

## Planning your wedding

We have a dedicated Wedding Coordinator who organises regular 'Wedding Surgeries' on Saturday mornings, when couples can meet our team, have a look around the church and discuss their hopes and requirements over a cup of tea and a biscuit.

It is also a good idea to come along to a Sunday morning service to meet the ministers and congregation, and to speak to our Director of Music and Flower Co-ordinator.

The Church of England provides a helping guide for wedding couples: Seven Steps to a Heavenly Wedding, plus an online ceremony planner at [www.yourchurchwedding.org](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org).

Do tell us immediately if any of your circumstances change - such as your address, or if you need to change dates/times of the ceremony.

### How much will it cost?

Weddings are expensive, as you will probably already have found out! The cost of the marriage ceremony in church is divided between the legal fees (which are mandatory and shown in blue below), covering the publication of the banns, certificate of banns (if necessary), the marriage service and a certificate of marriage, and the charges set by the church. The latter include payments to the organist, vergger, the bell ringers and the church choir, should you decide to have them.

The Diocese of Derby £218

The Parochial Church Council £262

Publication of Banns of Marriage £32

Certificate of Banns of Marriage (if required) £16

Heating (October to April) £80

Vergger £40

Director of Music (organist) £175

Bells £180

Choir £295

Flowers £80

Videos (*videos may only be taken from the gallery area*) £200 (£160 is payable to the Director of Music and £40 to the bell maintenance fund)

These fees are in accordance with the levels set by the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England and ratified by Parliament.

Fees should be paid two weeks before the wedding. The envelope enclosing the payment should be handed in to the Parish Office (call 01332 862153 or email [melbourneparishchurch@gmail.com](mailto:melbourneparishchurch@gmail.com) to arrange) and the envelope should detail each item of the fee enclosed, using the list above. We now also have the facility to accept payment by debit card for the statutory fees. Please ask for details.

### When should we have a rehearsal?

A wedding rehearsal is held in church usually during the week of the marriage service, and a convenient date and time will be discussed with you. At the rehearsal you should try to have the best man, bridesmaids and the person who is 'giving away' the bride present, if possible. This is a time to walk through the service and put you all at ease.

### Bridesmaids and page boys

Do you need to have them? No, is the simple answer! But if you are, there are no set numbers.

Bridesmaids are there to tend to the needs of the bride throughout the service, making sure that her dress is arranged properly and to 'wait' on her. The bride passes her bouquet to the chief bridesmaid at the beginning of the service and, if she is wearing a veil, a bridesmaid would normally help to take it back at the beginning of the service. In the past couples made your vows with the veil over the bride's face in case the groom changed his mind! Now, the veil is drawn back at the beginning of the service to make sure the groom is marrying the right person!

### The Best Man

He is there to assist the groom. Tradition held that if the groom failed to appear the best man was obliged to marry the bride! It is possible to have more than one best man. A best man should remember to untie any rings from a cushion, or take them out of the box before handing them to the priest!

## Vows

Today's vows reflect the equal commitment to partnership and responsibilities within a promise to love and cherish one another. It is still possible for the bride to include the word 'obey' in her vows, but don't do it for tradition's sake! If you wish to discuss this, please mention it to the minister. If the bride does say 'obey', the groom will promise to 'worship' the bride.

## Ushers and seating

It would be helpful if you could provide one or two ushers to welcome your guests and assist people as they arrive. Ushers should be present forty minutes before the wedding and distribute the booklets for the service. They will also escort people to their seats. It is traditional for the family of the groom to sit on the right side of church as you walk in, behind the groom. The family of the bride sit on the left, with a space saved for the person 'giving away' the bride. However, you do not have to follow this tradition, especially if one family is very small.

## Photographs

Photography is allowed during the ceremony at certain points – usually before the bride enters church; the signing of the registers and as the couple leave. The official photographer is encouraged to liaise with the officiating minister before the ceremony begins. Photographers are not allowed to move around church during the service, or to use flash photography, except at the signing of the registers.

Videeing is possible from the balcony, if done in an unobtrusive manner.

## The rings

A wedding ring is a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, and of the commitment you are making to each other. It is entirely up to you whether you have one ring or two. It has become increasingly popular for partners to give each other a ring. There are appropriate vows for whatever you decide.

## The signing of the registers

This usually takes place in the vestry at the end of the service. After the signing, the photographer will normally want you to pose for some special

photographs. The officiating priest will issue a marriage certificate which will be signed by both of you and two witnesses appointed. The witnesses must be over 18.

## The length of the service

The service in church is approximately 30 - 40 minutes. It is normally possible to come back into church after the service for any internal photographs, particularly if the weather is inclement. However, this may not be possible if another wedding immediately follows your service, so please check with the officiating minister should you wish to use the inside of the church for photographs.

Please don't be late as there may be another ceremony following yours. Don't listen to the tradition that the bride must always be late! Lateness often leads to a restless congregation, especially if there are a lot of young children present.

## Confetti

Your guests may throw confetti – but please wait until you are outside and the west doors are closed. Usually the photographer is the one to give permission, so as not to spoil his photographs! If at all possible, we recommend the use of bio-degradable confetti.

## Orders of service

Couples usually like to have their own Order of Service printed. This would have the words of the hymns included and it may be a good 'keepsake' afterwards. Please discuss the Order of Service with the clergy to ensure accuracy.

Please entrust your Orders of Service to a reliable person on your wedding day to ensure an early arrival at church and avoid them getting locked in a car boot or forgotten!