

Thank You for Your Wedding Enquiry at St Bartholomew's Thurstaston

Current marriage law states that you can get married in the parish church:-

- If one of you is resident in the parish
- If one of you is on the electoral roll of the parish church (ie you have been regularly (*at least two Sundays each month*) attending one of the churches for 6 months and have filled in a form to say that you consider this to be your church).
- If one of you
 - was baptised in the parish (and has been entered in the church register); or
 - 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); or
 - has at any time had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months; or
 - has at any time habitually (*at least two Sundays each month*) attended public worship in the parish for at least 6 months;
- If one of your parents has at any time during your lifetime:
 - had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least 6 months; or
 - habitually (*at least two Sundays each month*) attended public worship in the parish for at least 6 months;
- If your parent or grandparent was married in the parish.

(In this list references to being baptised, confirmed or married, or attending public worship, all refer to Church of England services.)

Divorce is not a prohibition to getting married in church but you will need to fill out an application form stating why you wish to be married in church. The Rector will then need to meet with you to talk frankly about the past, your hopes for the future and your understanding of marriage. You will need to be able to produce a decree absolute proving that you are no longer married. If you are not currently a member of the church, you will also be asked to attend church services on a regular basis over a six month period to demonstrate your commitment to the Christian Faith.

The Church marriage service invites God to become the third partner in your relationship. This means that you will each need to be willing to take the Christian Faith seriously, and we would encourage you to become active members of our church (or the church where you live) so that as a church fellowship we can get to know you and support you in your marriage.

You will be required to attend a meeting with the Rector to go through a marriage preparation pack which provides opportunity for you as a couple to spend time together discussing issues related to your marriage, such as communication and expectations.

If you can fulfil the above criteria and would like to book a wedding at St Bartholomew's you will need to contact the Rector. The Rector will need to see evidence of your nationality – passport is the easiest way!

Wherever possible we only take one wedding booking per Saturday (in order to avoid complications of two wedding parties getting mixed up together), however for popular summer dates we will do two weddings on the same day, and the times will need to be negotiated carefully. **When booking your wedding we cannot guarantee that it will be the Rector who will take the service**, as weddings are booked so far in advance, that holidays etc. have not usually been booked. We do not accept wedding bookings for Sundays or Bank Holidays. Monday to Friday weddings can be arranged, but we cannot guarantee that you will be able to have specific flower colours (see reverse), or that the bell ringers will be available.

Information about rules regarding flowers, photographs, videos etc. are on the reverse of this document.

Marriage is a wonderful gift of God. We look forward to meeting with you and celebrating your special day with you.

Number of Guests at your Wedding

St Bartholomew's Nave (the main part of the church) comfortably seats 80 adults (ie 4 people to a pew). If your guest list is larger than this, then we might need to use the choir stalls for extra seating. Using the choir stalls gives a maximum capacity of 120 adults. If you plan on needing to use the choir stalls, we suggest that you give your ushers a list of the names of the guests who are to be seated in the choir stalls.

Flowers at Wedding Services

Flowers for wedding service will be arranged by the church flower arrangers. You will be invited to specify a colour scheme, which the flower arrangers will do their best to meet. There are four price bands which you can choose from (1. Sanctuary only, 2. Sanctuary and Nave, 3. Sanctuary, Nave and Porch, 4. Sanctuary, Nave, porch and Lychgate). See Fees Chart for more information. Under exceptional circumstance it may be possible to arrange for a commercial florist to have access to the building to do your wedding flowers – please speak with the Rector about this as soon as possible.

Photographs at Wedding Services

Photography is not permitted during the actual service, except for non flash photography from the back of church. Your photographer can take as many photographs as they like in the run up to the entry of the bride, and again at the end of the service i.e. after the registers have been signed.

Audio Visual Recordings at Wedding Services

You are permitted to arrange to have an Audio Visual recording of your wedding service, but you will need a licence as all music is subject to copyright law. Most professionals have the required licence, if you are using amateurs (eg friends/family) you will need to obtain a licence and give a copy to the Rector. The person operating the audio-visual equipment will be asked to be stationary (at the back of church) throughout the service, so as not to detract from the act of worship. There is an additional copyright fee for any wedding which is recorded (see Fees Chart). This fee applies whether it is a professional recording, or a family member or friend taking “home movie” – the fee is to cover the cost of the live performance of music.

Music at Wedding Services

Most couples request the presence of our church organist for hymns and music at the entry of the bride and exit of the couple. If you do not require the church organist you must let us know as soon as possible (and preferably 3 months before the date of your wedding), you also need to let us know if you have an alternative form of music e.g. a family member or friend who will play the organ, a string quartet etc. etc. Some couples request their favourite piece of music to be played on CD during the signing of the registers –The Rector must see a copy of the words in advance and we must be notified at least a month before your wedding so we can arrange to get the right equipment into St Barts.

Readings at Wedding Services

It is a requirement that there is at least one Bible Reading within the service. If you would like to have an additional reading e.g. a poem etc, this is permissible by agreement with the Rector, who needs a copy of the reading well in advance of the service.

Confetti at Wedding Services

We politely request that all confetti is confined to outside of the church building and church yard and preferably is biodegradable.

Orders of Service for your Wedding Service

Most couples choose to produce an order of service for their wedding, which includes the words of the hymns. As all hymns are subject to copyright law, you will need to print “Copyright by permission Christian Copyright Licence 1200925” somewhere on your order of service. Alternatively, you may choose to use our church hymn books – you will need to check that the hymns you want are available within the hymn books!