

Getting Married

at

St John's, Beeston Parish
Church



All you need to know.....

We are delighted that you plan to hold your wedding at St John's, Beeston. We've put together this booklet as a 'one-stop' source of information, which we hope will help you as you prepare for your special day.

Who can be married in a Church?

- Someone who lives within the parish boundary or who has lived in the parish at some point in their lives for more than six months (we will need evidence).
- Someone who can demonstrate another "qualifying connection" with the parish – usually a historical family connection. You may need to speak to the clergy about what constitutes a legal qualifying connection or take a look at the Church of England website, which has lots of useful information.
<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/weddings>
- If you have been married before, you may still be eligible to be married at St John's, so long as all the stages of your divorce have been fully completed. We will need to see an **original copy** of your Decree Absolute. Marriage after divorce is entirely at the discretion of the parish priest following guidelines agreed with the bishop. In some cases it may be more appropriate for you to have a civil wedding at another venue which can still be blessed in church either immediately afterwards or at a later date.
- There are different rules regarding the marriage of EU and foreign nationals in churches and if either you or your partner is not a British Citizen (passport holder) you must make this clear from the outset so that we can make sure your wedding is still legal.

In every case you will be asked to provide some proof of identity and current address and you will be asked to sign an application for marriage, indicating that the information you are giving is correct.

What's special about a Christian Wedding?

Any wedding will involve you making big promises to each other about a life-long commitment. In a Church wedding you are making those same promises but also openly asking God to be a key part of your special day and of your life together.

When it comes to the day of your wedding you might hear the clergy at St John's reminding you and your family and friends that God is the most important 'guest' on your big day. We hope and pray that God will also have a big part in your future.

It is very important that you talk to each other about the reasons for choosing a Church wedding. We want you to feel comfortable with your choice of venue and the idea of the living God being at the heart of your relationship.

Here are some extracts from the Marriage Service for you to think about as you prepare for your wedding.

The Preface

This will be read out at the beginning of the service:

In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we have come together
to witness the marriage of *N* and *N*,
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.

N and *N* 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

N, will you take *N* 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

N will you take *N* 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.

A Reading from the Bible & Address

The Vows

The minister introduces the vows

N and *N*, 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, *N*, take you, *N*,
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, N, take you, N,
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.

The Giving of Rings

The minister receives the rings, and says

Heavenly Father, by your blessing,
let these rings be to N and N
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.

All Amen.

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

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.

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

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.

The Proclamation

The minister addresses the people

In the presence of God, and before this congregation,
N and N 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

Blessed are you, O Lord our God,
for you have created joy and gladness,
pleasure and delight, love, peace and fellowship.
Pour out the abundance of your blessing
upon N and N in their new life together.
Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts,
and a crown upon their heads.
Bless them in their work and in their companionship;
awake and asleep,
in joy and in sorrow,
in life and in death.
Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that banquet
where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home.
We ask this through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

The minister says to the couple

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.

The Prayers

As you think about whether or not to get marriage in church, just pause to ask yourselves if you are happy with what you have read so far? Are you in agreement with the content of the Preface, setting out what the Christian Church believes about marriage? Do the vows contain the kind of promises you were expecting to make? If you have any questions about anything you have read so far, then please don't hesitate to contact the clergy, whose numbers can be found at the end of this booklet.

What next?

You have probably already met one of the clergy, talked about your interest in marrying at St John's and filled in a form. The form is an agreement between us to marry you on a specific time and day – assuming that you are legally eligible. **If you decide to change your day or time or to postpone or cancel your wedding it is very important that you talk to us as soon as possible.** For example, another couple may have booked the time or day you want to change to.

What about coming to Church?

We hope that as part of your preparations for a Christian wedding over the coming weeks and months you may be able to join us as part of God's family worshipping together on a Sunday. Our main service is at 10am, which is a Parish Communion.

Final Preparations

3months before to your wedding you will need to be in touch with the clergy so that we can meet again to talk about the practical arrangements for your big day. At this meeting we will talk about ...

Orders of Service

These are printed by you or a printing service and can include as much information about your wedding as you want. They do not normally include every word of the service but would need to include the hymns and music details as well as any special readings and perhaps a mention of who you have chosen to be a reader. For example, you might want a family member or a friend to read the Bible passage or a poem/prose about love or marriage. Please make sure you discuss the details of the Order of Service with the clergy **before** you go ahead and get anything printed.

Banns

These are very important. It is likely that your banns will need to be read at the main Sunday service on three consecutive Sundays prior to the wedding, within 3 months of the wedding date. We hope you will be able to attend at least two out of three of the readings of your banns as part of your preparation.

Banns are an important legal preliminary and unless you are marrying with a Licence from a bishop or archbishop you cannot marry in a Church without banns. **If one or both of you are living outside the parish at the time of your wedding you will need to have your banns read at St John's AND in your home parish.** A fee is usually charged for this by your home parish, and you will be given a certificate as proof of reading which you **MUST** present to us by the time of your wedding rehearsal, normally a few days before the wedding.

Fees

The Fees are adjusted every year. In 2023 a wedding with bells and the organ costs £854. Without the bells the cost is £609. If you need to have your banns read in a parish other than St John's costs an additional £51 in 2023. Some charges are statutory fees set down nationally by Parliament and some are local charges set by the Parochial Church Council. A breakdown of specific fees is available on request from the Parish Office beeston.parish@gmail.com

We request payment of statutory fees electronically to the Parish bank account, account number 50149438, sort code 40-10-06. Payment for bellringers and organist are currently made in cash at the rehearsal. The wedding cannot take place without prior payment of the relevant fees.

In a few cases of genuine hardship we have some discretion to vary the fees.

The Rehearsal

This is an important opportunity, usually a few days before your wedding, to review the paperwork, collect any fees and run through the service. If you have had your banns read in another parish you **MUST** bring a completed banns certificate with you from the parish priest. Feel free to post the certificate to us as soon as you receive it rather than waiting for the rehearsal. Without this a marriage by banns – the normal legal route – is not possible. Failure to produce the certificate might mean that your wedding has to be postponed!

We only need to see the Bride and Groom at the rehearsal. However, if the person escorting the Bride down the aisle and the Best Man (or Woman!) are available they are welcome. It is a good idea to invite a bridesmaid too. But a rehearsal need only involve a few key people.

Flowers

You will need to think about a florist or we can arrange for there to be flowers in church on your wedding day. There would be a modest charge for this depending on your requirements. A stand of flowers arranged by someone in church will cost around £50, depending on the choice of flowers and size of arrangement. Please ask the clergy for details. We do not, however, offer a full floral service - bridal bouquets etc. Your florist may want access to Church so this needs to be arranged with the clergy before the wedding. We have seats rather than pews in St John's so we cannot accommodate fresh flowers on the end of each row.

If you'd like to talk to us about an arrangement of flowers in church please speak to Mrs Pauline Wheelhouse 925 9381.

Music

You need to think about the music for your wedding. How do you want to begin and end the service? With traditional wedding music? Or something else? What about music during the signing of the Marriage Document? We have a full and flexible sound-system in church which you might like to make use of.

The usual practice is to have two hymns or worship songs at a wedding. You need to think about what you would like to have. The internet is a good source of help. Try the Church of England website

<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/weddings>.

You might hear something you like on one of the Sundays when you come to Church as part of your preparation.

Although we are able to accommodate outside music groups and choirs we ask them to bring their own amplification equipment. We have a church choir who may be willing to accompany your guests and can sing during the signing of the Marriage Document. However this needs to be arranged with notice through Mrs Chris Warren (925 1259) our Musical Director and attracts an additional fee. Please see the list of fees available through the Parish Office beeston.parish@gmail.com

Readings and Prayers

A Christian Wedding always includes a reading from the Bible. You may want to choose an additional reading which is not from the Bible and that's fine. Again, the internet is a good source of inspiration.

To help you make a choice we have included some Bible passages at the end of this leaflet.

Why not write your own prayers for your wedding day? There may be things about your partner you particularly want to say 'thank you' to God for. There may be particular things or people you want to say 'thank you' for. Let the clergy know: they can help you put together a special prayer for your special day.

Photographs and Videos

We allow photographs in Church but ask guests **NOT** to use flash photography or videos/video phones *during* the service. Couples usually engage an official photographer who will be allowed to take photos during the service, but without flash. There will be a brief opportunity for guests to take photos after the signing of the Marriage Document. If you are arranging for a professional video of the service an additional fee is payable to the organist, again this is available from the Parish Office beeston.parish@gmail.com

Confetti

We like Confetti but not in Church! Please ask guests to throw it as you get into your car or carriage as you begin your journey to the reception venue.

Finally...

At any point, if you have any questions or concerns about your wedding please don't hesitate to get in touch with the clergy or the Parish Office.

When you meet the clergy 3 months before your wedding please bring this leaflet with you.....

Additional Information

Bible Readings ... some suggestions

Song of Solomon 2.10-13;8.6,7

My beloved speaks and says to me:

'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;

for now 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 turtle-dove is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm;

for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave.

Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame.

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it.

If one offered for love all the wealth of one's house,
it would be utterly scorned.

1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

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. Love never ends. But as for

prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Philippians 4.4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Colossians 3.12-17

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.

1 John 4.7-12

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way:

God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Things to Remember

- Get in touch with us again **3 MONTHS** before the wedding.
- **Rehearsal Checklist**

Banns Certificate – if applicable (this is very important if you live in another parish, as without it you cannot be married)

Fees – amounts agreed beforehand via bank transfer or cash.

Music – bring any CDs fully labelled with your chosen track number(s).

Useful contacts

Fr Wayne Plimmer *The Vicarage, Middle St, Beeston 0115 9254571*

wplimmer@tiscali.co.uk

Kathryn Weller (Parish Administrator) *07709 756 949 (Thursdays)*

beeston.parish@gmail.com

Chris Warren (Director of Music) *9251259*

Pauline Wheelhouse (Church Flowers) *9259381*

Useful Websites

www.cofe.anglican.org – general information

www.classicfm.co.uk

www.weddingsabout.com - music

Your notes.....