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**YOUR WEDDING EXPLAINED 2024**

**St Mary’s Church, Thorpe**

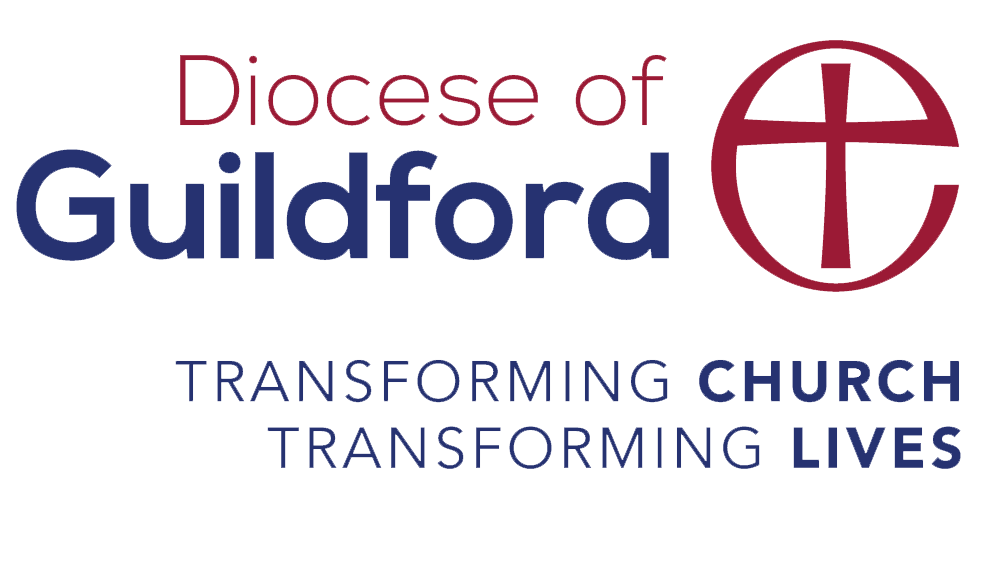
**Church Approach, Egham, Surrey, TW20 8TQ**

**Charity # 1176929**

[www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk](http://www.stmaryschurchthorpe.co.uk)

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# PART 1 – MARRIAGE FROM A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

## Welcome to St Mary’s Church!

Congratulations on your engagement. We very much look forward to welcoming you for your marriage ceremony at St Mary’s Church, which is right at the heart of historic Thorpe Village, Surrey. There are [some things about marrying in church](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org/youre-welcome/special-day-special-place.aspx) that you just can't get anywhere else. It's your wedding; let us help you make it personal, meaningful, spiritual and beautiful – a wonderful day to remember!

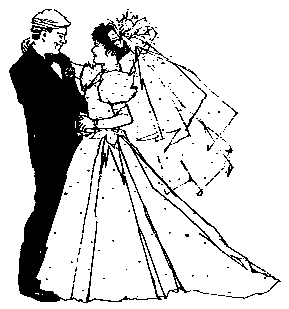
This guide will help you plan your big day. Part of the process is the welcome you will receive from our congregation as you spend time with us over the coming months. Do come along on Sundays as often as you can and get to know the church family.

A church wedding provides a spiritual dimension to the start of your marriage. The ceremony includes God and looks to Him for help and guidance. God’s blessing is the main attraction for many couples, whatever their beliefs. As part of the ceremony, you will make vows (promises before God), which have been used for centuries in a building that is thought to be over 1,000 years old. Made in public, these vows will help you to stay and grow together. God and your church are there for you to help you keep your vows.

In a Church wedding we celebrate marriage ‘in the eyes of God’ – this is more than legal; it’s different, it’s spiritual, it’s about love and it’s often described as ‘proper’. And of course, beautiful St Mary’s Church is a stunning wedding location with Grade 2\* listed status. Imagine all the couples who have married in St Mary’s Church down the years, some of whom may well be members of your family. You can feel you’re becoming part of history itself, the bigger plan, by marrying in the same place as your relatives. We know these sorts of connections can make your day even more special.

## The Sacrament of Marriage

It is all too easy for us to be caught up in the excitement of the time and perhaps miss the deeper meaning of the occasion. Yet most of us believe there is something sacred and special about marriage. We may not always have been able to express that in words – some simply feel that they wouldn’t be married properly if they weren’t married in church and for others there is a real sense in which they want to make their marriage vows in the church: blessed by the presence of God. For most a church wedding is about making vows to the person they love before family and friends and it is a ‘rite of passage’. In marriage we cease to be single and become joined to the one we love.

****

Christians believe that marriage is God given and we consider it to

be one of the Sacraments\* of the Church. Put simply, a Sacrament is

“an outward sign of something that God is doing on the inside of us.”

Sacraments touch our everyday lives and remind us that life is to be lived

out fully, transformed by the presence of Jesus Christ. Sacraments are

God given signs to us of his love and care. For the vast majority of people

marriage is the way in which they will live out their adult lives and therefore

it is the place in which they may develop their relationship with God.

In almost every human culture, Christian and non-Christian, men and

women get married and it is hard to argue therefore that it is not a God

given gift.

*\*The Seven Sacraments of the Church are considered to be marriage, baptism, confirmation, Holy Communion, ordination, confession and anointing the sick.*

# PART 2 - PLANNING YOUR WEDDING CEREMONY

The service (Liturgy) we use at St Mary’s Church is set by the Church of England, and approved by Parliament. We use the modern rite with contemporary language (except the Lord’s Prayer which is traditional) because this text is both easy for people to understand and follow, but also contains words and phrases that are familiar and inclusive. Towards the end of this guide is a full copy of the Wedding Service text as set by the Archbishop’s Council and approved by St Mary’s Parochial Church Council (PCC) Thorpe. You will need to familiarise yourself with the parts where you make promises / vows. You don’t need to learn your vows word for word as the priest conducting your ceremony will lead you through each response and in places you will be asked to repeat after them. However, familiarity with the text will help you on your special day. You will also have a rehearsal to help make your day perfect, usually the Thursday evening preceding your wedding day.

## Administration and Support with Your Wedding Planning

Our Administrator is Mary Morris who is happy to help – do keep in touch with her about your plans. This document should answer your questions, but if you are not sure about anything feel free to ask. You can contact Mary at [stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com](mailto:stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com). She will be in contact from time to time with reminder emails to guide you through the steps of planning your ceremony, and once you have submitted your Wedding Service Form ( at the latest 2 months prior to your ceremony) you will be provided with a template Order of Service.

## Your Wedding Ceremony – Choices for You to Make

You will need to make some choices about various parts of your Wedding Service such as music/hymns, readings, rings, bells, flowers and video recordings. We need to have those well in advance of the ceremony.

Music– you need to choose three hymns (these are required) as well as music for your entry and exit, and during the signing of the Marriage Document. Having an organist and three hymns is mandatory. Read more under “Thinking about music and hymn choices”.

Readings – you have a choice of up to two bible readings and one poem. One of these must be a bible reading from the New Testament *(****requirement*** *for any wedding held in church).* The other(s) may be from any part of the Bible or could be poetry or something personal to you.

Read more under “Choosing Bible Readings”. These must be approved.

Rings – you may choose to give and receive a ring from each other. (Some couples prefer to have only one ring given by the groom to the bride – please specify in the Wedding Service Form.)

Giving away the bride – you may like the bride’s father (or another chosen person) to give her away within the service; this is optional within the service text. Please notify us if not required.

Flowers in church – you may choose to use a florist (you need to give contact details of the florist with the Wedding Service Form) or ask the church’s own flower guild (more under “Flowers and St Mary’s Flower Guild”) to assist you. Flowers inside the church are not permitted during Lent and Advent season.

Bells- we have eight bells which are rung via an automated mechanical device. You can have these rung before and/or after your wedding ceremony. A fee (£40 in 2024) is charged for the use of the bells which goes towards annual Tower Maintenance costs.

Printed Service Booklet- when you have completed and returned the Wedding Service Form to the Administrator, we will provide you with a template based on your choices, but it is down to you to get this finalised and printed in A5 booklet format in time for your wedding. You will need to bring your printed order of service booklets with you to your wedding rehearsal.

Video or audio recording of your ceremony – this is down to you to arrange and is permitted, but additional fees and licences (£150 in 2024) will be charged. (Otherwise, no recording of any kind is permitted by order in St Mary’s Church, in accordance with Copyright Law.)

Please note that the last page of this guide is the Wedding Service Form ***which you need to submit*, with ALL details and specifications required, no later than 2 months before your ceremony**. From this we will prepare your draft service booklet for you, and invoice you etc. You can hand in your completed hard copy or email a pdf or jpg file to the Administrator (see details on form). Please submit your form only once complete with all details.

### Flowers for Your Wedding Ceremony

Flowers are permitted in Church outside of Lent and Advent. Most couples choose to use their own florist for wedding flowers and we ask that your appointed florist is in contact with St Mary’s at least two weeks prior to the service date to arrange delivery of your arrangements.

Options for flower arrangements in the church include to the side of the High Altar, on stands by the Norman Arch or in one or both of the squint windows either side of the Norman arch, beside the lectern and in the windows of the main body of the church.

Please note that for Health & Safety reasons there cannot be any arrangements in the aisle, neither free standing nor attached to the chairs. In addition, some couples arrange (following agreement by the Parish Priest) for a floral display to be installed at the lych gate or church porch.

Nothing can be attached to the fabric of the church (including furniture) or the lych gate with anything other than string as St Mary’s Church is an historical listed building. Most couples choose to take their arrangements to their reception venue and in recognition of this your basic wedding fee includes a contribution of £45\* towards the cost of Sunday/festival church flowers.

St Mary’s Flower Guild is a small team of people who arrange beautiful flower displays in the church for each Sunday outside Advent and Lent. They can, by request, prepare the church for a wedding. Costs per arrangement vary as the price and availability of flowers change with the seasons.

Should you wish for the Church Flower Guild to prepare flowers for your ceremony, additional charges will apply to accommodate your choice of flowers or extra arrangements but the £45 standard flower charge will be deducted from this amount. The Flower Guild need to know at least three months in advance of undertaking wedding flowers so that availability can be confirmed.

*\*The Sunday Flower Charge does not apply for weddings taking place during the Church seasons of Advent and Lent when flowers are not permitted in Church.*

### Thinking about music and hymn choices

Below are suggestions for music at different times in your ceremony. All three hymns will be accompanied by the organist on the church pipe organ – this is mandatory. Entry and exit music are usually played by the organist and there are many options listed below for your choice.

You may choose to bring in someone to provide live music during the signing of the registers (please refer to extended notes about “Musicians from outside St Mary’s Church”), or choose music to be played on the organ. You may book our choir to support the hymn singing (subject to availability – please book at least two months in advance). The Wedding Administrator will be very happy to discuss with you possible music choices.

By special agreement, you may like some alternative music provided as digital recordings. You may use recordings on an iPod but will need to ensure you have the correct cable to connect the iPod to our sound system. You will have to provide someone to operate the iPod. We strongly recommend that you come to the church some days before the ceremony to check that the music plays properly and confirm volume settings. We have to charge an additional £40 fee to cover our licenses for all pre-recorded music used at services in Church.

Just before the start of your wedding ceremony it is customary for the priest to hold a brief practice of the hymns and responses found in your service with the congregation.

Below is a list of popular items often used in church wedding services:

***Music before the service (organ)***

Coro (Water Music)  *Handel*

Wedding Day at Troldhaugen *Grieg*

Toccata and Fugue in D minor *Bach*

***Music for the entry of the bride (organ)***

Bridal march from Lohengrin *Wagner*

Canon in D *Pachelbel*

Fireworks Music: Minuet *Handel*

Grand March from Aida *Verdi*

March from Scipio *Handel*

Ode to joy (abbreviated version!) *Beethoven*

The Prince of Denmark’s March (Trumpet Voluntary*) Jeremiah Clarke*

Te Deum Prelude *Charpentier*

The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba (abbreviated version!) *Handel*

The Wedding March “Midsummer Night’s Dream” *Mendelssohn*

Toccata from Symphony no.5 *Widor*

Toccata in D minor *Bach*

Trumpet Tune and Air(abbreviated version!) *Purcell*

*(any of the entry pieces can also be played before the service)*

***Recessional music (organ)***

Canon in D *Pachelbel*

Fireworks Music; Minuet, Finale *Handel*

Another joyful piece from this suite as a Recessional is 'La Réjouissance'

Grand March from Aida *Verdi*

Hornpipe (Alla Danza) Water Music *Handel*

March from Scipio *Handel*

Ode to joy  *Beethoven*

The Prince of Denmark’s March (Trumpet Voluntary*) Jeremiah Clarke*

Te Deum Prelude *Charpentier*

The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba *Handel*

The Wedding March “Midsummer Night’s Dream” *Mendelssohn*

Toccata from Symphony no.5 *Widor*

Toccata and Fugue in D minor *Bach*

Trumpet Tune and Air *Purcell*

Wedding Day at Troldhaugen *Grieg*

***Popular Hymn choices for your wedding*** Please choose **three** hymns:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| All things bright and beautiful | All creatures of our God and King | Amazing grace, how sweet the sound |
| And did those feet in ancient times (Jerusalem) | Angel voices ever singing | At the name of Jesus |
| Be still for the presence of the Lord | Bind us together Lord | Come down O Love divine |
| Dear Lord and Father of mankind | Father hear the prayer we offer | From heaven you came (The Servant King) |
| Give me joy in my heart /  Give me oil in my lamp | He who would valiant be | I the Lord of sea and sky |
| I danced in the morning when the world was begun | I cannot tell why he whom angels worship | Immortal, invisible, God only wise |
| I vow to thee my country | Jerusalem the golden | Just as I am, without one plea |
| Lead us heavenly Father lead us | Let all the world in every corner sing | Lord, for the years, your love has kept and guided |
| Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us | Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy | Lord the light of your love (Shine Jesus shine) |
| Love divine, all loves excelling | Love is His Word, Love is His way. | Majesty, worship his majesty |
| Make me a channel of your peace | Morning has broken | Now thank we all our God |
| O Jesus I have promised | O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder | O perfect love, all human thought transcending |
| O praise ye the Lord | O thou who camest from above | O worship the King |
| One more step along the world I go | Peace, perfect peace | Praise my soul the King of heaven |
| Praise to the holiest in the height | Stand up, stand up for Jesus | Take my life and let it be |
| Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord | The King of love my shepherd is | The Lord’s my shepherd |
| Thine be the glory | Ye choirs of new Jerusalem | Ye holy angels bright |

***Music during the signing of the registers*** *Please specify version where appropriate.*

Amazing Grace (Choir) *John Newton*

Ave Maria (Organ) *Schubert* ***or*** *Bach-Gounod*

Canon in D (Organ) *Pachelbel*

Flocks in Pastures Green Abiding (Organ) *J S Bach*

Sheep may safely graze (Organ) *J S Bach*

Jesu Joy of Man’s Desiring (Organ) *J S Bach*

Largo (Organ) *Handel (also known as “Ombra Mai Fu”)*

Pie Jesu (Organ)  *Fauré*

If you have another piece of music, you would like played, please discuss this with the Wedding Administrator who will liaise with the organist. Additional charges may apply to cover the cost of sheet music.

***Musicians (entertainers) from outside St Mary’s Church***

It is getting increasingly popular for couples to hire professional singers or musicians for entertainment during the signing of the registers. Please note that such arrangements are welcome as long as they have been clearly stated, with name and contact details of the musicians/singers or the booking agency, in the Wedding Service Form under “Music at the signing of the registers”.

We expect the musician/singer or their agent to get in touch with us regarding their requirements at least a month before the service. If a soloist requires accompaniment on the organ or piano, we need to be furnished with a copy of the music at least three weeks before the service.

If a soloist brings accompaniment on an iPod, please note that they will under no circumstances have access to the audio system other than plugging the iPod in (no access to balance, volume etc of the system – only what they can access via their iPod. We have no music-grade amplification equipment available). They will need to ensure they have the correct cable to connect their iPod to our system and will have to operate the iPod themselves or arrange for someone else to do it for them.

If a musician/singer requires a microphone or any other equipment they need to provide these themselves. Any required rehearsals (with or without the Church Organist) need to be booked at least a month before the wedding and will have to fit in with the schedule of the Church/opening times. Out-of-time rehearsals may be subject to extra fees for the organist and staff who have to come specifically. There will be no exceptions to these rules and we suggest that you notify this paragraph to the musician or agency you are booking with before you commit.

### Choosing Bible Readings

Choosing an appropriate Bible reading(s) involves discovering what speaks most powerfully to you about the commitment you are about to make. You will learn a lot about each other’s spiritual awareness if you do this together and discuss your choices.

At least one Bible reading from the New Testament is required for a Church of England wedding service.

Possibilities include:

*New Testament Old Testament*

1 Corinthians 13; Colossians 3: 12-17 Genesis 1: 12-17; Ruth 1:16-17; Jeremiah 31:31-33

1 John 4: 7-12; Ephesians 5: 21-33 Song of Solomon 2: 10-13 OR 8: 6, 7

Romans 12:1-2,9-13; Philippians 4:4-9

For more suggestions visit: [*www.yourchurchwedding.org*](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org)

## Rules and Housekeeping at St Mary’s Church

There are also a few rules we need to share with you:

Photographs – these are a wonderful reminder of your special day and the Priest will explain to your chosen photographer the protocol at St Mary’s, asking the congregation not to take photos during the ceremony, although they are permitted to do so at the end as you leave the church. Use of flash photography within the historic church building is prohibited. (No photographs may be taken during the actual signing of the registers, even by your photographer, as these are legal documents.) Please also note that drones are not allowed above St Mary’s and surrounding areas as our neighbouring property is a boarding school.

Parking – limited car parking is available in the Vicarage Car Park and in Church Approach, and this should be reserved for essential members of your wedding party and immediate family such as your parents and those with disabilities who need to park close to the church. St Mary’s staff will also use this area for parking, so there will only be about fifteen spaces available in total and we suggest you instruct one of your ushers to make sure all cars make the most of the space available. Parking is only allowed on the gravelled area to ensure access for emergency vehicles if needed. Those who park in the Vicarage Car Park do so at their own risk and no responsibility can be taken by the Vicar or St Mary’s Parochial Church Council (PCC) for cars parked.   
Please note that the TASIS car park is not available for private functions. There is parking in Church Approach but to enable good access for the bridal conveyance, especially if this is a horse carriage, we suggest cars don’t park at the end close to the church. There is ample roadside parking in Mill Lane or Ten Acre Lane no more than ten minutes’ walk away.

Smoking and Dogs - all the grounds in and around St Mary’s Church are strictly non-smoking and only guide dogs are allowed on church premises.

Confetti – paper, petals or bio-degradable confetti is not permitted at all, even in Church Approach. Although the church grounds are maintained by Runnymede Borough Council, confetti costs a significant amount of money to clean from Church Approach, footpaths and church grounds; any such cost incurred we would have to pass on to you.

Decorations/Flowers – we believe St Mary’s is beautiful enough! But should you wish to add flowers or other decorations for your ceremony, please note that these must be freestanding and in places that do not interfere with Health & Safety procedures. You are not permitted to attach anything to the interior or exterior walls of the church or its furniture. St Mary’s Church is a Grade 2\* listed building and special Legal Consent is required to make any alterations or attachments. Therefore, the use of pins, tape, tack or glue is not permitted at any time. Please discuss any plans for decorations with the Wedding Administrator before booking a Florist of your choice.

Heating– an extra heating charge of £120 applies for all weddings, funerals and other occasions in Church between September and April. This means we will ensure the heating is on maximum in advance of your ceremony (the temperature inside the Church will be between 16 and 18 Celsius). For weddings outside this period, you can request heating at the same charge.

Seating – the maximum number of guests we can provide with seating in the nave of the church is 146.

## Legal Requirements

### Banns of Marriage - THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT

The Banns of Marriage *(from a Middle English word meaning "proclamation", rooted in Old French)*, commonly known simply as the "banns" are the public announcement in a Parish Church of an impending marriage between a man and a woman. The purpose of banns is to enable anyone to raise any canonical or civil legal impediment to the marriage, so as to prevent marriages that are invalid.

In advance of the ceremony the Vicar will advise you of the three dates on which your banns of marriage will be called at St Mary’s. Banns are normally read on the first three Sundays of the month preceding your ceremony at the Main Sunday Service, which is usually at 10am. You are asked to attend on at least one occasion.

You are required to ensure that your banns are read in each parish church where you are resident.

*If your ceremony is to be held at St Mary’s Church by virtue of a qualifying connection you will certainly need to arrange for your banns to be read in your local church as well. This could be more than one additional church!*

You must contact your local Church of England Vicar/Priest and make an appointment to see him/her to arrange for your banns to be called in their church (in addition to those at St Mary’s Thorpe). A charge will be made for the calling of your banns and the church will present you with a certificate after the banns have been called for the third time. You must present the certificate to the Priest conducting your wedding at St Mary’s at your rehearsal at the latest. (Failure to have your banns read in each parish where you are resident will cause your wedding ceremony to be postponed and/or significant additional costs to you.)

If you are unsure of how to contact your local church then go to the website [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com) and enter your postcode. This will identify the correct church(es) to contact.

It is important that, if you live at separate addresses, banns must be read in each parish where you are resident. This could require banns to be read in three separate churches.

### Qualifying Connection Sign-In Sheet

If you do not live within the Parish of Thorpe, or do not have a qualifying connection (for which it is your duty to provide proof in writing), then you will have to qualify for your wedding at St Mary’s by attending our services at least once a month for six consecutive months.

We are legally required to have proof of your attendance and therefore we provide a sign-in sheet for wedding couples on the welcome desk inside the main entrance to the church. It is up to you to make sure you sign and date this sheet every time you attend.

## The Registers and Certificate of Marriage

The original application (banns) form that you completed when you booked your wedding at St Mary’s contains the information that will be written on the Marriage Document. Should any of your details change we will need you to complete a new form and present us with updated proof of identity/address.

The Marriage document is a legal document and should be treated with care

Towards the end of the service the priest will escort you and your witnesses to our Rutherwyke Room for the signing of the Marriage Document. The priest will guide you through this process.

The couple, their witnesses (min 2, max 4) and the priest all sign the Marriage Document. The bride signs in their maiden name.

The document is then sent to the Register Office. The couple are required to ring the Register Office, (0800 234 6434) three weeks after the wedding to request a Marriage Certificate.

## The Cost of Your Wedding

The Archbishop’s Council of the Church of England sets the basic fees chargeable by parish churches and St Mary’s applies these. The basic wedding fee below includes all such set charges plus the Organist’s fee and Rutherwyke Room Charge. All extra fees are listed after.

Basic wedding £714

Sunday Flower Charge (compulsory outside Lent & Advent) £ 45

Heating (compulsory September to April) £120

OPTIONAL EXTRAS:

Recording Fee (Video or Audio) £150

Choir £60

Bells £40

Wedding Candle £40

Use of pre-recorded music £40

Flowers arranged by our Church Flower Guild will be charged separately as per agreement (see “Flowers for Your Wedding Ceremony”) – please discuss this option with the Wedding Administrator. Standard Sunday flowers charge £45.

## 

## Payment Details

Please note that a non-refundable deposit of £200 is payable on booking your wedding, and **we suggest you make full payment for your wedding well in advance of your wedding.**

You may pay by debit/credit card (there is a handling fee of £5) or by cheque payable to **Thorpe PCC**, but many prefer to make a bank transfer to Thorpe Parochial Church Council, Account Number 10884901, Sort Code 20-81-11 with Barclay’s Bank. Please enter your reference with the date and time of your ceremony according to this format: weekday-DDMMYY-time, and email us a copy of your confirmation page.

Payment must have been received before the reading of your banns at St Mary’s. Only in exceptional circumstances payment in CASH will be accepted.

## Rehearsal of your Ceremony

Your wedding rehearsal will usually take place in the week before the actual ceremony and lasts for about 45 minutes and will be organised by the priest.

The rehearsal should be attended by the bride and groom, best man, bridesmaids, readers and witnesses. Your parents may also like to attend, along with one of your ushers. Likewise, if you have asked someone to play the music from an iPod, they should also be present.

## On the Day

### Children and Church – *all are welcome!*

St Mary’s Church always welcomes families with children and we will do all we can to make them feel at home. In church we have a children’s carpeted corner with a few quiet toys and books, but you may like to make up a special wedding pack with suitable things for the children to do during your ceremony. The church has a selection of colouring pens (with washable ink) that are also available.

### Toilet facilities

There are toilets located in the Rutherwyke Room which is to be found on the South side of St Mary’s Church by following the red brick path past the porch (entrance to St Mary’s) to the right and round the Church to the back.

### For the hard of hearing – *our induction loop*

Our sound system is fitted with a hearing loop which is designed for use with hearing aids that have the *T* symbol – switch to *T* to hear the ceremony relayed straight to an earpiece.

### Be prepared and arrive in good time!

### The groom and guests should allow plenty of time for parking.

**The Wedding Ceremony Text**

The wedding ceremony contains these key features and their meaning:

1. The **Welcome** and first prayer remind us that we are in God’s house.
2. The **Preface** sets out the Church of England (Anglican) Teaching about Christian marriage.
3. The **Declarations** focus on your intention to marry, before your family and friends.
4. The **Collect, Readings** and **Talk** provide a range of reflections on marriage.
5. The **Vows, Giving of Rings** and **Proclamation** reflect upon your decision to be married and the love that you have for each other.
6. The **Blessing** and **Prayers** help us to think about the place of Prayer in marriage.

*Before the start of the ceremony (just as the bride arrives for photographs outside with the bridesmaids) the priest will lead the congregation in a short rehearsal of the hymns and responses printed in the order of service. Everyone is seated until we are ready to start.*

*The priest will indicate the start of the service by asking the congregation to ‘Stand’.*

**OPENING MUSIC** *- The bride enters.*

*The verger leads the priest who leads the bride and her father or guardian down the aisle. Space should be left between the priest and the bride. The wedding couple meet at the chancel step (dais).*

**THE WELCOME** *The priest welcomes the people*.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you

*All* **and also with you.**

God is love, and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them.

*1 John 4.16*

We pray together:

*All*  **God of wonder and of joy: grace comes from you,**

**and you alone are the source of life and love.**

**Without you, we cannot please you; without your love, our deeds are worth nothing. Send your Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts**

**that most excellent gift of love,**

**that we may worship you now with thankful hearts**

**and serve you always with willing minds;**

**through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**HYMN** no.1

*During verse 1, the bridesmaids help the bride to remove her veil and sort out the flowers. They then all move to the chairs at the front of Church.*

**THE PREFACE** *Read by the priest*

In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we have come together to witness the marriage of *N* and *N*, to pray for God's blessing on them, to share their joy and to celebrate their love. Marriage is a gift of God in creation through which husband and wife may know the grace of God. It is given that as man and woman grow together in love and trust, they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind, as Christ is united with his bride, the Church. The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together in the delight and tenderness of sexual union and joyful commitment to the end of their lives. It is given as the foundation of family life in which children are [born and] nurtured and in which each member of the family, in good times and in bad, may find strength, companionship and comfort, and grow to maturity in love.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God, and blessed by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with those celebrating a wedding at Cana in Galilee. Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty which all should uphold and honour. It enriches society and strengthens community. No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly but reverently and responsibly in the sight of almighty God. *N* and *N* are now to enter this way of life. They will each give their consent to the other and make solemn vows, and in token of this they will [each] give and receive a ring. We pray with them that the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen them, that they may fulfil God's purposes for the whole of their earthly life together.

**THE DECLARATIONS** *The priest says to the congregation*

First, I am required to ask anyone present who knows a reason why these persons may not lawfully marry, to declare it now.

*The priest says to the couple*

The vows you are about to take are to be made in the presence of God, who is judge of all and knows all the secrets of our hearts; therefore if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

*The priest says to the bridegroom:*

*N*, will you take *N* to be your wife? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

*He answers:*  **I will.**

*The priest says to the bride:*

*N*, will you take *N* to be your husband? Will you love him, comfort him, honour and

protect him, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

She answers: **I will.**

*The priest says to the congregation:*

Will you, the families and friends of *N* and *N*, support and uphold them in their marriage, now and in the years to come?

*All*  **We will.**

**THE COLLECT** *This is a prayer said by the priest.*

God our Father, from the beginning you have blessed creation with abundant life. Pour out your blessings upon *N* and *N*, that they may be joined in mutual love and companionship, in holiness and commitment to each other. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

*All* **Amen**.

*The congregation SIT. The couple move to their seats, bride first, walking carefully around the edge of the platform and up the step. The seats are in front of the Font (left hand side of the church).*

**READING (S) / POEMS / REFLECTIONS UPON MARRIAGE**

**HOMILY** *A brief talk by the priest*

**THE MARRIAGE** *The couple stand before the priest at the Chancel Step.*

*[ Optional - the father of the bride may be asked by the priest:*

Who gives this Woman to be married to this man? **I do.**

*The bride’s father (or whoever is giving her away) places the bride’s right hand into the minister’s, they then place the bride’s hand into the groom’s. The father then returns to his seat. ]*

**THE VOWS** *The priest addresses the couple.*

*N* and *N*, I now invite you to join hands and make your vows, in the presence of God and his people.

*The bride and bridegroom face each other. The bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his [originally a sign that the couple take each other in Law to be husband and wife]. The priest will say the words and first the groom repeats after each line:*

I, *N* , take you, *N* , to be my wife,

to have and to hold from this day forward;

for better, for worse,

for richer, for poorer,

in sickness and in health,

to love and to cherish,

till death us do part;

according to God's holy law.

in the presence of God

I make this vow.

*They loose hands.*

*The bride then takes the bridegroom's right hand in hers and repeats the same action, this time the bride speaks after the priest:*

I, *N* , take you, *N* , to be my husband,

to have and to hold from this day forward;

for better, for worse,

for richer, for poorer,

in sickness and in health,

to love and to cherish,

till death us do part;

according to God's holy law.

in the presence of God

I make this vow.

*They loose hands.*

**THE GIVING OF RINGS** *The priest receives the ring(s), and says the prayer:*

Heavenly Father, by your blessing let *this / these* ring*s* be to *N* and *N*

a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, to remind them of the vow and covenant

which they have made this day through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All*  **Amen.**

*The bridegroom places the ring on the fourth finger of the bride's left hand and, holding it there, repeats after the priest:*

*N*, I give you this ring

as a sign of our marriage.

With my body I honour you,

all that I am I give to you,

and all that I have I share with you,

within the love of God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*If rings are exchanged, they loose hands and the bride places a ring on the fourth finger of the bridegroom's left hand and, holding it there, says after the priest*

*N*, I give you this ring

as a sign of our marriage.

With my body I honour you,

all that I am I give to you,

and all that I have I share with you,

within the love of God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*[ If only one ring is given, before they loose hands, the bride says:*

*N*, I receive this ring,

as a sign of our marriage.

With my body I honour you,

all that I am I give to you,

and all that I have I share with you,

within the love of God,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit. *]*

*The Priest joins their right hands together, wrapping them in their stole and says:*

Those whom God has joined together let no one put asunder.

**THE BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE** *The husband and wife kneel before the priest on the dais.*

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, for you have created joy and gladness,

pleasure and delight, love, peace and fellowship. Pour out the abundance of your blessing upon *N* and *N* in their new life together.

Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts and a crown upon their heads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; awake and asleep, in joy and in sorrow, in life and in death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that banquet where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home. We ask this through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

*All*  **Amen.**

*The priest says the prayer of blessing over the couple:*

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve

and keep you; the Lord mercifully grant you the riches of his grace,

that you may please him both in body and soul, and, living together in faith and love,

may receive the blessings of eternal life.

*All*  **Amen.** *The couple stand.*

**THE PROCLAMATION** *The priest addresses the people.*

In the presence of God, and before this congregation, *N* and *N* have given their consent

and made their marriage vows to each other. They have declared their marriage by the

joining of hands and by the giving and receiving of rings. I therefore proclaim that they are

husband and wife.

*The priest may declare before the couple*: You may kiss the bride.

**HYMN**  no. 2 *The couple are led by the Verger and Priest to the High Altar step.*

**PRAYERS** *The priest invites the congregation to KNEEL for the prayers.*

Lord of life and love:

*All*  **hear our prayer.**

*The priest leads the prayers until they conclude with the Lord’s Prayer:*

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

*All* **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come;**

**thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

**[ OPTIONAL: LIGHTING OF THE WEDDING CANDLE**

*The priest will invite the couple to stand before the high altar. The bride will stand on one side of the wedding candle and the groom on the other. The Verger will take a light from the Paschal (Easter) candle. The two tapers are passed to the minister. The minister may use these words of preparation:*

These tapers have been lit from the Paschal candle, which represents the light of Christ. As a reminder of the vows you have just made, you will light your wedding candle and these two distinct lights will merge into one. This is what the Lord meant when He said, "On this account a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall be one flesh."

From now on your thoughts shall be for each other rather than your individual selves. Your plans shall be mutual, your joys and sorrows shall be shared alike. As this one light cannot be divided, neither shall your lives be divided but shine forth as a united testimony, in a Christian home.

A *lit taper is passed from the minister to both the bride and groom. Together, they light the Wedding Candle which symbolises Unity.*

Let us pray:

Living God, as this candle burns brightly on this wedding day,

so, we celebrate your love for us mirrored in the love of N & N for each other.

By the gift of your Holy Spirit, the life giver,

may they know the risen Lord Jesus Christ to be with them now,

as they celebrate this covenant together.

May this candle be to them a reminder

of the vows and covenant that they have made this day.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All*  **Amen.** ]

**THE BLESSING & DISMISSAL** *The priest prays over the people:*

God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love, defend you on every side,

and guide you in truth and peace; and the blessing of God Almighty,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

**HYMN** no. 3

**REGISTRATION OF THE MARRIAGE**

*The verger with the priest lead the couple out of the chancel through the link door into the Rutherwyke Room for the signing of the registers. The wedding party will follow – parents, best man, bridesmaids and the two witnesses (if not already part of listed above).*

*The bride will sign first, then the groom followed by the two witnesses, then the priest.*

*When the official signing is complete, one register will be set ready for a mock-up photo.*

*Following photos the priest hands the bride her certificate. Then we form a procession with the bride and groom first, just inside the link door arch into the Chancel.*

**THE MARRIED COUPLE ARE INTRODUCED TO THE CONGREGATION**

*The priest will announce the happy couple and they exit (on their own) through the link door arch into the Chancel and pause for photos under the Norman arch. After a brief pause for photographs, the priest will signal to the lead bridesmaid for the rest of the party and the family (e.g. parents, who may exchange partners) and procession to follow on behind.*

*An appropriate piece of recessional music is played.*

*The collection plate is left by the main door for the generosity of the guests.*

*Photos of the happy couple may be taken at the door before the congregation follows on behind them.*

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

*Complete & return the form on the next page and that is your*

*wedding ceremony prepared!*

*The ministry team and congregation of St Mary’s Church Thorpe wish you every blessing for your wedding day and your married life together.*

*You are very much in our thoughts and prayers.*

# WEDDING SERVICE FORM – CHECK LIST for St Mary’s Church, Thorpe

Names of Couple \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Expected number of guests in church: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

We would like *(please delete Yes/No* ***AND*** *note required specifications as appropriate)*

1. To use our iPod\* in church during the signing of the registers Yes / No
2. To have the Church Bells rung Yes / No
3. To have permission to record our wedding\*\* Yes / No
4. To request a Choir Yes / No
5. To exchange rings (**please specify**: two rings or one ring for bride only) Yes / No
6. To light a wedding candle as part of our ceremony Yes / No

(**please specify**: we will bring our own candle / please provide a candle for us)

1. To have flowers in church\*\*\* Yes / No

(**please specify**: put us in contact with Flower Guild / we will arrange a Florist: ourselves

Name + Telephone...............................................................................................................)

**AND** we will leave the flowers in church for Sunday / we will take the flowers with us)

Our chosen hymns and music are:

1. Hymns with organ (three required):
2. Processional Organ Music (entry of bride):
3. Recessional Organ Music (exit of bridal couple):
4. Music at the signing of registers (maximum two - please specify organ/choir recorded music/hired musician from outside St Mary’s for each piece):

Our chosen readings (max. two in total; with readers’ names shown in Order of Service) are:

1. Bible reading(s) (at least one from the New Testament):
2. Other reading (e.g. poem):

We (the bride & groom) will arrange for an Order of Service booklet (A5 format) to be printed according to the template we will receive based on this document. We will have any changes to the template approved through the Wedding Administrator before going to print.

**Please return this form** digitally to [stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com](mailto:petra@phcrafts.plus.com) or as hardcopy to the Administrator. Please submit once you have **completed all parts** including the details of the Florist

(if applicable) but **no later than 2 months before your ceremony**.

*\* You must bring your own iPod and find someone to operate the recorded music during the service.*

*\*\* You must arrange the recording yourselves – St Mary’s Church will only provide the licence.*

*\*\*\* Not available for Lent and Advent weddings; you must arrange a Florist yourselves and he/she must comply with restrictions according to Listed Building Status and Health & Safety regulations for St Mary’s Church.*