

Wedding frequently asked questions:

In the 5 months before your wedding you will have plenty to think about, below are some frequently asked questions to help in your planning.

Preparation

The vicar taking your wedding will wish to meet with you to talk through the service and in particular the meaning of the Vows. If you have not heard from the Vicar by 6 months before your wedding please contact them.

Banns

Most people are married following the calling of banns. This is when your forthcoming marriage is publicly announced during church services for 3 weeks. The banns will be called in the church of the district in which you live. The vicar conducting your marriage will be able to tell you when your banns will be called and in which church. It is good preparation for your wedding day to try and be present when your banns are called. If one of you lives outside the Parish of Hitchin, you will need to have your banns called in your local church. The vicar conducting your marriage can give you advice about this.

Music

Music can play a very big part in a wedding and so spending some time thinking about what type of music you would like is important. It is a good idea to have the organ played and you need to decide whether you would like the choir to help with the singing.

Once these things are settled you need to decide on a piece of music for the bride to come in to, up to three hymns during the service, a piece of music to be played or sung during the signing of the registers, and the piece of music you want to walk down the aisle to at the end of the service. There are a number of things which can help you in this task.

Firstly, there is a suggestion list of the most commonly used music at weddings. Secondly, there are a number of CDs available containing a selection of popular wedding music. Thirdly, if you have access to the internet there are a number of sites which give you samples of wedding music (eg. www.foreverwed.com/music).

Finally, once a year the organist at St Mary's holds an evening for everyone being married in St Mary's during which he will play through some of the more commonly used wedding music. An invitation will be sent to you letting you know when this will take place.

In some cases you may need to apply for a special license and the vicar will have advised you of this at your first meeting.

Orders of Service

You may wish to consider whether you would like to have orders of service printed. If you are proposing to do these yourselves or getting them printed by a firm please show a draft to the vicar taking your wedding before getting hundreds printed!

Church House also offers a printing service at 50p per order of service. There is a draft version in the wedding pack you will be given by the vicar, along with a form to complete. The form should be with Mrs Dorothy Grieves at least 6 weeks before your wedding. There is a suggestion list of Biblical readings

Videos and photography

Inevitably you will want some record of your wedding day and possibly of the service itself. If you wish to have someone video the service, one video camera is allowed and, because of the

musicians, there is a copyright fee to pay. It is not permitted for others to video the service. Please advise your ushers of this.

We ask guests to refrain from taking photos during the service itself, as camera flashes going off as you say your vows becomes very distracting. It might be possible for one or two photographs to be taken by your official photographer, without the use of flash, but this is by negotiation with the vicar taking your wedding.

Fees

The dreaded question of money! Please remember the simpler you make your wedding, the less it costs! The current cost of the bells, choir etc is available from Dorothy Grieves. Approximately 6 weeks before your wedding you will receive an invoice for the cost of the service, minus your £50 deposit with a date when the final payment should be paid.

In the few weeks before the wedding you will need to sort out the remaining practical details, namely:-

Cars

As anyone who has been to St Mary's will appreciate, there is difficulty getting cars right up to the church and there is limited parking once there. For this reason, we ask that only official wedding cars enter the Churchyard or vehicles for severely disabled guests.

Between 10.00am and 4.00pm there is a barrier which you will need to get through in order to drive down the High Street. The church has permits for this barrier which are available from Dorothy Grieves in Church House during office opening hours. There is a £10 deposit for each one which is returned when you return the permits.

Rehearsal

A few weeks before your wedding you will need to arrange, with your vicar, a date for a rehearsal in the days prior to your wedding. This usually takes roughly three-quarters of an hour and is a walk through of the service. This means that it is helpful to have your bridesmaids, best man, the person who is giving the bride away, and anyone else involved in the service present at the rehearsal.

If any of the above information is not clear or you have any other questions about what happens for any aspect of the service or arrangements, do feel free to contact the vicar taking your wedding. We are here to try and make your wedding day the best start we can for your married life together.

Flowers

St Mary's has its own flower arrangers, trained to a high standard, who will be responsible for the floral displays at your wedding. These may include two pedestals, one at the front of the pulpit, beside the High Altar and an arrangement at the base of the Baptismal font.

Where more than one wedding takes place on the same day colours are selected to suit all occasions and the cost of the flowers is shared.

The person in charge of flower arranging is Mrs Margaret Khinmaung. Her contact details are in the wedding pack.

Many Thanks

Rev'd Chris Bunce

Vicar of St Mary's

Church House telephone number: (01462) 452758