

Your Wedding at St Mary's, Ecclesfield



A Guide as you prepare for
your Wedding Day

We are delighted that you are thinking of getting married at St. Mary's. This is an exciting time and we hope that this booklet will help you in the planning of your wedding day and as you think about your marriage. All that it contains will be explained more fully in the course of wedding preparation with us, but it helps to have it written down as well so that you can check anything you are not sure about. First we will look at the practical aspects of your planning and then at the promises you will be making.

Booking your Wedding

Please phone the Vicar, The Revd. Daniel Hartley ☎ 2570002 if you haven't already done so. He will guide you through the process.

But what if one or both of us are divorced? As a church we very much support marriage as a commitment for life. However, we also recognise that there are times when relationships break down, and the gospel is about second chances as well as being about unconditional love.

If either of you have been married before you will need to see the Vicar, The Revd. Daniel Hartley ☎ 2570002 before booking your wedding as there are certain guidelines we have to follow in the remarriage of those who have been divorced.

Legal Requirements

As the law stands at the moment, you can be married at St Mary's if

- One or both of you live within the village of Ecclesfield – i.e. within the ecclesiastical, not the civil parish – or are regular worshippers with us.

From October 1st 2008 an engaged couple are welcome to be married in St Marys in the parish of Ecclesfield, not only if one of them lives or worships there, but also if just one of these applies:

- one of them was baptised or prepared for confirmation in the parish;
- one of them has ever lived in the parish for six months or more;
- one of them has at any time regularly attended public worship in the parish for six months or more;
- one of their parents has lived in the parish for six months or more in their child's lifetime;
- one of their parents has regularly attended public worship there for six months or more in their child's lifetime;
- Their parents or grandparents were married in the parish.

To qualify as regular worshippers, one or both of you would need to be coming on a regular basis for about a year before your wedding day. After six months your names would be put forward to go on the church electoral roll (membership list), this would be considered by the next meeting of the church council. Once this was completed we can call your Banns and proceed legally with your wedding. Although in practice this can be completed after 9 months, we suggest you aim to come for a year so that you are covered in the eventuality of sickness, changed work patterns etc. since this is a legal and not a church requirement.

Although this may seem an extra burden at a time when you are busy with other aspects of your wedding day, most couples who follow this path find it makes a real difference to that day. Coming regularly means you are familiar with the church and with services of worship and so can relax and enjoy yourselves much more than if one of the first times you are in the church is when you are about to make your vows. It also gives you an opportunity to think a little more about what getting married in church means.

Reading of Banns

Banns of Marriage, the public announcing of your intention to marry, have to be read both in the church in which you are about to be married and in the parish/parishes in which you both live. They cannot be read sooner than 3 months before your Wedding Day so, 3 months before your wedding you must go and see the Vicar of the other parish/parishes and ask for your banns to be read. Note they must be read in a Church of England church because this is a legal procedure and there will be a charge for this. Once they are read you will be issued with a certificate. Please can you make sure you hand that in to us as it has to be seen by whoever is taking your wedding. We will read your Banns at St Mary's on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sunday at the 9.30 a.m. service on the first month possible, i.e. Banns are read in June for August weddings.

Flowers

Mrs Carol Wright co-ordinates flowers for all weddings at St Mary's since St. John's, Chapeltown also uses the church for their weddings. Unless it is Lent (6 weeks before Easter) or Advent (4 weeks before Christmas, there are usually 2 pedestals of flowers in church, one in front of the pulpit and the other up at the high altar. You may want other flowers or/and pew ends for your wedding day. Carol Wright is a florist and can do the flowers for you but you are also quite free to have any florist of your choice. Whatever you decide, please can you contact her as soon as possible ☎ 2451872 and let her know your decision.

If you are having another florist please ask them to phone Carol and she can let them into the church at a time convenient to them. She can also let you know whether another couple is getting married on the same day and help you to liaise with them and share the cost if you want to.

Music

Early in the year in which you are getting married we have an evening with the organist and choir to help you in your choice of organ music and hymns. If you are unable to attend that evening, Mr Don Knott, the organist is happy to talk with you about what you might choose after the 9.30 service on a Sunday morning. Once you have decided what you would like can you please complete the form in this booklet and make sure he has it at least 6 weeks before your Wedding Day.

Choir & Bells

We are very fortunate at St. Mary's to have a good team of bell ringers and a choir. However, since many of them work, they are not available for weddings on a weekday.

Arriving at church

When booking your wedding cars please ask for the bride to be brought to church 15 minutes before the time of your Wedding. This allows time for photographs and to calm any nerves, and ensures that you are not late. This is especially important when there is another wedding following you.

Confetti

We are very happy for your guests to smother you with confetti so long as it is bio degradable and not immediately in front of the church doors. The latter is so that any brides following don't have confetti on the ground in their pre-wedding photos! The usual practice is for folk to throw it over by the Lych Gate or elsewhere in the grounds.

Orders of Service

Most couples find it useful to have a service leaflet of some kind or another. They can range from simply having the hymns written out to a full service. Most go for something quite simple. Suggested outlines are elsewhere in this booklet. These Orders of Service can be produced in the church office at a cost of 50pence each if you can let the parish administrator, Mrs Jean Fowler, ☎ 2450106 have the details a month before your wedding day. If you are doing your own, or having them printed by someone else, please can you make sure the lines of hymns are printed as they are in the hymn books.

Whichever way you are having them done can you also make sure there are 15 copies of the insides with the hymns on for the choir. This is because hymn and song books vary in the words they use in hymns at times and the choir do want to be singing the same as everyone else.

Photographs & Videos

We do ask that no photographs are taken during the service, apart from by the official photographer. It is very distracting for those around the 'photographer' as well as for yourselves at a very important occasion in your lives. So as not to interrupt the flow of the service, we ask that only one 'staged' photograph is taken after the signing of the registers, so please can you ask him/her to have a word with whoever is taking your wedding 15 minutes before the service begins.

Videos are less intrusive but carry an extra charge for copyright reasons. This, we're afraid, applies to family as well as professional videos. Again, if you are having a professional video made, please ask the people concerned to have a word with whoever is taking the service.

Payment

Traditionally payment has always been in cash at the rehearsal but we now suggest that you might pay a month beforehand by cash or a cheque made out to 'Ecclesfield PCC'. This is then one less thing you have to think about close to the day. Any closer than a month then we need to have the payment in cash.

Change of address, Telephone numbers, Postponement/Cancellation

Please can you make sure you do keep us up to date with any changes in your details as we will be contacting you at various times before your wedding with details of wedding preparation etc. We would also be very grateful if, for some reason you decide to postpone or cancel your wedding that you let us know and we can then make that date available to others.

Wedding Preparation

There are several elements to this:

- *Planning Your Wedding*

An evening in the September or October for couples who are getting married in the next calendar year. The aim of this is to talk through some of the practical things that you need to think about when planning a wedding in Church.

- *Choosing Your Music*

An evening with the choir and organist in the January or February of the year in which you are getting married. This evening provides an opportunity for you to hear the organist and choir perform some wedding music and hymns that will help you in the choices that you'll need to make.

Meeting with whoever is marrying you:

Approximately 2 months before your wedding date, the person marrying you will make contact and arrange to meet with you.

- *Wedding Rehearsal*

This usually takes place one evening during the week before your wedding. By then you should have all who need to be involved with you. These include yourselves, the best man, bridesmaids/matron of honour/flower girls/pageboys, whoever is giving the bride away and ushers. Also if anyone is reading it is helpful if they can be there and can check out the microphone etc.

Cost of a Wedding at St Mary's

Please see the church's website Weddings page for details of current fees. This will give you a good idea of what a wedding will cost when you get married at St Mary's.

Note: Every January Parliament issues the legal fees (called 'Statutory' in this list) for the coming year. These usually rise in line with inflation. At the same time the choir, bells, organist, clerk and PCC charges are also reviewed. If you add approximately £20 to your total from this list your allowance should be on the generous side.

Guests

It is helpful if you can let us know whether any of your guests will need wheelchair access.

Service Outlines

Music In

The Welcome & Opening Prayer

Hymn

Introduction & Declarations

The Reading/s

The Address

Hymn

The Marriage

Prayers – *which will include the Lord's Prayer*

Blessing

The Registration of the Marriage

Music Out

A Church Wedding – What Does This Mean?

You may have chosen to be married at St Mary's

- For family reasons – it's where members of your family have been married in the past.
- Because you like the look of the church.
- Because you want to make your vows not only before your families and friends but explicitly in the presence of God.

Whatever the reason or combination of reasons, you will be stepping into a long tradition of Christian Marriage. A tradition which sees the marriage relationship as exclusive and lifelong and lived out in relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

With this in mind you may find it useful to look together at the vows you will be making to one another.

These vows will probably be familiar to you from other weddings and from films and novels, but they will feel quite different when you are the one making them.

Read them through together and share with one another what you think they really mean.

**I, N, take you, N,
to be my wife/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.**

When you exchange rings you will then say the following words to each other:

**N, 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.**

This is then the point where you are declared husband and wife and, asking you to join your right hands, places his/her stole over them and says:

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

Once more emphasising the lifelong commitment you will both have just made.

Links

www.stmarysecclesfield.com/Regular_Services.html

www.stmarysecclesfield.com/Weddings.html

www.yourchurchwedding.org/

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