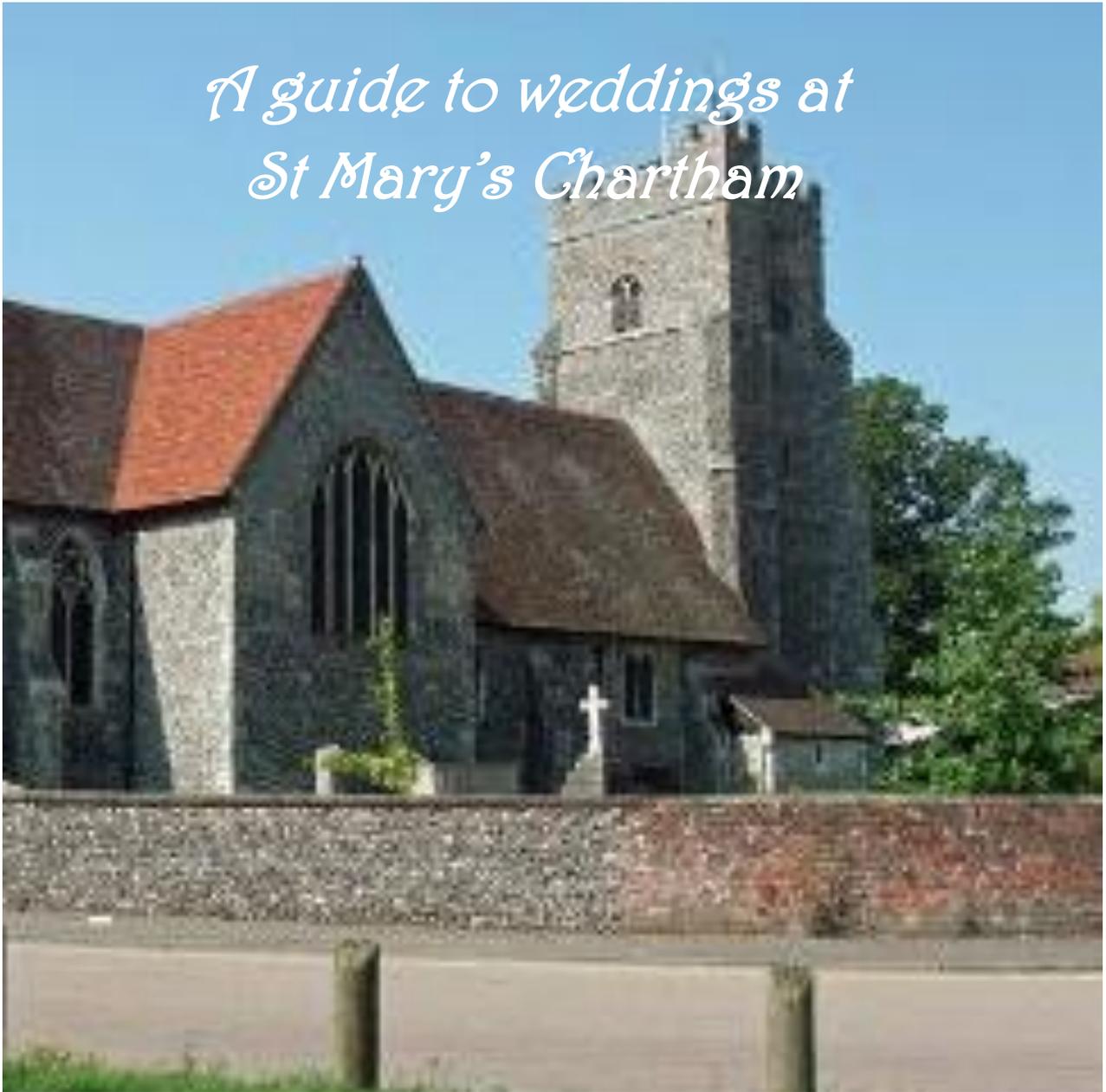


*A guide to weddings at
St Mary's Chartham*



*An all you need to know guide (we think) to getting married at
St Mary's Church in Chartham.*



Let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

This Booklet

Within the pages of this booklet there is all the information that you should need when organizing your wedding at St Mary's Chartham. If there is any question that isn't covered here, please ask. Contact details are below.

Vicar

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More information

Can be found at our website at

www.stmaryschartham.co.uk

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What is a wedding?

A wedding is one of life's great moments, a time of solemn commitment as well as good wishes, feasting and joy. St John tells us how Jesus shared in such an occasion at Cana, and gave there a sign of new beginnings as he turned water into wine.

Marriage is intended by God to be a creative relationship, as his blessing enables husband and wife to love and support each other in good times and in bad, and to share in the care and upbringing of children. For Christians, marriage is also an invitation to share life together in the spirit of Jesus Christ. It is based upon a solemn, public and life-long covenant between a man and a woman, declared and celebrated in the presence of God and before witnesses.

On their wedding day the bride and bridegroom face each other, make their promises and receive God's blessing. The congregation are witnesses of the marriage, and express their ongoing support by their presence and prayers.

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.

1 Corinthians 13.4-7

Who can get married in Church?

You must be old enough. If you are under 18 years old you will need your parents' consent to marry and by law you cannot be married in the UK until you are 16.

You can marry in any Church of England church (of which St Mary's is one) if you can show:-

❖ That one of you:

- has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months **or**
- was baptised in the parish concerned **or**
- was prepared for confirmation in the parish **or**
- has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months **or**

❖ That one of your parents, at any time after you were born:

- has lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months **or**
- has regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months **or**

❖ That one of your parents or grandparents:

- was married in the parish

Regularly attending normal church services in the parish would be being at either 8am or 10am services twice a month over the course of 6 months.

Love is....

*patient, love is
kind. It does not
envy, it does not
boast, it is not
proud. It does not
dishonor others, it
is not self-seeking,
it is not easily
angered, it keeps
no record of
wrongs. Love does
not delight in evil
but rejoices with
the truth. It
always protects,
always trusts,
always hopes,
always perseveres*

When can a wedding take place?

To be legal the wedding must take place between 8am and 6pm. This is an historic rule introduced because there needs to be enough light to make certain that the person you are marrying is actually the person you thought you were marrying!

Although most weddings take place on Saturdays, Fridays and Sundays are also popular days. In fact any day of the week is possible as long as the church is available and there is a priest available to marry you.

Lent (the weeks between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday) is a 'penitential' season of the Church and there will be no flowers in church at this time. We would advise you to avoid this time if possible. Prince William and Katherine Middleton's wedding happened on 29th April 2011 deliberately to avoid Lent.

Who has to attend the wedding?

It goes without saying that the Bride and Groom will need to be there, as well as a Priest to perform the ceremony. Apart from that you will need two witnesses who have attended the service and who are over 18 years of age to sign the registers to confirm that the marriage has taken place.

A Wedding is a public service and, as such, anyone is welcome to attend.



Booking

If you would like to book a wedding service please complete the form on the last page of this guide. When you have completed this form we will check to see if the date and time is available for your wedding.

If any of your details change after you have booked your wedding **you must let us know**. Changes of address may affect the reading of Banns, and may mean that you have to change the way that you get the legal permission for your wedding to take place. If your phone number or email address changes it can make it difficult for us to contact you.

If you change your mind about your requirements for your wedding (such as music or flowers) we also need to know. Please let us know of changes in writing or by e-mail.

If you need to postpone or cancel your wedding **please also let us know in writing**.

Please be aware that, occasionally, the person taking your service may be changed due to unforeseen circumstances, such as illness, etc. We will inform you as soon as we can if this needs to happen.

Banns

If you are getting married after the calling of Banns (a public announcement in a parish church of an upcoming marriage between two specified persons), as most couples do, you will need to have your banns called in all of the following Churches:

- St Mary's Chartham
- The church in the parish in which you live, if this isn't St Mary's
- The church in the parish in which your fiancé(e) lives, if this isn't St Mary's
- Any Church where you or your fiancé's names appear on the electoral role.

Please note your banns read must be read in a **Church of England** church; ie, Anglican Church.

You don't have to come and hear your banns called, but as part of the whole process of getting married, most couples like to do so. Banns are called 3 times in the 4 weeks before your wedding at the 10am service.

If you are marrying at St Mary's and are both resident in the parish, then the cost of Banns is in the cost of your wedding. If you need Banns to be read in any other church, this will involve paying them an additional fee. You will need to contact the church yourself to arrange this.

Your full and proper name; ie, no shortened or nicknames - must be used on your Banns form. It is **vitaly important** to get a banns certificate from the other parishes where your banns are being read and hand these to us before the wedding. **We cannot by law marry you unless we have seen the banns certificates from the places where they need to be read.**

Cost

The cost of the average wedding in 2013 was over £14,000. Only a small part of this is down to the Church fees. It's not necessary to spend an enormous amount of money on a wedding, as some of the best and most memorable weddings are done with a close eye on the overall cost. Asking friends and family to help with the preparations gets more people involved and each will enjoy helping you make your day really special as well as bringing the cost down.

A wedding really doesn't need to cost anything like £14,000. You can find more practical advice at www.yourchurchwedding.org

Weddings are not there to make money for the Church but there are costs that you will be asked to meet. These costs are of three types:

- There are the statutory fees that help support the ministry of the Church of England and cover the legal cost of your wedding.
- There are local fees that help towards the costs of the parish Church.
- Any 'extras' that we might have supplied; eg, organist, choir and flowers.

There are occasions when a couple would like a friend who is an organist to play for their wedding or a choir that they are members of to sing. Please speak to the person taking your wedding about this. Musicians' Union rules on such matters are well known amongst musicians and in such circumstances the 'home' musicians are still entitled to their fee.

Fees are set at the beginning of the year so they can only be confirmed then. Fees should be paid in full at the wedding rehearsal before your wedding day. Please pay in cash. *A list of fees can be found on our website; the address is on the front cover.*

Insuring your wedding

One area that people often overlook is insurance when planning their wedding. Ecclesiastical is the insurance company that insure most Church buildings and as specialists in Church insurance they are also specialists when it comes to wedding insurance. To find out more, look at their website at www.ecclesiastical.com

as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together . . .

Service Sheets

Many couples like to have a service sheet for their wedding and many people now either produce these themselves or get friends to help. While having a service sheet is not essential, if you do produce one, you will need to do this after you have talked about your service with the person conducting your wedding. The texts of the wedding service, Bible readings and the words of hymns can easily be found on the Internet and there are links to resources from our website.

When considering what quantity to print, bear in mind that the bridal party will need at least 6 copies and the choir (if you're having one) and organist may well need 9 or 10 copies.

An example sheet is available to look at as well as actual service sheets from previous weddings at St Mary's. Whoever is taking your service should be shown a mock-up of your service sheet **before** it goes to print. Please talk to the member of clergy who is conducting your wedding about this.

Music

Music often plays an important part in a wedding service. There is normally something played at the entrance of the bride, two or three hymns during the service itself, and then something else played as the couple leave the church. There is often music played when the registers are being signed. When choosing hymns, do read through all the verses of the hymns that you are considering and ask yourself if the words are appropriate for your wedding day. There are some suggestions on the next page.

Organist

It is useful to talk to the organist at an early stage about music for your wedding. If you would like help with choosing hymns for your wedding please do ask our organist or the person conducting your wedding. Contact details of our organist are available from the Vicar.

Choir

Many couples like to have the choir at their wedding. The choir helps lead the singing at the wedding. However, please be aware that the choir may not always be available for midweek services.





Some suggestions for music

Here are some suggestions of music and hymns you might like to consider for your wedding. Don't forget to check the lyrics of the hymns to see if they are appropriate for your wedding. The list below includes some of the most popular sung at weddings.



Entrance

Bridal Chorus – Wagner (“Here comes the Bride”)

Prince of Denmark's March – Clarke

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba – Handel

Air on a G String – Bach

Hymns

Morning has Broken

Praise my Soul the King of Heaven

Be Still for the Presence of the Lord

Amazing Grace

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Love Divine All Loves Excelling

Shine Jesus Shine

Lord of all Hopefulness



Leaving

Toccata from Organ Symphony No. 5 – Widor

Wedding March – Mendelssohn

Readings

The most popular reading from the Bible is from 1 Corinthians 13, the 'love' chapter. It is an excellent passage, but there are plenty more to choose from. We would recommend reading the following before you come to a decision:

Genesis 1:26-28

Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Romans 12:1-2; 9-13

Colossians 3:12-17

1 John 3:18-24

1 John 4:7-12



If you don't have a bible at home yourself, www.biblegateway.com is an excellent online resource.

Other readings

You may well have another reading that you'd like read at your wedding; maybe a piece of poetry or a passage from another book in addition to the reading from the Bible. It's an excellent way to get other family members or friends involved in the day if they do the reading.

Please show the reading to the priest who is to officiate at your wedding well before the day itself. We're certain that you have the most wonderful taste, but we would like to make sure that it will fit in with the tone of the service.

Flowers

We have a talented group of people who are able to arrange the flowers for your wedding. You can contact Dee Hickman to discuss these. Please look at our Weddings page on our website for full details. If there are other weddings on the same day as your wedding it would be a good idea to coordinate arrangements for flowers with the other couples.

Photography

Most couples like to have a photographic record of their wedding. It is important that any photography is not a distraction on such a special day so it is vital to talk to the person conducting your wedding about this. Ideally the photographer should also speak to the priest who is taking the wedding before the service, at the rehearsal if they can be there. As it is a service of worship, we do not allow flash photography during the service, apart from the signing of the registers, and ask that the photographer remain in the same place throughout the service.

Video photography

If there is music in your wedding and you are having it recorded on video, then you will need a Limited Manufacture License available from PRS (Performing Rights Society). There may also be an additional fee to be paid to the organist if the service is being videoed. As for those taking still photographs, we ask that videographers remain in the same place throughout the service.

Bells

If you wish to have bells rung at your wedding, please specify on the intention to marry form at the back of this booklet guide. However, please be aware that the bell-ringers may not always be available for midweek services.

Confetti

If you have confetti, we ask that it is bio-degradable, and is thrown outside the church gates.

Timing

You may have heard that there is a tradition of the bride being late, however it is important to start the service promptly, particularly if there is another wedding on the same day as you.

We would ask that:

- Ushers arrive at the Church about 30 minutes before the start of your wedding so that they can welcome guests and make certain that the guests are seated before the bride arrives.
- Groom and best man arrive 30 minutes before the start of the service to allow time for photographs and time to be seated before the Bride arrives.
- Bride arrives 10 minutes before the start of the service to allow time for photographs.
- The congregation should all be seated 5 minutes before the start of the service and it may be a good idea to put a note to this effect on your wedding invitations.

If you are very late then there will be a point at which those involved in your service; eg, choir or organist and priest, will need to leave. If this happens, we cannot promise that fees will be refunded.

So please be on time!



INTENTION TO MARRY FORM

Please complete this form in **BLOCK CAPITALS** giving us **ALL** your details. These details will end up on your marriage certificate, so it is vital that we have all your correct information.

GROOM'S DETAILS

BRIDE'S DETAILS

FULL NAME (including any middle names; no shortened or nicknames)

CURRENT ADDRESS:

SINCE:

TELEPHONE:

E-MAIL:

DATE OF BIRTH:

OCCUPATION/PROFESSION:

ARE YOU (delete as appropriate):

SINGLE / DIVORCED / WIDOWED

SINGLE / DIVORCED / WIDOWED

ARE YOU A FOREIGN NATIONAL? (please note that you are required to provide proof of nationality)

PARISH CHURCH FOR BANNS
(ie, the parish where you live):

IS YOUR PARTNER RELATED OR CONNECTED TO YOU BY MARRIAGE? IF SO, HOW?

IF YOUR ADDRESS IS GOING TO CHANGE AFTER YOU ARE MARRIED, WHAT WILL IT BE?

GROOM'S FATHER

BRIDE'S FATHER

FULL NAME(including any middle names; no shortened or nicknames):

OCCUPATION/PROFESSION:*

STILL LIVING?

* IF YOUR FATHER IS RETIRED OR DECEASED, PLEASE STATE WHAT THEIR PROFESSION WAS WITH "RETIRED" ADDED IN BRACKETS IF APPLICABLE.

PROPOSED WEDDING DATE:

TIME:

DO YOU REQUIRE:

BELLS Y / N

ORGAN Y / N

CHOIR Y / N

QUALIFYING CONNECTION WITH THE PARISH:

SIGNATURES:

GROOM:

BRIDE:

(Date)

(Date)

ADMIN USE:

BANNS DATES:

REHEARSAL DATE:

