

Your Wedding in the Parish of St Leonard, Bretforton



2011

Congratulations that you are contemplating marriage and thank you for enquiring about marriage in the Parish of St Leonard, Bretforton.

Marriages in the church take place according to the rights and traditions of the Church of England and thanks to a law passed in 2008, you've now got more choice about which church to marry in – please see details under the heading Legal Notices further on in the booklet.

A marriage service, wherever it is held, is a public declaration of love and commitment to your partner. If you choose to get married in a Church of England church, there is an added dimension - the assurance that God cares about your relationship and that his resources and strength are available to help you. Including God in your marriage doesn't mean that you will avoid all the usual ups and downs, but you will know that you can look to God for help and guidance, and that his love will sustain you. You will also have the support and encouragement of the wider Christian Church family.

Marriage, the Bible tells us, is a gift of God in creation and a means of his grace, a holy mystery in which man and woman become one flesh. It is God's purpose that, as husband and wife give themselves to each other in love throughout their lives, they are united in that love, just as Christ is united in love with his Church.

The words from the Pastoral Introduction to the Marriage Service in Common Worship tell us: 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.

This is, of course, the ideal and no true lovers hope for anything less. The church holds firmly to Christ's teaching that marriage is a lifelong commitment.

Legal Notes

The following notes outline a few of the requirements for weddings within the Church of England. They are not exhaustive and offer only a brief outline of the legalities that must be satisfied in order for a wedding ceremony to take place in church.

- Church of England weddings in this country are governed by the 1949 Marriage Act and may only be solemnised inside a building licensed for the purpose and between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm
- Both Bride and Groom normally have to be at least eighteen years old, though with the consent of their parents people can get married from the age of sixteen.
- Either the Bride or the Groom has to live within the parish boundaries, or be on the electoral roll of the church. To join the electoral roll you have to be baptised and a regular worshipper at church for six months.

Thanks to a law passed in 2008, an engaged couple can now marry in church if either of you can show just one of the following seven connections with the parish.

That one of you:

- was baptised in the parish concerned **or**
- was prepared for confirmation in the parish **or**
- has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months **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

More detailed information is available on the Church of England web site (www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/weddings)

Assuming that you fulfil the conditions above, you have the legal right to be married in church unless either of you has been married before and has a partner still living. Under these circumstances, the decision on whether or not to marry you rests with the clergy concerned. Although the answer is often 'yes', you should not take this for granted and must discuss it with them before making any arrangements.

Banns

Except in special cases, the legal preliminary to marriage in church is for banns to be published. Banns are the public announcement that two people wish to marry, and an invitation to anybody who knows just cause or impediment to the union to declare it. On three Sundays prior to the wedding, the banns are read out in the parish church(es) of the future bride and groom, and are effective for three months afterwards. Banns must be called in both the church where the wedding is to be held, as well as the parish church(es) of the bride and groom (from which certificate(s) of banns must be obtained) (Other requirements apply if one partner is from outside the European Union, Old Commonwealth, or USA).

Special Licence

If you live outside the benefice and you do not meet any of the above criteria you may be able to apply for a Special Licence. If this is the case please contact the vicar.

(email: vicarage@ourbenefice.org.uk)

Planning your wedding

The Church of England offers three different Marriage Services

- A service from the Book of Common Prayer (1662) in 17th century English
- A modified version of the Book of Common Prayer service modified in 1966
- The Marriage Service from Common Worship (2000)
A service in modern language, and reflecting the current Christian understanding of marriage

The Common Worship marriage service is the one most commonly used and offers the most flexibility in the choice of readings and prayers. Whichever you choose you will need to choose hymns and other music, for the service.

When planning your wedding you will need to consider the following

- Entry Music (music for the bride to enter the church)
- Two or three hymns to sing
- A Bible reading (and any other poems or readings etc.)
- Some music to play during the signing of the Registers
- Music for the bride and groom to leave the church to

We will talk through all of these during a meeting with the vicar who will help you to decide on what suits you best. For your help and information there are a list of popular hymns and readings later in this booklet (these are by no means exhaustive - but may help).

Bells

The parish of St Leonard has a dedicated team of bell ringers who would be delighted to ring the bells in celebration of your marriage as you leave the church after the service. (As most couples opt for this the cost is already included in the overall price)

Music

The parish of St Leonard has an organist who is happy to play for your wedding (again as most couples opt for this the cost is already included in the overall price). We also have a sound system with the ability to play CD's.

Hymns

Below is a list of popular hymns, this is by no means exhaustive but may be helpful.

Father hear the prayer we offer
Lead us Heavenly Father Lead us
Love Divine all love excelling
Make me a channel of your peace
Tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord
Praise my soul the King of Heaven
Dear Lord and Father of mankind
For the beauty of the earth
Colours of day
Give me oil in my lamp (Sing Hosanna)
Lord of all hopefulness
All things bright and beautiful
Amazing Grace
Lord of the Dance
Morning has broken
The Lord's my shepherd
The king of love my shepherd is

Flowers

We have flowers in church every week (with the exception of Lent and Advent) but you are encouraged to use a florist of your choice to provide the flowers for your wedding, we do however ask that that this is done with reference to our church arrangers regarding the placing of arrangements - in particular it's important that large floral arrangements don't stand in the way of any proceedings during the service! We particularly ask that if you remove flowers after your wedding you leave one arrangement for church services on the Sunday. Church flower pedestals and similar equipment can be used but only if agreed before hand with the church flower arrangers.

Confetti

Confetti is allowed in the churchyard but is not allowed inside the church however, we do ask that it is of a biodegradable type.

Seating

The church is a late 13th century Grade 1 listed building with seating for approximately 140.

Photographs and Video

Because the day passes by so quickly most couples want to capture the day with photographs that can be looked at in years to come. Some couples also like to have a video made of the day for the same reason. There is no problem with photographs or video recording a wedding service, but you there are some guidelines which you are asked to follow.

Photographs - most photographers know what is allowed but we do ask that they make contact with the vicar on the day. Here are some guidelines for the official photographer for the day.

Entry of the bride - photograph allowed without flash as bride enters church. During first hymn - photograph allowed without flash from the back of church.

Exchange of rings - photograph allowed without flash from the back of church single exposures only please do not use motorwind at this point during the service.

Photographs during the signing of the Registers is not permitted, but ample opportunity will be given for 'staged shots' for the album once the formal signing is complete.

At the end of the service photographs may be taken as required.

Video recording requires a license to cover copyright issues, most professional videographers will be able to arrange this but for more information see www.videolicence.co.uk or tel: 01323 436111.

Because you are recording a person's performance, e.g. an organist or choir, there is an additional fee, this is detailed in the wedding fees section.

Readings

All weddings in the Church of England include one or more readings from the Bible, as well as bible readings many couples also include other readings or poems of their choice.

Some of the more popular bible passages are shown below.

¹If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And 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. ³If 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. ⁴Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love 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. ⁹For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; ¹⁰but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. ¹¹When 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. ¹²For 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. ¹³And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (NRSVA)

⁴Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love 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. ¹³And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 & 13 (NRSVA)

¹I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ⁹Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Romans 12:1,2,9-13 (NRSVA)

¹On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ²Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." ⁴And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." ⁶Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. ⁹When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom ¹⁰and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." ¹¹Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

John 2:1-11 (NRSVA)

¹²As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. ¹³Bear 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. ¹⁴Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let 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. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:12-17 (NRSVA)

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰In 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. ¹¹Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

1 John 4:7-12 (NRSVA)

Wedding Fees

All that your Vicar and congregation do in the community such as weddings, baptisms, funerals, home visits, special projects and organising Christian worship is called Ministry.

In the earliest days of the church, communities would make contributions to the church as a moral obligation, since it provided these services to all without a specific charge. By donating to the church, communities sustained a vital part of community life for all.

The legal fee for weddings that you pay today has its roots in this ancient tradition which has evolved to become a required payment. It helps to pay towards the provision of these essential services for you and the community, unfortunately it no longer covers the increasing cost of heating lighting and insurance, therefore included in overall cost is a donation towards the upkeep of the church.

Overall fee for 2011 £ 700.00 *

This includes Organ, Bells, all statutory legal fees**, reading of banns at St Leonard, marriage certificate and a donation towards upkeep of the church.

If a Video is taken these **fees are increased to £750.00** also a Copyright Licence is required and must be available before the service (see page 6).

* If Banns are to be read in another church the following fees will also be payable in that church

| | |
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| Publication of Banns | £ 22.00 |
| Certificate of Banns | £ 12.00 |

** Statutory legal fees

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|----------------------|---------|
| Marriage service | £262.00 |
| Publication of Banns | £ 22.00 |
| Marriage certificate | £ 3.50 |

Dates for Reading Banns of Marriage

| | Date | Time |
|--------|------|------|
| First | | |
| Second | | |
| Third | | |

Date for Rehearsal

| Date | Time |
|------|------|
| | |

Contact Details

| | Name | Telephone |
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