

Your Wedding



Your guide to getting married in our parish church

Who can marry in one of our parish churches?

You can marry in a Church of England church 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

In all cases involving church services - i.e. going to normal church services, baptism, confirmation or marriage - this applies only to Church of England services. Even if you cannot demonstrate any of the above connections, we want to help you explore whether it may still be possible for you to marry in your special church.

There may be other considerations to be legally worked out, for example if one of you is a foreign national.

The first thing you need to do if you want to marry in FawsleySt Mary the Virgin Dallington or St James Northampton Churches is to contact the Vicar.

The Revd Sue Faulkner
RevSueFaulkner@aol.com

The following pages have further information taken from the brilliant website <https://www.yourchurchwedding.org/>



There are certain things that must happen in a church wedding to ensure the marriage complies with both UK civil and church law.

In marriage you take on a whole new legal status. The vicar knows how to advise and prepare you for your wedding day and everything must comply with all relevant UK and Church of England laws. These are the main legal points to consider before you begin planning:-

You must be old enough

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

Changes to same-sex marriage legislation

Although same sex-marriage legislation is now in force, it remains the case that it is not legally possible for same-sex couples to marry in the Church of England.

Marrying away from where you live

It's possible to get married in a church that's away from where you live if you have a certain kind of connection with it. You may be legally connected to a number of churches in different ways. See page 2

Time of wedding

The wedding must take place between 8am and 6pm on any day.

Guidelines for divorcees

There are special guidelines on marriage in the church if you are divorced. There may well be a way forward, but you will need to talk your Vicar about your situation to explore the possibilities for you.

Reading of Banns

Most Church of England marriages will require banns to be published before the wedding can take place. You won't need to arrange banns until about four months before your wedding date.

If there is not enough notice given for the banns to be read before the marriage is due to take place, or in the case of the marriage of people who are not nationals of a country within the European Economic Area, or if one or both of you does not live in England or Wales, it is recommended that the Licence procedure be used rather than banns.

Licences

There are some circumstances in which you may need a Special Licence, Common Licence or a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate to marry in church. Your vicar will let you know if these apply to you.

Documents you'll need

- All couples will need to show the vicar their passport as proof of nationality. If you don't have a passport, there are other documents which would be acceptable, so ask your vicar about this.
- If either or both of you are divorced, you will need to bring your decree absolute for the vicar to see.
- You may also be asked to provide evidence of your connection to the church, such as utility bills which show you live or have lived in the parish, or your parents' marriage certificate if they were married there, for example. Your vicar will guide you on acceptable documents for your particular connection.

Whether you plan to get married in a couple of years or in just a few months, your church will help you through the process of booking and planning the ceremony.

As far as possible, the church wants you to hold your wedding on a date that is convenient for you, your guests and the church itself. Each church will vary in what can offer and when, so do check with your church when you book, particularly if you'd like to get married soon. These timings follow a typical pattern and may serve as a general guide.

One-two years ahead

It's often about 18 – 24 months ahead when couples start planning. The first step is usually booking the reception venue, but make sure you talk to the vicar as well to **agree the date** so that everything fits together. If you're not yet sure which church you can get married in, The Vicar will make arrangements for your **first meeting** with them so that he or she can get to know you a little and complete the necessary forms.

Now is the time to ask whether you will require a licence to get married. Most people will not – the vicar will advise if this applies to you at your first meeting. The vicar will also explain to you about having to get your banns read, especially if that will be in more than one church.

One year-six months ahead

During the next few months, you will probably pop in to your reception venue a few times. In a similar way, you might take time to **go along to the church** and find out more about what happens there. If you are creating a connection to the church by attending for six months, this is the time to go along regularly each month. You may not hear from the church until about six to nine months before the wedding – especially if you have booked a long time ahead. But don't worry, they will be in touch.

This is also the time to consider your **ceremony**. You have choices in this, which you can discuss with your vicar on subsequent meetings with them. You can choose your hymns, other music and readings. Use our online Ceremony Planner to help. If you are planning to have your wedding **filmed**, tell your vicar now so they can check out any **copyright** issues.

Many churches offer you the **time and space to think** about what marriage entails, the meaning of the marriage vows and understanding the service. These kinds of events, to help prepare you for married life, are not compulsory, but if you do choose to take this up, they are usually offered within the six months preceding the wedding.

Around six months ahead of the wedding might also be a good time to book your **flower arranger** and **bell-ringers** if you are having them. Churches may also contact you during this time to remind you of the dates your **banns** will be read. If you need your banns read in different churches, now is the time to make sure that has been arranged.

Three months ahead

The majority of marriages require that **banns** are read out in church for three Sundays during the three months before the wedding. Many couples like to be in the church when their banns are read. The congregation will be praying for you and your marriage, and this can be a reassuring and special experience. It also helps you get to know the church if you are unfamiliar with it.

You might like to review how your **ceremony is shaping up** and make any final decisions with the vicar at around this time. Also check with **photographers** that they are aware of the church's guidelines on photographs. See if you can visit the church together with the photographer and introduce them to the vicar. Coordinating your other wedding suppliers with the church team will help things run as smoothly as possible.

One-two weeks ahead

Most churches will hold a **rehearsal** for the wedding, which will usually be during the week before the wedding. This will help you relax and ask any final questions about where to stand and so on. It's ideal if everyone who has a part to play on the day comes along, as it all helps to make the day run smoothly.

If you have produced the **Orders of Service** yourself, these need to be at the church beforehand. Ask the vicar if you can bring them to the rehearsal and put them in a safe place for vergers or ushers to find them on the day.

This is also the time to make a final check on your flower order. Whatever transport you have booked for getting to your wedding, make sure they are aware of the timings and whether there are any local events happening on the day that might disrupt your journey to church.

The day before

This can be a nerve-wracking time for both bride and groom, so finding time to **relax** in the evening may help you sleep better. You may find it helpful to light a candle and say the following **prayer**:

*This day has been so long coming, so long planned, so long anticipated,
Help us relax enough to enjoy it.*

Help us to concentrate enough to appreciate it.

Be with those who have a special part to play and with everyone as they travel to join us.

May this day be all we have hoped for.

May it be a wonderful start to the rest of our lives.

Amen.

Prayer by Andrew Body from Pocket Prayers for Marriage compiled by Andrew & Pippa Body

The Big Day

When the day finally arrives all that remains is for you to enjoy each moment! Ushers may want to arrive about 45 minutes early to check Orders of Service are in place, or ready to give out as people arrive. If you're having a verger from the church, they can help with this.

The groom and best man arrive before the bride too. Everyone (except the bride, her father or the person walking her down the aisle, bridesmaids and/or page boy if you have them), should be seated and ready about 10-15 minutes before the service is due to start. The vicar may have a couple of brief notices to read at this point.

When you walk into your beautiful church to make this great commitment, know that God's love and our prayers are with you. Relax and enjoy your day!

Oh and if you want to know about costs, each church has a poster in it giving what all the fees are for the year. Or the website

<https://www.yourchurchwedding.org/>

Has a link to the current costs.