

St Michael's Church Tilehurst



Getting Married at
St Michael's Church
Tilehurst

A Guide for Engaged Couples

GETTING MARRIED AT ST MICHAEL'S TILEHURST

This booklet is designed to help you if you hope to be married at St Michael's. We hope many of your questions will be answered in these pages. During the months before your wedding day, you will be expected to take part in a series of 'preparation meetings', when there will be opportunities to raise anything not covered in the booklet.

The Marriage Measure

We understand that there are many couples who would like to marry in a church that has special significance for them, through family or other close connections. Since 2008, the Church of England has made it easier for couples to do just that.

In addition to qualifying by reason that either you or your fiancé/e live in our parish OR one of you is on the Electoral Roll of our Church, since 2008, in order to marry in the parish church of a parish other than the one where you or your fiancé/e are living, without the need for a Special Licence, you or your fiancé/e will need to demonstrate just one of the following 'qualifying connections'.

That:

- One of you was baptised in our parish, (If you were baptised and confirmed at the same time, the provisions on confirmation rather than baptism apply).
- One of you was prepared for confirmation in our parish.
- One of you has at any time lived in our parish for at least 6 months.
- One of you has at any time regularly attended public worship in our parish for at least 6 months

Or:

- One of your or your fiancé/es parents has lived in our parish for at least 6 months at any time after you were born (or, in the case of your Fiancé/es parents, at any time after your Fiancé/e was born)
- One of your or your fiancé/es parents has regularly attended public worship in our parish for at least 6 months at any time after you (or your fiancé/e) were born.
- A parent or grandparent of you or your fiancé/e was married in our parish.

In all cases—ie worship, 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 chosen church. Talk to the Rector well in advance to discuss the options open to you.

Certain neighbouring parishes

If your address is outside St Michael's parish, but in one of these parishes

St Catherine of Siena, Tilehurst

St Birinus, Calcot

St Matthew, Southcote

then you are entitled to be married at St Michael's if you wish. But remember, your own vicar would be pleased to marry you in your own parish church.

Maximum notice for weddings

At St Michael's, weddings can be booked up to two years ahead of your proposed wedding date.

Please be honest

The great majority of couples are already living together when they ask about a wedding in church. We don't "sit in judgment" about that, but we do want you to tell us what your situation actually is. This is vital for legal reasons, too, and deliberately giving false information would jeopardise your wedding. If you have been divorced, it may still be possible for you to be married at St Michael's but you should contact the Rector before making any arrangements.

Church Electoral Roll, Armed Services

There are certain exceptions to the normal residence requirement. If you are on the church's Electoral Roll, or one of you is in the Armed Services, the Rector will explain further.

Calling the Banns

Unless you are being married by Special/Common Licence, the Banns must be called on three Sundays during the final three months before your wedding day. Calling the Banns is an ancient procedure - a brief public announcement in church that the wedding is to take place, with an opportunity for anyone who knows of a legal objection to declare it. If you live at separate addresses, then the one who does not live in St Michael's, must contact the local vicar where he/she lives and arrange for the Banns to be called there as well.

We normally call the Banns in our 9.30am Parish Eucharist service. Though not legally required to attend, you are most welcome to do so. In fact, you're welcome to come to any of our services, before and after your marriage.

If you have had Banns called at an 'Away' parish church, you will be issued with a certificate and a fee will be payable. It is your responsibility to give this certificate to the priest who is to officiate at your wedding. You cannot be married until the officiating priest has seen it.

Marriage by Licence

If either of you is not a British citizen, it will be necessary to apply for a 'Common Licence'.

Whether you're being married by Licence, or 'after Banns', you will be asked to provide evidence of identity and address. You may be required to produce your Birth Certificate and/or passport or driving licence together with a utility bill or bank statement showing your address.

Timetable

When you make your booking, you should complete a Banns Application form and you will also be asked to pay a non-returnable deposit of £50. This will count towards your wedding fees when you come to pay them.

A few months before your wedding, we hold two preparation meetings which will give you the opportunity to meet eight or nine other couples whose services will be happening around the same time as yours. One of the evenings focuses on practical details of your service music, bells and so on. There's also an opportunity for couples to share ideas about just what they are getting themselves into! If you can't both attend all the meetings, it's better that just one of you should be present than neither.

Four months before your wedding is the time to contact the 'other parish' about calling the Banns if one of you lives outside our Parish. Arrange with the clergy there to pay the fee and collect the certificate as appropriate. ***NB Don't forget to bring it to St Michael's, the week before your wedding at the latest!***

A week before your wedding, the priest who is to marry you will meet you in church for a 'walk through' the service. Unless any special arrangement has been made, the priest will expect to see you at 10am on the Saturday prior to your wedding day.

Please make a note of that date now, as you will not be reminded about it later. At this rehearsal it is helpful if all the people who have a specific part to play in the wedding service attend. Bring any 'away' Banns certificate with you, if you have not already given it to the clergy.

Which form of service?

We use the modern version of the Marriage Service, from the Church's 2001 Common Worship book. Couples wishing to use the Book of Common Prayer (1662) may do so and should ask the Rector about it.

Are you both confirmed?

'Confirmation' is the service in which people become fully-participating members of the Church of England. If you are both confirmed, there is no better way of starting married life together than by receiving Holy Communion as part of your wedding service. It increases the overall length by about 10-15 minutes. If you want to consider this, please tell the Rector in good time.

Would you like to think about being confirmed?

You have decided to be married in church. Would you like to join the church as a full member? If so, the Rector will be pleased to tell you about adult Confirmation preparation groups.

PRACTICAL POINTS

Flowers

Except during Lent and Advent (see below), flowers are provided in church whenever weddings take place. If there is more than one wedding taking place on a Saturday, we cannot promise to work to particular colour schemes; but if you wish to make requests or suggestions, please ring Mrs Diane Morris (0118 942 7578) who will put you in touch with the person arranging flowers on your week.

NB

If you wish, you and your family can take *full* responsibility for providing flowers for church on the week-end of your wedding. To find out more about this option and what it involves, please speak to Diane Morris.

During Lent (six weeks before Easter) and Advent (four weeks before Christmas) there are no floral decorations in church on Sundays. You may be married in Lent or Advent if you wish (without church flowers). The bride and bridesmaids are still able to carry flowers.

No weddings take place during Holy Week, (the last seven days before Easter).

Music

Enquiries about music at weddings should be addressed to Mr David Corbett, tel: 0118 942 6559, email: davidcorbettpianos@yahoo.com.

We will try to supply the music you have asked for. Sometimes it will depend on the availability of an organist who can play what you have requested. It is therefore important that the Music Booking Form be returned to David at least six weeks before your wedding. This can be sent by fax or email or placed in the 'C' pigeon-hole at church, addressed to 'Mr D Corbett', or handed to him after Sunday services.

Please do not have your Order of Service printed until this has been confirmed with David. He will contact you when he has received your Booking Form. If you have chosen a hymn and a choice of tunes, he will check which you require.

If you are hoping to use some music that is not 'traditional' then please bear in mind that it may not sound appropriate on the organ. It is not always possible to convert the music in an acceptable way for you. Please make an appointment to hear it played on the organ so you are fully aware of the effect you will get.

We are always happy to try to accommodate your choice but please remember that organists do not always have copies of ‘pop’ songs, etc so you may be required to provide a copy before your music booking is confirmed. Please be very sure that the music is appropriate for the occasion. The music for the signing of the registers comes between making your vows and the prayers.

Tapes with samples of wedding music are available for you to borrow. If you are still unsure of what you want after you have listened to the tape, or would like something else that is not on the tape or listed below, then please contact David Corbett.

Orders of Service

We are happy for you to use our Order of Service. If you prefer to print your own, a draft can be downloaded from the Church of England website.

www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/texts/marriage/marriage.html

The final draft *must* be approved by the Rector before you go to print.

SOME SUGGESTIONS OF ORGAN MUSIC

The Bridal March for Lohengrin	- WAGNER
Trumpet Voluntary (Prince of Denmark's March)	- CLARKE
Hornpipe in D from the Water Music	- HANDEL
Trumpet Tune	- PURCELL
Prelude to a Te Deum	- CHARPENTIER
Theme from St Anthony Chorale	- BRAHMS
Arrival of the Queen of Sheba	- HANDEL
Grand March from Aida	- VERDI
Theme from Crown Imperial	- WALTON
Sonata No 3 (First Movement)	- MENDELSSOHN
Trumpet Voluntary from Suite in D	- STANLEY
Air from Suite No 3 in D	- J S BACH
Adagio in G minor	- ALBINONI

Air from the Water Music	- HANDEL
Ave Maria	- SCHUBERT
Allegretto from Sonata No 4	- MENDELSSOHN
Sheep may safely graze	J S BACH
Jesu, joy of man's desiring	J S BACH
Chorale-Improvisation 'Now thank we all'	KARG-ELERT
Carillon in B flat	VIERNE
Carillon-Sortie	MULET
Crown Imperial March	WALTON
Toccata in G	DUBOIS
Toccata from Symphony No 5	WIDOR
Wedding March, Midsummer Night's Dream	MENDELSSOHN
Tuba Tune	LANG

SUGGESTED HYMNS

Amazing grace (27)
And did those feet (Jerusalem) (31)
Bind us together, Lord (60)
Come down O love divine (90)
Dear Lord and Father of mankind (106)
Father hear the prayer we offer (120)
For the beauty of the earth (137)
Give me joy in my heart (153)
Gracious spirit, Holy Ghost (184)
Guide me O thou great Redeemer (188)
Lead us heavenly father lead us (293)
Let there be love shared among us (298)
Lord for the years (310)
Lord of all hopefulness (313)
Lord the light of your love is shining (317)
Love divine (321)
Make me a channel of your peace (328)
May the grace of Christ our Saviour (333)
Morning has broken (337)
Now thank we all our God (354)
O Jesus I have promised (372)
O perfect love (387)
Praise my soul the King of Heaven (422)
Praise the Lord, ye heavens adore him (425)
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty (427)
The King of love my shepherd is (484)
The Lord's my shepherd (490)

Bells

Our team of ringers endeavour to meet all requests for ringing after weddings — though this is not ‘guaranteed’, and is unlikely if the Service is not on a Saturday.

Photography

Your photographer is invited to take pictures of you as you enter Church, at the Signing of the Registers and as you come down the aisle at the end of the service. No photographs other than those are permitted during the service.

Video

You may, if you wish have your service video-recorded. It is essential for the video operator to liaise with the Officiant in good time before the service. See ‘Scale of Charges’ for details of video fees’

Please note: if a video recording is made, the fee is charged regardless of whether the video operator is professional or amateur and you should arrange for the separate licence that is required, www.wvrl.co.uk/

Please let the Parish Office have a copy of the licence before the rehearsal and ensure that the operator discusses recording positions with the Officiant before the service.

Confetti

We realise that brides and grooms cannot be held responsible for what their friends and family decide to do! But we would be glad if you would discourage the use of confetti, especially metallic. Rice or rose petals are a good alternative.

Fees

Payment should be by cheque, made payable to 'St Michael's Tilehurst PCC' and must be received at the latest by twenty-two days before your wedding service.

And finally.....

At St Michael's we are always delighted to see engaged couples at any of our services to which you are warmly invited. The principal service each Sunday is at 9.30am and there is an opportunity to meet afterwards over coffee. You will always find a welcome at St Michael's and we hope to see something of you in the future too. But do make contact with your local church wherever you are living. If you have children, take them to your local church if you decide to have them baptised.

The Church of England's teaching on marriage is that according to our Lord's teaching, marriage is in its nature a union permanent and lifelong, for better or worse, till death do us part, of one man with one woman, to the exclusion of all others on either side, for the procreation and nurture of children, for the hallowing and right direction of the natural instincts and affections, and for the natural society, help and comfort which one ought to have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity.

Engaged couples are not likely to welcome too many warning sounds, but if you have any real doubts it is far better to delay or cancel the wedding till you are sure. 'Weddings' *can* be cancelled. 'Marriages' can't—well, not so easily, any way!

It is good that you are thinking positively about your relationship. Marriages get into deep waters sometimes. When that happens, don't be afraid to seek help and advice, in good time.

May God bless you both!

Regular Services at St Michael's each week are:

8.00am Eucharist

9.30am Eucharist (includes Sunday School)

6.30pm Evensong

First Sunday of each month:

11.30am Baptism Service

Wednesdays:

10.00am Eucharist (followed by coffee)

12.30pm Wednesday Lunch

Monday to Fridays (8.30am on Fridays):

9.00am Morning Prayer

Thursdays Term Time only:

12.00pm Little Angels