

Getting Married

in the
Stilton Group of Churches

St Mary Magdalene, Stilton

St Helen's, Folksworth

All Saints, Elton

All Saints, Morborne

St Mary's, Haddon

We are delighted that you have chosen to be married in Church. Getting married is a big step and we want to help you make this day memorable and enjoyable. This booklet is designed to help you with your preparations and answer some of your questions.

Welcome

This booklet will guide you through the essential information you need to know when planning a wedding. When you are ready to book or would like further information please contact the Vicar, Revd Richard Gibbs on 01733 248 701. If you would like to know more about arranging a church wedding, there is an extremely good Church of England website with all sorts of helpful information. Take a look at www.yourchurchwedding.org. There is also a link to it on our website www.stiltonchurches.com.

Bookings

For an initial enquiry/booking, please contact the Vicar. He will arrange to meet you, to talk through the preparations and go through any questions. At the first meeting you will be asked to bring ID and given a marriage application form to take away and complete. Other things such as attending the Marriage Preparation Course will be discussed. Once the forms are completed and returned then the wedding is booked. A second meeting will be made for 3-4 months before the Wedding Day, to discuss the practicalities of the day, set a rehearsal date and dates for reading banns. Under normal circumstances the Vicar will take the service, but this cannot be guaranteed. If he is not available, alternative arrangements will be made.

Marriage Preparation Course

This allows couples to look forward to the future of married life and to consider how to support each other on the journey. The course is held once a year and is for all the couples planning to marry at any one of our five churches. The sessions are to offer guidance into a lifetime's partnership at a time when there is so much focus on one day. We very much hope you will find the sessions helpful and enjoyable. The marriage course is part of the wedding preparation.

- has at any time habitually attended public worship in the parish for at least 6 months;
- That person's parent has, at any time during the person's lifetime, had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months;
- That person's parent has, at any time during the person's lifetime, habitually attended public worship in the parish for at least 6 months;
- That person's parent or grandparent was married in the parish.

On three Sundays and within 3 months prior to the wedding, banns are read in the Church publicly announcing that the service of marriage is to take place.

If either of you is under 16, there can be no marriage.

If either of you is under 18, you will need the written consent of your parents.

If one or other of you are divorced, you can still marry in church but need to discuss this with the Vicar.

Marriage of Foreign Nationals

If either person does not hold a full British passport, please talk to the Vicar about your legal responsibilities prior to the marriage being approved.

Flowers

We are happy for the churches to be decorated. Organising the flowers needs to be arranged by yourselves. Talk to the Vicar or church wardens to gain access for setting up and clearing away after the service.

Confetti

We are happy for confetti to be used, but would be grateful if this could be some way from the church and porch so that it does not blow into the building. Please use paper, petals or other biodegradable material - not foil!

Collection

At a wedding, when we look to the future with such joy, there is an opportunity to share hope and happiness with those who may have little to celebrate or look forward to. To that end, a collection plate may be available as everyone leaves the church, and any monies collected will go towards our work here and overseas.

The Legal Requirements

In order to get married in our Churches you must demonstrate a qualifying connection in accordance with The Church of England regulations.

The “qualifying connections” are as follows; one connection is sufficient:

The person concerned:

- was baptised in the parish;
- has been confirmed and the confirmation has been entered in a church register book belonging to the parish. (This would have been done on the basis that the person concerned was prepared for confirmation in the parish);
- has at any time had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months;

Banns

Banns will be called, publicly announcing your marriage, within the 3 months prior to your wedding. They will be called at the church where the marriage is to take place, and if either of you lives outside the parish then they will need to be called in your parish(es) of residence as well. If these “away” banns are required then you will need to make contact with your own parish church who will arrange for them to be called and, after the third calling, will provide you with a certificate. This should be passed immediately to Revd Richard. We will advise you when the banns will be called at the church you are to be married in, normally about 2 months before the wedding. We would hope to see you in church on at least two of those occasions - although we would, of course, be delighted to see you at any service at any time!

Rehearsal

The Vicar will arrange a rehearsal, ideally one or two days before the wedding day, when you, and those involved in the service - such as the bride’s father, best man and any bridesmaids - will walk through the whole service. If you are having photographs taken or a video made of the service, it is a good idea to offer the person doing this the chance to attend the rehearsal. Any others who have a key role in the wedding are very welcome to come along.

Music

You will need to choose up to 3 hymns for your wedding, and music for the entrance of the bride, the signing of the registers, and the exit of the bride and groom. If you don’t know many hymns, the vicar will be happy to help, or you can ask members of your family. Again, www.yourchurchwedding.org will be useful with a number of specially written wedding hymns set to well-known tunes.

Orders of Service

If you wish to have printed orders of service, make the arrangements in good time. The 'running order' will be agreed together with the vicar. Remember to include the words of the Lord's Prayer, together with the words of your chosen hymns. You are responsible for the final proof of the order of service.

The Marriage Service

A suggested outline:

- Processional Music
- The Welcome and Opening Prayer
- Hymn
- The Introduction and Declarations
- Readings
- The Address
- Hymn (if you have only two hymns this one is omitted)
- The Marriage
- Hymn
- The Registration
- The Prayers of Blessing
- Recessional Music

Readings

There is at least one reading at the service and this is from the Bible. You are more than welcome to have another reading (or readings) and this can be something that is relevant to you both, for instance a poem or piece from a book. It's good to choose family members or friends to read for you - it's also a good idea to choose someone who can read clearly and confidently.

Fees

There are fixed costs set by the Church of England nationally and this is the same for every church. In 2018*, it costs £517 if you marry away from where you live and £474 if you marry in your home parish. For the most up to date list of fees please visit www.yourchurchwedding.org. Each of our parish churches will be able to advise you on additional services they can provide.

Organist & Bells

Bookings for both Organist and Bells can be made in advance to make their contribution to the enjoyment of your wedding day. Please advise the vicar at the time of returning your Marriage Application form as to whether you will require these, so they can be booked in good time. A Verger will always be offered; they will help with the smooth running of the practicalities on the day. Fees will vary slightly according to the church and particular arrangements at the time. They will be confirmed in an invoice sent nearer to the date of the wedding.

Additional Service	Approximate cost*
Verger	£50
Organist	£80 - £120
Bells	£150 - £220
Video Licence	£35
Heating	£60

Photographs and Video

We are happy that photographs are taken in church. We ask that during the service any photographs or videos should usually be taken by the officially appointed persons only. They should preferably stand at the back of the church or at the side, except during the signing of the registers and at the end of the service.

*Published costs correct at time of print and may be reviewed and changed