



Your Wedding at St Mary's

St Mary's Church, Thorpe
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Diocese of 
Guildford
TRANSFORMING CHURCH
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Welcome to St Mary's Church, Thorpe

Congratulations on your engagement, we look forward to sharing with you in your wedding day. The marriage service will be at the heart of your wedding day so we want to ensure it's personal to you both and to your families and friends. This document will guide you through the practicalities, to ensure your service is a uniquely spiritual and joyful part of your day. In the meantime, you are very welcome to join us for our Sunday services and other special occasions, this will help you get to know us and for you to feel relaxed at St Mary's.

Your Marriage Service

The formal words of the marriage service at St Mary's are set by the Church of England, which has an excellent online resource for wedding information including choosing hymns and readings (search for '*your church wedding*').

The priest conducting your service will meet with you to go through the service in detail, to guide you through what it all means and to answer any questions you have. This will include guiding you through the choices you have to make in Appendix A: Marriage Service Choices.

There will be a rehearsal for your marriage service (for a Saturday wedding this is usually on the evening of the Thursday before). Only the two of you need to attend but most couples like to invite as many from the wedding party as can make it, so that everyone feels relaxed on the day.

Our Administrator, Mary Morris, will guide you through the formal legalities and booking process, do ask her any questions you have and keep in touch with her as your plans develop.

Please make sure Appendix A: Marriage Service Choices is completed and returned, and the final invoice settled at least two months before your wedding.

The order of service should be agreed with the priest at least one month before.

Personalising your Marriage Service

While the formal words are set, the following choices will make the service personal to you. After meeting with the priest indicate your preferences in Appendix A: Marriage Service Choices.

Hymns and Songs

Choose two or three that you know and love, and that your family and friends will enjoy. They are normally led by our organist.

Bible Readings

Choose one or two bible readings, including one from the New Testament. These should reflect your thoughts and feelings about marriage, your love for each other and how God is going to be part of your lives.

Wedding Candle

After the marriage vows you can choose to symbolise being joined 'into one' by lighting a wedding candle. The wedding candle is yours to keep and to re-light on your wedding anniversary as a reminder of God's presence in your marriage.

Music on Entry and Exit

These two pieces, which you choose, can be played by the organist or through the church audio system (from a CD, phone or audio device). The organist will be happy to discuss possible choices with you if that's helpful.

Poetry or Music

You could have a family member or friend play some live music, sing a solo, or read a poem they have found or written. Music could be provided by a professional musician or group. Please be aware that additional audio equipment may be needed.

Marriage Document – this will be signed by yourselves and two witnesses who you can choose (they must be age 18 or over). The document will be given to you or a designated person during the service. **It's then your responsibility to take or send it to the Register Office to exchange it for a legal marriage certificate.**

Flowers

Except during Lent and Advent the regular church flowers used for services will be in place. If you want additional flowers you will need to provide details of your florist so that our flower team can be in touch.

Bells

You can choose to have the bells rung before and after your service. Our eight bells are rung by an automated mechanical device and the fee for their use goes towards annual tower and bell maintenance costs.

Order of Service booklet

Though it's not strictly necessary (if the hymns you choose are in the church hymn book), you may well like to have a printed order of service to make it easier for everyone to follow and to have a memento of the day. You need to design these and get them printed, please consult with the priest who will agree the final draft of the service content with you.

Other Practicalities on the Day

Photography

No photographs are to be taken during the service except by your official photographer. Please ask them to introduce themselves to the priest before the service so that they can explain what's permitted. The photographer will be allowed to take photographs from the back of the church or from the side aisles but not from the front, so that you don't get distracted. No flash should be used.

Parking

Limited car parking is available in the Vicarage car park and in Church Approach. Note the parking is also used by St Mary's staff on the day. Priority should be given to the bridal party and those with disabilities. About fifteen spaces are available, please instruct one of your ushers to direct cars; parking is only allowed on the gravelled area of the Vicarage car park to ensure access for emergency vehicles. Those who park here do so at their own risk, St Mary's PCC cannot be held responsible for any damage caused.

Confetti

Only natural petals or bio-degradable confetti is permitted including in Church Approach. 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.

Heating

Between 1st October and 31st April there is an additional fee for heating to ensure that it's a comfortable temperature for your service. Outside of this period please discuss with the administrator if you are concerned about cold weather.

Seating – we can accommodate up to 150 people in the church.

Toilets

These are available in the Rutherwyke Room behind the church, the steward will direct people.

Accessibility

We are able to move church chairs to make space for wheelchairs, please discuss this with the priest at your rehearsal.

There is an induction loop in the church for those who are hard of hearing.

Legal Requirements

The law requires you to have a qualifying connection with St Mary's in order to get married here. Broadly speaking, you are deemed to have a qualifying connection with a parish if one or both of you:

- was baptised or confirmed in the parish or
- has at any time had your usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months or
- has at any time habitually attended public worship in the parish for at least 6 months or
- has a Parent or Grandparent who was married in the parish.

There are certain conditions to the above so please check with our administrator who will also need to go through identity and residential status checks with you.

On three Sundays before you are married, your '**Banns of Marriage**' will need to be read at the parish church of the parish in which you are resident and at St Mary's. Banns are a public declaration of your intention to marry and give the opportunity for anyone to speak privately to the parish priest if they know a legal reason why the marriage should not go ahead. It's also an opportunity for you to be prayed for in the service, that God would prepare you for all that lies ahead.

At St Mary's banns are usually read at the 10am service on the first three Sundays two months prior to your wedding day; our Administrator will advise you of the exact dates and you are asked to attend on at least one occasion.

If you are not resident in Thorpe parish, please make sure you contact your own parish church in plenty of time before your wedding, to have your banns read there. If you are unsure how to do so, go to the website www.achurchnearyou.com and enter your postcode; this will identify the correct church to contact. If you live at separate addresses, banns must be read in each parish where you are resident. When your banns have been read for the third time, the parish church(s) will present you with a certificate, please send or give this to our administrator, your service cannot go ahead without it.

*The Vicar and congregation of St Mary's Church Thorpe wish you every blessing
for your wedding day and your married life together.
You are in our thoughts and prayers.*



Appendix A

Marriage Service Choices

Name of Couple:			
Date of Wedding:		Time of Wedding:	
Expected number of guests in church:			

We would like:

		YES	NO
1)	To play music on a phone/CD/MP3 player in church during the signing of the Register		
2)	To have the Church Bells rung		
3)	To exchange rings: Two rings		
	One ring for bride only		
4)	To light a wedding candle as part of our ceremony: We will bring our own candle		
	Please provide a candle for us		
3)	To have flowers in church: Put us in contact with Flower Guild		
	We will use our own florist Name of Florist: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____		
4)	AND We will leave the flowers in church for Sunday		
	We will take the flowers with us		
5)	Our chosen hymns and music are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processional Organ Music (entry of bride): • Recessional Organ Music (exit of bridal couple): • Music at the signing of the Register • Hymns with organ (two or three): 		
6)	Our chosen readings are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible Reading(s) • Other reading (e.g. poem): 		

An Order of Service booklet will be discussed and agreed with the vicar.

Please return the completed form to stmaryschurchthorpe@outlook.com or to the Parish Administrator no later than 2 months before your ceremony.