

## Getting Married at All Saints – an Introduction

Congratulations on your engagement! We are pleased that you are considering getting married at All Saints; this information pack tells you more about what is involved and should answer some of your questions.

If there is anything that you are not sure about, you can ask the Vicar at your first meeting.

### Can I get married in church?

You are welcome to marry in church whatever your beliefs, whether or not you are baptised and whether or not you go to church. Everyone is entitled to get married in their own parish church, and - following a recent change in the law - it is now much easier to get married in a church even if it is not your own parish church.

When you enquire about getting married at All Saints church, one of the first questions we ask therefore is whether or not you live in the parish. (You can find out which Church of England parish you are in, if you are not sure, by typing in your postcode at the following website: [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)).

If one of you lives in All Saints parish then things are very straightforward: you are entitled to have your wedding here.

If you live outside the parish then you may still be able to have your wedding in this church, if you can show that you have a “qualifying connection” with All Saints - in other words, if at least one of the following applies:

- one of you was baptised (christened) or prepared for confirmation in the parish;
- one of you has ever lived in the parish for six months or more;
- one of your parents has lived in the parish for six months or more in your lifetime;
- your parents or grandparents were married in the parish.
- one of you has at any time regularly attended public worship in the parish for six months or more;
- one of your parents has regularly attended public worship there for six months or more in your lifetime;  
(*All of these refer to Church of England services*)

If none of the above applies, but you are very keen to be married in All Saints, then you can still do so if you are willing to:

- make a genuine commitment to worship *regularly* with the congregation, for at least six months before your marriage. After that period you would then have a qualifying connection with All Saints.

If you are not sure about making such a commitment you can discuss this with the Vicar at your initial meeting to find out more about what is involved.

Otherwise, if you are keen to have a church wedding you should consider getting married in the parish where one or both of you lives at the moment.

If either of you is divorced, this is not necessarily an obstacle to being married in church, but you will need to discuss this with the Vicar, and you will need to show your ‘decree absolute’ (original, not a copy) to show you are free to marry.

## How do I book a wedding?

If you haven't already, you will need to arrange an initial meeting with a member of the clergy (usually the Vicar), who will record your details - which will eventually appear in the marriage registers and on your marriage certificate.

You must provide proof of identity, address and nationality (e.g. utility bill and passport). You will also need to provide evidence of the "qualifying connection" (eg date of baptism or confirmation; proof of former address; date of parents' or grandparents' marriage).

On payment of a deposit, the date and time of your marriage service can be firmly booked.

If either of you is divorced, you will need to have a preliminary discussion with the Vicar who will need to make a decision about whether to allow the wedding, before you can proceed to make a booking.

Should you subsequently decide for whatever reason that you do not wish to go ahead with your marriage at All Saints, your deposit will be refunded provided that you give three months' notice *in writing* to this effect to one of the parish clergy.

## Banns or Licence?

Most couples who get married in church have a public notice, their "banns of marriage", read where they get married, and at their local parish church(es) if they live outside the parish where the wedding will take place. There is a fee payable for this, and banns need to be arranged in good time. The minister will explain more about this.

You **must** provide certified evidence that all necessary banns have been called to the minister who will marry you.

A few couples obtain a Special Licence in order to marry, instead of having banns read. This may be necessary if one or both of you are not UK citizens, or if you are living abroad. We will let you know if this might be relevant for you.

If you get married in a Church of England service you don't need to obtain a licence from the Civic Registry Office, since the minister is a Registrar in their own right.

## How do we prepare?

You may well have thought for a long time about your relationship before getting engaged, but an important aspect of getting married in church is the opportunity it offers you to reflect, both with your partner and with others, about the commitment you are making.

Once you have booked, we will let you know in due course which member of the clergy at All Saints will be conducting your wedding. The minister conducting the service will meet with you several times in the months preceding the big day, and has a big part to play in helping you not only to plan the service but to prepare for life beyond the wedding day. Getting married in church is not about hiring a venue, it is about being part of a community which is here to support and encourage you as you prepare for your married life together.

One of the ways we do this is by inviting all couples who are marrying over the coming year to a Marriage Preparation Day (usually in February). This is an enjoyable and sociable experience. It's an opportunity to discuss in more detail the practicalities of the day, as well as to think about your plans and hopes for the future.

We often have a social event at another time of year especially for the couples getting married, and couples have welcomed this opportunity to meet each other and other church members. Many also find that attending church regularly becomes a helpful part of their preparation, as they grow to feel more at home in church and part of the community.

## What will it cost?

Please consult the table of fees in this pack for the current costs of wedding services (these are subject to change each year). We ask for a deposit of £100 to be paid when you first book your date. Our fees treasurer will write to you to request payment of the balance about three months before the wedding. Fees can be paid by cheque (payable to 'All Saints Gosforth PCC') and sent to our fees treasurer:

**Fees Treasurer, The Parish Office, All Saints Centre, West Avenue,  
Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 4ES**

Or BACS

**Account Name:** PCC All Saints Gosforth Fees Account  
**Sort Code:** 20-59-61  
**Account Number:** 30045217

Please note that fees must be received in full before the ceremony can take place.

The cost of the wedding will depend on which of the optional extras you decide you would like. These include:

- **Organist**

Beautiful organ music to accompany the hymns and to play as you enter and leave the church are part of what makes a church wedding special, so it is normal to have an organist. We will arrange for the Director of Music or another suitable organist to be available.

Having the organist does not stop you having other forms of music in the service; sometimes a couple want friends to sing or play during the service and we generally encourage this. They should make contact with the Director of Music in good time and allow ample time to rehearse in church.

Sometimes couples choose to bring music on CDs. We do allow this, though we recommend if possible that music is performed live by the organist, by singers or other instrumentalists. Our Director of Music is a very capable musician and can play a wide repertoire. You should consult him well in advance about choices of music and if necessary provide him with copies of the pieces you wish him to play.

- **Choir**

All Saints church choir is sometimes available to sing at weddings. They can offer a range of anthems which might be sung during the signing of the register and they also provide a strong lead for the singing of the hymns should you wish. If you are interested in having the choir, you will need to ask for this well in advance, but please note that the choir is not usually available in late July, August or on weekdays.

- **Bells**

We have a dedicated band of bellringers at All Saints, who are available to play at weddings throughout the year. Bells are rung as the bride arrives and at the end of the service. If you want to listen to how they sound, you can hear them rung on most Sunday mornings and evenings throughout the year.

- **Flowers**

We encourage you to use the flower arrangers at All Saints to provide special floral arrangements to decorate the church. They prepare flowers for most Sundays in the year and know the building well. This fee includes 1 pedestal arrangement, 2 altar arrangements and 1 porch arrangement. Pew end flowers are available at an extra cost. For information regarding please contact the co-ordinator of flowers at All Saints, Mrs Pat Spong (0191 236 4532).

If you prefer to use your own florist, you should still contact Mrs Spong to co-ordinate arrangements. If there is another wedding on the same day, we suggest you also contact the other couple to discuss flowers, as it may be possible to share arrangements and share the cost.

- **Video**

If you decide to have a video (professional or amateur) made of the wedding service, you will need to pay a facility fee to the church (in addition to any payment you make to the videographer. This is because of copyright law; you will be making a permanent copy of the organist's work, who is entitled to a fee covering their performing rights.

You must seek permission in advance if you wish to make a video or sound recording of the service.

We can Livestream your service for £100.00.

## **What's not included in the charges?**

- **Photography**

You will need to make your own arrangements for a photographer if you want one. A good photographer will be able to take excellent pictures of the service in an unobtrusive way – you should hardly notice them and neither should the congregation. Many local photographers have worked at All Saints before. Ask other couples who have got married locally for their recommendations.

## **What choices do we have about the service?**

Within a Church of England marriage service there is quite a lot of scope for choosing different options, to help make the service one that is personal to you.

The minister taking your service will help you to explore these options. These include alternatives for the prayers and some other words, choosing the readings, and the hymns and music. Readings include at least one from the Bible, and many couples have a poem or other prose reading as well. Another choice is who to ask to take part in the service. Inviting friends or relatives to read, lead prayers, play or sing is a lovely way to include them in the service: but do give them plenty of time to prepare for this.

You will also need to design a service booklet for the order of service. The minister taking your service will have examples to show you, and will advise you on what needs to be included.

We recommend the following very helpful website to help you start thinking about planning the service: [www.yourchurchwedding.org](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org). The section called 'ceremony planner' gives you all the words of the wedding service and shows you where the various choices can be made.

## **Worship and Community**

As you look forward to your wedding in church, remember that you are choosing to mark this momentous step in your lives in the presence of God. A wedding service is an act of worship, prayer and blessing, as well as a statement of commitment in front of your families and friends.

If you don't go to church much, these months of your engagement could be a good time to give it a try. For one thing, you'll find choosing hymns and readings for the service a lot easier! More seriously, you will feel that the place where you get married is even more special to you, a place where you know you belong and feel at home. The clergy are always happy to discuss any questions of faith or spirituality you wish to explore, and can advise you on getting baptised or confirmed, if that is a step you would like to take.

We hope you will discover that All Saints is a friendly, open and varied community, as well as being a beautiful building.

# Countdown to your Wedding at All Saints

## *First steps*

- Your initial enquiries
- Meeting with one of the clergy to record your personal details, (with necessary ID and documentation) and to book a provisional date and time for the service
- Payment of refundable deposit (£100): your wedding date and time are then firmly booked
- Normally in February – Marriage preparation day

## *Six months before your wedding*

- The minister who will conduct your service will contact you
- Decide on choices for service (Bells? Choir? Video?)
- Latest time to arrange calling of banns in your local church (if applicable)

## *Three months before*

- Request for payment of balance of your wedding fees sent out
- Decide on detailed choices for service (Readings, hymns, other music). Make contact with Director of Music if applicable
- Make contact with flower arrangers
- Send copies of readings to the relatives or friends who will read at the service
- Draft order of service in consultation with minister
- Arrange date and time of rehearsal with minister

## *One month before*

- Final date for payment of fees
- Collect banns certificate from your local church (if applicable)

## *Final week*

- Give Banns Certificate to minister (if applicable)
- Rehearsal for bride, groom, bridesmaids, best man, ushers, ...
- Enjoy the wedding!

## **Fees**

### **Marriage Service**

The basic fees are fixed by law and are the same for all Church of England weddings. The church fee covers the service of the minister taking the wedding, use of the church building, and all administrative costs. In addition, we include a small charge to cover general facilities and consumables together with a fee for the services of a vergers who looks after the practical arrangements and ensures that the church is clean and tidy for the wedding day.

The fee payable for the basic **Marriage Service** in church amounts to **£693.00** and includes all fees outlined in the paragraph above.

The following options are available and chargeable at the rate shown.

<b><u>Fee Rate</u></b>	
Organ music	£155.00
Bells	£267.00
Choir*	£254.00
Flowers**	£225.00
Livestream	£100.00

\*This fee is based upon a minimum of 10 choir members; the actual fee charged will be based upon the number of choir members available on the day of the wedding.

\*\* This fee includes 1 pedestal arrangement, 2 altar arrangements and 1 porch arrangement.

Pew end flowers are available at an extra cost. For information regarding flowers (including using your own florist), please contact the co-ordinator of flowers at All Saints', Mrs Pat Spong (0191 2364532).

Fees should be paid by cheque (payable to 'All Saints Gosforth PCC') and sent to:

Fees Treasurer  
The Parish Office  
All Saints Centre  
West Avenue  
Gosforth  
NE3 4ES

Or BACS

**Account Name:** PCC All Saints Gosforth Fees Account  
**Sort Code:** 20-59-61  
**Account Number:** 30045217

Fees should be paid in full - and have cleared in the Parish bank account - one month before your wedding.

**NB if fees are not paid in full before the wedding, it cannot take place**