



**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families



# Getting married in Church

[www.mothersunionllandaff.org](http://www.mothersunionllandaff.org)

**Mothers' Union is an international Christian membership charity that aims to demonstrate the Christian faith in action through the transformation of communities worldwide.**

We are working with people of all faiths and none in 83 countries to promote stable marriage, family life and the protection of children through praying, enabling and campaigning.

Our aims and objectives are:

- To promote and support married life
- To encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children
- To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service
- To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
- To help those whose family life has met with adversity

At Mothers Union we believe that marriage is a loving, nurturing and committed relationship that benefits individuals, families and society. Supporting couples preparing for marriage, or those who are already married, is a core part of the work Mothers Union carries out around the world.

Prayer is a vital part of this work. Members pray regularly for couples in their area preparing for marriage.

# Getting Married in the Church in Wales

## Frequently Asked Questions



### What are banns?

Banns are the usual legal preliminary to a church wedding. They are an announcement of your intention to marry and an opportunity for anyone to put forward a reason why the marriage may not lawfully take place. Banns are read out in the main Sunday service in the parish where each of you lives as well as the church in which you are to be married, if that is in another parish. The Banns are called on three (usually but not necessarily consecutive) Sundays during the twelve weeks before the wedding.

### Do I have to be married in my Parish Church, or could I choose any church?

If you are a regular worshipper in a church outside the parish in which you live, it is usually possible to be married there. If you are not a regular worshipper, why not start attending? You will normally be expected to attend services for at least six months before becoming eligible to be married in a church other than your parish church. If you want to get married in a parish where neither of you resides nor is a regular worshipper, you will need to talk to the parish priest. Couples can apply for the Archbishop of Canterbury's Special Licence, if one of them has a genuine and long-standing connection with the Church in which they wish to marry. To apply or find out more contact The Faculty Office, 1 The Sanctuary, Westminster, London SW1P 3JT tel: 020 7222 5381.

## **Could I be married in church even if I don't go to church?**

Yes! Remember that the wedding ceremony in church has a distinctively Christian character and assumes that you accept the Christian understanding of marriage.

## **Can a divorced person have a church wedding?**

Marriage is for life, but it is a sad fact that some marriages do fail. There are some circumstances in which a divorced person may marry again in church. If you are considering a church wedding and have been divorced, you should discuss this with your parish priest.

## **How much will it cost?**

The legal fees for a marriage cover the publication of the banns, the marriage service and a certificate of marriage. There will be additional fees for a choir, organist, bell-ringers, permission to make a video recording etc. Check with your parish priest.

## **Why do we need marriage preparation?**

Most marriages are entered into confidently, assuming that they will last, but a very high proportion end in the tragedy of separation and divorce. Your marriage may have to last many years until death parts you, so it makes sense, however well you know one another, to think through your future relationship as man and wife. Most churches will therefore invite you to participate in preparation for your life together.

## **Can we be involved in planning the service?**

Yes. The minister will discuss with you the arrangements for the service and help you decide on appropriate music and readings. You may wish to involve family or friends in the service: e.g. in doing a reading or playing a musical instrument.

## **Can we have a video recording of the service?**

You will need to ask permission from the parish priest and some parishes have a policy that does not allow video to be taken. There may be a fee. Copyright issues also arise: for further information, go to <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/downloads/litcopy.rtf> under Video and Audio Recordings.

## **Will there be a rehearsal for the ceremony?**

The minister will want to run through the service with you and others who are taking part so that everyone knows what to expect. The rehearsal will usually take place in church during the few days before the service.

## **When may we marry?**

The day and time of the service is decided in consultation with your minister. It must be between 8am and 6pm and not clash with other Church services. For example, if you wanted to marry on a Sunday, it would have to be at a time other than the normal Sunday services and when the minister is available. By custom, there are no weddings during Lent, the church season covering the six weeks before Easter.

## **Is it possible to have a church blessing after being married abroad or by Civil Ceremony?**

Yes. Ask your parish priest or minister about this. There are no legal preliminaries necessary.

### **What if one of us lives abroad?**

Banns are not possible in these circumstances, so a Common Licence will be required. Your minister will help you to apply for this.

### **What if one of us is a foreign national?**

If one of the parties is a national of a country outside Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, the EU or USA, it would be wise to obtain from the relevant embassy or consulate a letter saying that the marriage will be recognised there. The marriage should be by Common Licence and not by banns.

# Suggested Readings

## 1 Corinthians 13. 1-7

### The Gift of Love

**13**If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup>And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant <sup>5</sup>or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; <sup>6</sup>it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. <sup>7</sup>It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

## Colossians 3. 12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

## Matthew 19.4-6

He answered, 'Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning "made them male and female", and said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.

## John 15. 9-12

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.



# Suggested music - Procession of the Bride and Recessional of Bride and Groom

The Bridal March (Wagner)

The Wedding March (Mendelssohn)

Canon (Pachelbel)

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (Bach)

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba  
(Handel)

Toccata (Widor)

Trumpet Tune (Purcell)

Trumpet Voluntary (Clarke)

Air from the Water Music (Handel)

Hornpipe from the Water Music  
(Handel)

Your organist will be able to suggest  
others perhaps

## WEDDING MARCH. Hochzeitsmarsch.

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

The image shows a page of a musical score for the 'Wedding March' by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. The score is written for piano and is in 2/4 time. It begins with the tempo marking 'Allegro vivace. (♩. 84.)'. The score is arranged in two systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system includes a key signature change to one sharp (F#) and a dynamic marking of 'ff'. The second system continues the piece with various musical notations, including slurs, accents, and a first ending bracket labeled '(A)'. The score concludes with a final cadence.

## Suggested Hymns

All Things Bright and Beautiful

Amazing Grace

Bind Us Together

Come down O Love Divine

Father hear the prayer we offer

Give me joy in my heart

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

Lord, for the Years

Lord of All Hopefulness

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

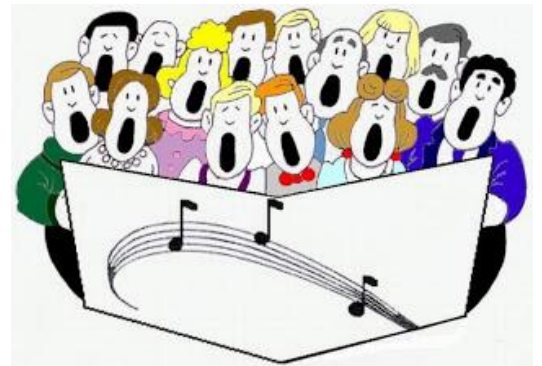
Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Morning has Broken

Now thank we all our God

O praise ye the Lord

Praise my Soul the King of Heaven



The King of Love my Shepherd is

## **The Marriage Service**

Traditionally bride and groom enter the church separately – the groom first with the best man, and the bride at the time set for the service, on the arm of her father or another relative or friend. However, she may enter alone if she wishes, or the couple may arrive together.

The minister will welcome the congregation, and then read an introduction explaining what Christians believe about marriage. He or she will ask the congregation and then the couple if there is any reason why the marriage may not lawfully take place.

In the first part of the service, there will be readings from the Bible, and the minister may give a short address or sermon.

You will then be asked to make declarations (repeated phrase by phrase after the minister) that you will live together according to God's will and purpose; love, honour and care for each other, in sickness and in health; and be faithful to one another as long as you both live. Then, with hands joined, you make your vows to take each other in marriage:

*To have and to hold,  
From this day forward,  
For better for worse,  
For richer for poorer,  
sickness and in health,  
To love and to cherish,  
As long as we both shall live,  
According to the will and purpose of God.  
And to this I give you my pledge.*



*In*

You then exchange a ring or rings with these words:

*Receive this ring in token of my love and faithfulness.  
I honour you with my body,  
And all my possessions I share with you.*

The minister will then declare that you are man and wife, and pronounce a blessing over you as you kneel.

The third part of the service is prayers for your future life together.

When the service is concluded, the bride, groom and two witnesses must sign the Civil Register of Marriages. The minister will give you a copy of the marriage certificate. This takes a little time, and so music is often performed while it is happening. The choice should be discussed with the minister. Music can be played on the organ or some other instrument(s), or sung by a soloist or choir.

## **The Church in Wales Marriage Fees 2017**

*Effective from 1 January 2017*

MARRIAGES	MINISTRY FEE	CHURCH FEE	TOTAL
Marriage Service <i>(including fee for Publication of Banns)</i>	£185.00	£245.00	£430.00

*Where Banns are called outside the parish where the marriage service will take place*

Publication of Banns <i>(including certificate Banns)</i>	–	£40.00	£40.00
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Please note that individual churches may charge extra for Organist, Bells, Flowers and Licence for Photography and Videography.

## A RECIPE FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE

- 1 cup of consideration
- 1 cup of courtesy
- 1 cup of flattery (carefully blended)
- 1 cup of the milk of human kindness
- 1 cup of faith in God and one another
- 2 cups of praise
- 1 small pinch of the in-laws
- 1 reasonable budget
- 1 generous dash of cooperation
- 2 tablespoons of pure extract of 'I am sorry'
- 1 cup of confidence
- 2 cups of encouragement
- 1 large or several small hobbies
- 1 cup of blindness to other's faults
- Optional: 2 or more children

Flavour with generous portions of recreation and a sprinkling of happy memories. Stir well and remove any specks of jealousy or bad temper. Sweeten well with generous amounts of love and keep warm with a steady flame of devotion. Never serve on a cold shoulder of hot tongue.

## A GOOD WEDDING CAKE

4lb of love

1lb of butter of youth

½ lb of good looks

1lb of sweet temper

1lb of blindness of faults

1lb of self-forgetfulness

1lb of pounded wit

1lb of good humour

2 tablespoons of sweet argument

1 pint of rippling laughter

1 wineglass of common sense

1oz of modesty

Put the love, good looks and sweet temper into a well-furnished house. Beat the butter of youth into a cream, and mix well together with the blindness of faults. Stir the pounded wit and good humour into the sweet argument, then add the rippling laughter and common sense. Work the whole together until everything is well mixed, and bake gently for ever.

