wedding can take place. Although a legal requirement, banns can be a special occasion too. Here's your essential guide to Church of England banns:-

Banns are an announcement in church of your intention to marry and a chance for anyone to put forward a reason why the marriage may not lawfully take place.

Banns are an ancient legal tradition and have been read out every week in churches across the land for millions of couples, over many centuries.

After your forthcoming marriage is announced, the congregation may be invited to pray for you both. It can be quite special and moving to hear this, so do go along if you can.

Banns need to be read in the parish where each of you lives as well as the church in which you are to be married, if that is somewhere else.

You must have your banns read out in church for three Sundays during the three months before the wedding. This is usually done over three consecutive Sundays but does not have to be.

As well as being a legal requirement, your banns readings are special public occasions when people in church hear of your intention to marry. It's an exciting and happy time, so you're welcome to invite your family and friends to hear your banns too, if you'd like.

If there is not enough notice given for the banns to be read before the marriage is due to take place, or if one or both of you are British but do not live in England (or Wales), the Common Licence procedure needs to be used rather than banns.

If one or both of you is a national of a country which is outside the European Economic Area, you will require a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate to marry, rather than have banns read

Common Licence

- You may need a Common Licence if:-
- One or both of you are British but live abroad.
- One or both of you live in the UK but your home is not in England or Wales.
- Your home address is likely to change during the time when banns would normally be read out.
- Your wedding date is too soon to allow enough time for banns to be read.

Here are some key facts about Common Licences:-

- A Common Licence replaces the need for banns.
- If you already have a legally-recognised connection to the church where you're getting married, a Common Licence application is usually straightforward and the vicar will guide you on this.
- If you don't have one of the connections with your marrying church, and don't have time before your wedding to create one, applying for a Special Licence or Superintendent Registrar's Certificate may be suggested, depending on your circumstances.
- The granting of a Common Licence is at the discretion of the church legal official to whom the application is made, so is not necessarily a guaranteed route to marrying in a particular church.
- Part of the Common Licence application process requires you to swear an oath in person (in England) before a legal official. Couples who live abroad need to bear this in mind when planning a wedding in England
- Common Licences can only be granted for a marriage to take place in a particular church and are only valid for three months.
- The fee for a Common Licence is around £200.

NB If one or both of you are a national of a country outside the European Economic Area, you will each need a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate to be able to marry. The only exception to this is if you have been granted a Special Licence by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Do I have to attend the church to get married there?

The Church of England gives all British citizens with no former partner still living the right to get married in the parish church of the town where they live, or where either of the couple are on the church's electoral roll. You can also get married in church to which you have a connection, such as:

- Either of you lived in that church's parish for six months or more
- One of you regularly attended worship in that parish for six months or more
- Either of you were baptised or prepared for confirmation in the parish
- One of your parents lived in the parish/regularly attended worship there for six months or more in their child's lifetime

- Your parents or grandparents were married in the parish
- If you attend services at your chosen church for six months – even if you only attend a single service a month – that can help your case.

How far in advance should I book my church wedding ceremony?

It works the same way as booking a civil wedding ceremony in that places will get booked up months in advance. Talk to your vicar or the church office as soon as possible, particularly if you're hoping to marry in peak wedding season. Bear in mind most Church of England churches won't host ceremonies during Lent, although this isn't usually the case for Catholic ceremonies.

How much does a church wedding ceremony cost?

It costs around £510 to get married in a church in England, so make sure you factor this into your wedding budget. This cost covers the expense of reading of the banns, the certificate, the vicar and the use of the church itself. Extra details such as the Verger, flowers, having the bells rung (where possible) organist or choir will incur additional costs.

Can we use our own vows in a church wedding ceremony?

If you're planning on writing your own wedding vows, a church ceremony might not be for you. In England and Wales you cannot change any part of the wedding vows, however in Scotland you can vary the traditional vows or write your own as long as the minister approves them. You can include poems, readings or songs in your vows as long as your vicar is okay with it.

Can I decorate the church with my own flowers?

Most churches will be able to recommend someone from the parish who can decorate the church for you, but it shouldn't be a problem to bring in your own floral displays. Just check with your vicar where you can have the flowers as you wouldn't want a large arrangement to get in the way during the ceremony.

What is a wedding rehearsal?

Lots of churches offer the chance to have a wedding rehearsal – this allows you, your partner and your bridal party to run through the service ahead of the big day so you know what to expect and when.

Can we have confetti at our church wedding?

This varies from church to church so check with your vicar and let your guests know in advance. If wedding confetti is not allowed, find out if they'll allow you to use a natural or bio-degradable type of confetti instead.

Wedding Fees

(From January 2021)

Service		£464
Reading of Banns		£31
Certificate of Banns	Required if resident outside the parish from each church where couple live	£15 each

Contacts

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Links below to Various helpful Wedding Planning Sites

[Church of England Weddings](#)

[Just Engaged](#)

[Hitched](#)



Passport to Marrying in the Loveden Deanery

List of Churches

Names

Church

Date and Time of Wedding

To qualify to marry in one of our churches you need to attend church at least once a month for a period of six consecutive months, ideally in the church in which you intend to marry, but it may be in another church in the benefice.

Up to date details of services can be found at [insert website details](#)

Please leave enough time after your attendance for the banns to be read before your wedding - about another two months should be enough

Date of attendance

Authorised Signatory
Minister Church Warden

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The Marriage of Bride and Groom



Church

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for right.
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints. I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

'How Do I Love Thee?' by Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Bride and `groom ask that you please refrain from taking photos or videos during the service. Thank you.

Introit: Canon in D Major Pachelbel

THE WELCOME

HYMN

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art;
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word,
Be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord;
Be thou my great Father, and I thy true son;
Be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight;
Be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might;
Be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my strong tower:
O raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise:
Be thou mine inheritance now and always;
Be thou and thou only the first in my heart;
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright Sun,
O grant me its joys after vict'ry is won;
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

*Irish, 8th century, tr. Mary Byrne 1880-1931
versified Eleanor Hull 1860-1935*

PREFACE

In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we have come together to witness the marriage of Bride & Groom, to pray for God's blessing on them, to share their joy and to celebrate their love.

Marriage is a gift of God in creation through which husband and wife may know the grace of God. It is given that as man and woman grow together in love and trust, they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind, as Christ is united with his bride, the Church.

The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together in the delight and tenderness of sexual union and joyful commitment to the end of their lives.

It is given as the foundation of family life in which children are born and nurtured and in which each member of the family, in good times and in bad, may find strength, companionship and comfort, and grow to maturity in love.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God, and blessed by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with those celebrating a wedding at Cana in Galilee.

Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty which all should uphold and honour. It enriches society and strengthens community. No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly but reverently and responsibly in the sight of almighty God. Groom and Bride are now to enter this way of life. They will each give their consent to the other and make solemn vows, and in token of this they will each give and receive a ring.

We pray with them that the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen them, that they may fulfil God's purposes for the whole of their earthly life together.

THE DECLARATIONS

The minister says to the congregation

First, I am required to ask anyone present who knows a reason why these persons may not lawfully marry, to declare it now.

The minister says to the couple

The vows you are about to take are to be made in the presence of God, who is judge of all and knows all the secrets of our hearts; therefore if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

The minister says to the bridegroom

Groom will you take Bride to be your wife?
Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her,
and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

He answers

I will.

The minister says to the bride

Bride will you take Groom to be your husband?
Will you love him, comfort him, honour and protect him,
and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

She answers

I will.

THE VOWS

The minister introduces the vows

Bride & Groom I now invite you to join hands and make your vows, in the presence of God and his people.

The bride and bridegroom face each other.

The bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his, and says

I, Groom , take you, Bride, to be my wife,
to have and to hold from this day forward;
for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health, to love and to
cherish,
till death us do part; according to God's holy law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.

They loose hands.

The bride takes the bridegroom's right hand in hers, and says

I, Bride, take you, Groom , to be my husband,
to have and to hold from this day forward;
for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health, to love and to
cherish,
till death us do part; according to God's holy law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.

They loose hands.

THE GIVING OF RINGS

The minister receives the ring, and says

Heavenly Father, by your blessing,
let these rings be to Groom and Bride
a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, to remind them of the
vow and covenant which they have made this day
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

*The bridegroom places the ring on the fourth finger of the bride's left hand and,
holding it there, says*

Bride I give you this ring as a sign of our
marriage. With my body I honour you, all that I
am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you, within the love of
God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The bride replies

Groom I give you this ring as a sign of our
marriage. With my body I honour you, all that I
am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you, within the love of
God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

THE PROCLAMATION

The minister addresses the people

In the presence of God, and before this congregation,
Groom and Bride have given their consent and made their marriage vows to each other. They have declared their marriage by the joining of hands and by the giving and receiving of rings, I therefore proclaim that they are husband and wife.

The minister joins their right hands together and says

Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder.

THE BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

BLESSING

God the Father,
God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve and
keep you;
the Lord mercifully grant you the riches of his grace, that you may please
him both in body and soul,
and, living together in faith and love, may receive the
blessings of eternal life. All **Amen.**

REGISTRATION OF THE MARRIAGE

Ave Verum Corpus – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
God So Loved the World – John Stainer

READINGS

Colossians, Chapter 3, verses 12-17

Reader: Peter Robbins

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Song of Solomon, Chapter 2, verses 10-13

Reader: Jenny Lambert

“My beloved speaks and says to me:
Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away,
for behold, the winter is past;
the rain is over and gone.
The flowers appear on the earth,
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.
The fig tree ripens its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.
Arise, my love, my beautiful one,
and come away.”

Anthem – For the Beauty of the Earth – John Rutter

READINGS

Extract from *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Reader: Martha Montagne

What does that mean—'tame'?"

“It is an act too often neglected,” said the fox. “It means to establish ties.”

“Go and look again at the roses. You will understand now that yours is unique in all the world. Then come back to say goodbye to me, and I will make you a present of a secret.”

The little prince went away, to look again at the roses.

“You are not at all like my rose,” he said. “As yet you are nothing. No one has tamed you, and you have tamed no one. You are like my fox when I first knew him. He was only a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But I have made him my friend, and now he is unique in all the world.”

And the roses were very much embarrassed.

“You are beautiful, but you are empty,” he went on. “One could not die for you. To be sure, an ordinary passerby would think that my rose looked just like you—the rose that belongs to me. But in herself alone she is more important than all the hundreds of you other roses: because it is she that I have watered; because it is she that I have put under the glass globe; because it is she that I have sheltered behind the screen; because it is for her that I have killed the caterpillars (except the two or three that we saved to become butterflies); because it is she that I have listened to, when she grumbled, or boasted, or even sometimes when she said nothing. Because she is my rose.”

And he went back to meet the fox.

“Goodbye,” he said.

“Goodbye,” said the fox. “And now here is my secret, a very simple secret: It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.”

“What is essential is invisible to the eye,” the little prince repeated, so that he would be sure to remember.

“It is the time you have wasted for your rose that makes your rose so important.”

“It is the time I have wasted for my rose—” said the little prince, so that he would be sure to remember.

“Men have forgotten this truth,” said the fox. “But you must not forget it. You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed. You are responsible for your rose...”

“I am responsible for my rose,” the little prince repeated, so that he would be sure to remember.

ADDRESS

HYMN

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down;
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.

Come, Almighty to deliver,
Let us all thy grace receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve thee as thy hosts above,
Pray and praise thee without ceasing,
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation,
Perfectly restored in thee,
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

arr. Blaenwern
Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

THE PRAYERS

Faithful God, holy and eternal, source of life and spring of love, we thank and praise you for bringing Bride & Groom to this day, and we pray for them.

May their marriage be life-giving and life-long, enriched by your presence and strengthened by your grace; may they bring comfort and confidence to each other in faithfulness and trust.

May the hospitality of their home bring refreshment and joy to all round them; may their love overflow to neighbours in need and embrace those in distress.

May they discern in your word order and purpose for their lives; and may the power of your Holy Spirit lead them in truth and defend them in adversity.

May they nurture their family with devotion, see their children grow in body, mind and spirit and come at last to the end of their lives with hearts content and in joyful anticipation of heaven.

We join together in the family prayer of the church

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy
name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against
us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from
evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the
glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE BLESSING

The minister says

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love, defend you on every side,
and guide you in truth and peace; and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

HYMN

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer, Pilgrim through
this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy pow'ful hand: Bread of heaven,
bread of heaven, Feed me now and evermore,
Feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain, Whence the healing
stream doth flow; Let the fiery cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through
Strong deliv'rer, strong deliv'rer,
Be thou still my strength and shield, Be thou still my
strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan, Bid my anxious
fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee,
I will ever give to thee.

arr. 'Cwm Rhondda'
William Williams (1717-1791)

Exeunt: Arrival of the Queen of Sheba Handel

Thank you to all who have made this service possible

Service led by Canon Tony Tucker