

YOUR CHURCH

WEDDING



Faith
Hope
Love

Marrying in church is personal, meaningful, spiritual and beautiful, just as you want it to be.

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Stratton Team Ministry

Welcome to the Stratton Team Ministry.

The churches in our team are St. Margaret's in Lower Stratton, St Leonards in Stanton Fitzwarren and St Mary Magdalene in South Marston.



Congratulations

Congratulations to you both on your engagement. We are delighted that you have asked to be married within one of the churches with the Stratton Team Ministry. This booklet gives you a general overview of getting married in our churches, each of our churches have their own unique abilities these will be discussed during the initial contact.

We hope that this booklet will help you as you plan for your wedding within the church and to make sure that everything goes smoothly on the day. If the booklet doesn't answer all your questions then please get in touch with us.



The legal bits

For a marriage to be conducted following the rites of the Church of England one of the following routes is required:

- The calling of Banns
- The Common Licence
- The Special Licence
- A Superintendent Registrar's Certificate

Please speak to the Parish Administrator or Vicar to confirm which route you will be taking.

Qualifying connection

You can be married in any of our churches if you can show that either of you has one of the following qualifying connections:

1. live in the parish or at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least six months.
2. was baptised in the parish
3. was prepared for confirmation in the parish
4. has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the church of a period of at least six months
5. that one of your parents, at any time after you were born has lived in the parish for a period of at least six months
6. that one of your parents has regularly gone to normal church services in the parish for a period of at least six months
7. that one of your parents or grandparents was married in the church

Should you be unable to fulfil any of these criteria then you could opt for a blessing which has the same format as a wedding but leaves out the legal part.

BANNS

These are legal formalities which have to be observed before a wedding can take place in a church. Normally this means reading the banns on three Sundays before the wedding. (This can be any time within three months of the wedding day).

If one of you **live in another parish** (i.e. different from the parish where you are being married) you will need to have the **banns read there as well** and you should contact the Parish Priest there three to four months before the date of your wedding.

When the banns have been read, s/he will issue a certificate for which a fee is payable. Without this, your marriage can not take place. You must give this certificate to us **before you wedding day**.

In certain circumstances a marriage takes place by LICENCE instead of by banns. If this applies to you, we will give you information about how to obtain it.

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Verification

As we are sure you will appreciate, it is important that the Vicar ensures that all the legal requirements are carried out to make your wedding legal. The first part of this process is for the Vicar to verify identification and qualifying documents. Therefore, both of you will be asked to meet with the Vicar with some ID e.g. your passport and a utility bill that has your current address on.

This meeting is an ideal opportunity to talk through whether you will be getting married by 'the calling of banns' or whether you need to pursue another avenue.

Securing a Booking

In order for us to be able to secure a booking we need a few things:

- Verification of you both
- Completed banns form (if getting married by 'calling of banns')
- Deposit of £100 non refundable

Once these things are in place we will be able to confirm a booking.



Preparing for our Christian Marriage

It has been shown that preparation beforehand results in a more stable marriage. Therefore, preparation forms an important part of any marriage taking place in one of the churches. This normally consists of an invitation to a Marriage Preparation day run by the local churches early in the year of the wedding and a one-to-one meeting with the Vicar usually about four months before the wedding.

Fees

The fees for a church wedding are updated in December each year. Please contact the Administrator for the current fees.

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Flowers:

You are welcome to have a professional florist. Please ensure you contact the person responsible for the flowers in the particular Church you are getting married in **at least 3 months before the Wedding**, or as soon as possible if the Wedding has been booked late to discuss your plans.



Music:

Professional musicians and talented amateurs are welcome to perform at appropriate times during the service. If this is desired please discuss it with the Vicar before making the booking.

We have several talented organists who will play at the service. If you require a musician and would like to use one then please contact the parish office to discuss and we will endeavour to put you in contact. To ensure availability please do this at the earliest opportunity.



Bells:

The Churches at St Margaret's and St Mary Magdalene have peals of bells which can be rung by teams of ringers.

If you wish to have bells rung at your wedding then please contact the Parish Office as soon as possible who will make a booking for you. The bell ringers like as much notice as possible so that they can get a team together. The cost listed is for ringing after the service, if you would like bells rung either side then the cost is doubled. Getting a team together in the week can be more difficult.



Rehearsal:

A rehearsal is usually held during the week before the wedding. The Vicar encourages anyone with a 'walk-on part' to attend if this is possible. It is especially helpful for very young children to see the building and meet the Vicar before the service.





Videoring and recording the service:

It is possible for the wedding service to be videoed as a permanent record of the day. However, there are complications in regard of copyright. If a service is to be videoed, then the camera needs to be set upon a tripod and remain on it for the duration of the service. This is to prevent the movement of a cameraman distracting you and the congregation from the service.

It is your responsibility to obtain the licence and show it to the vicar. Go to <https://www.yourchurchwedding.org/article/filming-a-wedding/> to find out more.

Drones:

It is possible for a Drone to be used to take images on your wedding day. There are of course legal procedures that have to be adhered to. The law is that drones with cameras cannot be flown within 50 metres of buildings and people. The drone operator needs to be a qualified professional with their own public liability insurance.

Please contact the parish office if you would like to get a drone permit.

Photographs:

Many couples engage the services of a professional photographer to take their pictures. Photographs cannot normally be taken during the service until the signing of the Registers at the end, though the minister is happy to discuss this with the official photographer. As with videoing, this is to prevent people being distracted during the service. If the weather is inclement then the guests and wedding party may remain in the church for their formal photographs.

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Planning your order of service

When you meet with the Vicar taking your wedding you will be able to discuss the order of service and all that will happen.

A suggested order of service is:

- Processional Music
- Opening Prayer
- HYMN
- Preface
- Declarations
- Reading(s) (one needs to be from the Bible)
- Address
- HYMN (can be omitted if you only want two)
- The Marriage
- HYMN
- Prayers ending with the Lord's prayer
- Blessing
- Signing of Registers (during which music is played or sung)
- Exit Music



If you plan to have an order of service printed, please consult us before you give a firm order to the printer. Mistakes in the order or with the words of hymns can sometimes cause problems.

Please DO NOT have an Order of Service printed until your vicar has seen the draft

To Do Lists!

No doubt you will be making lots of 'to do lists' we thought this checklist might help you to see if you have completed the various things needed relating to the church service.

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What you need to do!	When	Done!
Return Banns of Marriage Application forms	ASAP – sent to the Parish Office	
Get your documents verified by the Vicar.	ASAP	
Pay the £100 deposit.	With banns forms and verification documents.	
Agree time of service and confirm booking with the Parish Office.	ASAP -	
Agree dates for preparation sessions with Minister(s).	The Vicar will discuss this with you.	
Agree a date and time for the rehearsal with the minister.	The Vicar will discuss this with you, probably a month before the wedding.	
If appropriate (e.g. if you are not resident in the parish and without a qualifying connection) attend worship for the necessary 'habitual' period (6 months) and complete the record sheet for each attendance.	ASAP – the latest time to start is 8 months before the wedding. Must be completed a minimum of two months before the wedding to enable banns to be read.	
If either of you are not resident in the parish where the wedding is taking place, you need to arrange for banns to be called in your home parish(es).	Minimum of 3 months before the wedding.	
If either of you are not resident in the parish where the wedding is taking place, obtain banns certificate(s) from home parish(es) to confirm banns have been called. Send to Vicar or bring to rehearsal.	ASAP when banns have been called	
Agree dates for calling of Banns in host church.	The Parish Office will notify you of these. They will be read two to three months before the wedding.	
Book an organist and discuss arrangements for music, if appropriate.	ASAP – organists can get booked up a long time in advance.	
Contact the Parish Office if you would like to book the bells.	ASAP	
Discuss flowers with the local organiser in the church.	Minimum of 2 months before the wedding.	
Produce draft Order of Service (if appropriate) and have it checked by the Vicar. Bear in mind the printer's deadline if not printing yourself.	At least a month before the wedding recommended.	
Pay fees for the marriage, including bells, choir, video permit and organist if appropriate.	Minimum of 4 weeks before the wedding	
If videoing the service, return the completed permit (including recordist's signature) to the office.	Minimum of 2 weeks before the wedding.	
Produced orders of service including sufficient extra copies for, eg, the minister, vergers, choir and organist	At least a week before the wedding recommended.	

This checklist is designed to help ensure you've done all you need to legally get married in church, as well as other things to help the service go more smoothly. It is not a definitive list – there will be other things you will regard as important or essential (such as a photographer).

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Useful Website

www.yourchurchwedding.org is a useful website when planning a wedding.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/> is the Church of England website.



We hope that this booklet has helped answer some of your questions, however, please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

Contact details:

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