



# Weddings Introduction

## St Mary's Church, Thorpe

### Holding your Wedding in St Mary's Church

If you regularly attend St Mary's and / or are a member of the Thorpe Church Electoral Roll then you can automatically be married at St Mary's Church. In addition, if you are not a regular church goer but live within the Parish of Thorpe then you are legally entitled to be married at St Mary's. Our Ministry Team will be able to explain to you the legal preliminaries (in terms of the calling of banns and obtaining of licences for instance) that will be required. To confirm that you live within the Parish of Thorpe go to [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com) and enter your postcode.

### Qualifying Connection to be married at St Mary's

For those who don't qualify as above, a couple can be married in a Church of England church if they can prove what is known as a qualifying connection.

This could be that you and your family attended St Mary's Church when you were a child / growing up, or perhaps your parents still live in the Parish of Thorpe. It could be that you were baptised or confirmed at St Mary's or that one of your parents or grandparents got married in the church.

In order to qualify, you may also attend regular worship, at least monthly for six months (you will need to sign-in on each visit to qualify).

If you wish to get married at St Mary's, and you think that you can prove one or other of these connections then you need to make contact with us. A member of St Mary's Ministry Team will want to meet with you in order to be able to clarify whether or not there is a qualifying connection and you may be asked to provide appropriate evidence to support this.

A wedding ceremony at St Mary's Church, Thorpe cannot be 'booked' and the deposit paid until the qualifying connection has been met.

You can download the [Qualifying Connections Form](#) from our website.

On meeting the rules of qualification you will be asked to pay the deposit to secure your chosen date and time. At this stage you will be asked to complete a Banns of Marriage Application Form (this is in addition to the Qualifying Connections Form).

You can download the [Banns of Marriage Application Form](#) from our website.

### Date, time of ceremony and deposit to secure your booking

Ceremonies at St Mary's usually take place at set times: 10am, 12noon, 2pm or 4pm on a Monday to Saturday. (Thursday weddings 2pm or 4pm only in term-time)

On a Sunday and certain festival days including Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday/Easter Eve, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or St Stephen's/Boxing Day weddings are not permitted by decision of Thorpe PCC.

You will be asked to pay a £200 (non-refundable) deposit to secure the date and time of your ceremony and complete a Marriage Application form and provide documentation to prove your address and confirm your identity.

You can download the [Marriage or Blessings Application Form](#) from our website.

### [Marriage Preparation Evening](#)

The Church of England takes very seriously the important commitment that husband and wife make to one another on their wedding day, which is why at St Mary's we ask all wedding couples to take part in our wedding preparation.

At the preparation evening we will introduce the team and provide you with resources which aim to help you to think about married life and all it will mean for you. In preparation you may like to carefully read our useful pack entitled '[Your Wedding Ceremony Explained](#)' to help you make plans for your ceremony.

[Available to download from our website](#)

### [Banns Only](#)

If your ceremony is to be held in another Church of England (Anglican) parish and you are resident in Thorpe you will need your Away Banns called at St Mary's.

We always call banns in the 10am Sunday Eucharist on the first three Sundays of the month preceding your ceremony and you will need to attend at least one of these. Once called a certificate will be available for you to collect from the Parish Office. A set fee will be charged for the calling of Away Banns.

Please complete the [Banns Only Application Form](#) available to download from our website.

You will also need to provide proof of your identity and address.

### [Marriage after Divorce](#)

It is possible to be married at St Mary's when one of you has been divorced. A decision will be made on a case by case basis and the Bishop of Guildford will need to be consulted by the Vicar before any ceremony can take place.

Alternatively, in many circumstances it is appropriate to hold a service of Blessing in St Mary's Church following on from a Civil Marriage (in a Registry Office or approved wedding venue) and our Ministry Team are always happy to discuss possibilities.

Download the [Marriage or Blessings Application Form](#) from our website

### [Same-Sex Marriage](#)

By law, marriage in a Church of England Parish Church is only allowed between one man and one woman and we are not currently permitted to offer services of blessing to same-sex couples, and we recognise this will be a disappointment to many as it is to us.

St Mary's is a member of the national body, Inclusive Church and we are committed to inclusivity and our team is always happy to give pastoral support and offer prayer with same-sex couples. St Mary's Church community is inclusive of all and you are welcome so please don't hesitate to be in touch with us.

Please contact us to discuss all your questions and arrangements:

St Mary's Parish Office is open on Wednesdays 9am to 3pm

Ph: 01932 567603

or you can get in touch via our Contact Us page on the website.

All the forms mentioned in this document can be downloaded from the following page on our website:

[www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/life-events](http://www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk/life-events) under the weddings section