



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

WEDDING INFORMATION

Many congratulations!

Many congratulations on your engagement!



We are delighted that you are considering having your wedding at St John's Church in Merrow. We will do all we can to ensure that your special day is a happy one and that your marriage is built on firm foundations. We will help you prepare for your wedding day and life together, both in terms of the service and emotional and spiritual support.

This document is our guide to planning a wedding at St. John's and hopefully answers many of the questions that you may have about the process of a church wedding.

If you have any additional questions, please do contact either me or the parish office and we will be pleased to help you.

With good wishes,

Tim

The Rev'd Tim Clifford Hill

Rector of Merrow

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I get married at St John's?

There are various ways in which you can qualify to be married at St Johns:

Either one or both of you lives in the Parish

If you or your partner live in the parish, you are entitled to be married at St Johns by 'Banns'.

Banns are a public announcement of your intention to marry and must be read in your parish church. If either of you lives outside Merrow you must ensure that the Banns are also published in the parish church(es) where you live - this is a legal requirement. You will need to contact the relevant parish and arrange the calling of Banns. It is your responsibility to make sure that your banns are read in other parish(es), you will need to give us the Banns Certificate (given to you by the other parish) at least a fortnight before your wedding to prove this has been done.

Neither of your live in the Parish

If neither of you currently live in the parish, you can still qualify to get married in St John's if you can meet any one of the following criteria:

- One of you was baptised in the parish.
- One of you was prepared for confirmation in the parish.
- One of you has lived within the parish for at least six months.
- One of you has (or will by the time you are married) regularly attended normal church services for at least six months.

Or

- One of your parents lived within the parish for at least six months after you were born.
- One of your parents regularly attended St John's for at least six months.
- One of your parents was married in the parish.

Or

- One of your grandparents was married in the parish.

Evidence of any connection will need to be shown to the parish priest. If you don't qualify for a historical connection and aren't able to attend St John's for six months before your wedding, you may be able to be married under a Special Licence.

Applying for a Special License

We advise you to speak to the Rector for more information on this option. If it is suitable, you will then need to arrange an appointment to meet with the Bishop's Surrogate, they are responsible for issuing the license.

Marriage in Church after divorce

If you have been married before, the rector will ask how your previous marriage ended and the needs and concerns of any children from that relationship. You can be married under the same qualifications as above, but we will also need a copy of your Decree Absolute.

If you are not members of the Church of England

People of all faiths have the right to be married at their parish church. If one of you belongs to another faith, which is not Christian, then it may still be possible for you to get married

at St John's, but you will need to have a Christian order of service.

If one of you is not British or does not live in England

You may need to apply for a special licence to marry at St John's.

Who will take our service?

The Rector normally officiates at weddings at St John's. He is also assisted by retired clergy who officiate when he is away. If you have a friend or family member who has Permission To Officiate in the Church of England they may be allowed to take your wedding service, with the rector's permission.

Which form of service should we have?

Most wedding ceremonies use the '2001 Common Worship' form of the service. Whilst there are other authorised forms, Common Worship is our recommendation. When you meet with the parish priest to discuss the service they will show you the Common Worship Marriage service.

How long will the Service last?

Usually a wedding service will last between 30 and 45 minutes, but this depends on how many readings and hymns you choose to include. It is extremely important that you arrive on time for the wedding service. If your service doesn't start on time, it might be necessary to reduce part of the service to ensure it doesn't run into another service.

When will our 'Banns' be read?

For those living in the Parish, Banns of Marriage will normally be published for 3 consecutive weeks at the 10am Service at St Johns, 2 months before your wedding. Our Parish Office can advise you of the dates for reading your banns when your

wedding date has been set. You are not obliged to attend the reading of the banns but on these occasions everyone in the church will be praying for you and it can be a very special and moving experience.

Does the bride have to be ‘given away’?

There is technically no requirement for the bride to be given away, nor for this to be done by her father, although this is traditionally something that a bride wishes to include.

Will there be a rehearsal in church?

Yes. In the week before the wedding there will be a full rehearsal for the bride, bridegroom, best man, bridesmaids, and any others with an active role in the service. This rehearsal should be arranged directly with the priest who is marrying you. The priest will also meet you a few weeks before the wedding to finalise the service arrangements with you.

Do we have to have witnesses?

Yes, you must have two witnesses who are over the age of 18 have a good understanding of English. They will be required to sign the legal marriage document along with the bride and bridegroom and the officiating priest. All signatures need to be legible, and the bride will sign using her maiden name.

Do we need ushers?

Ushers will help to look after your guests. Having ushers is a good way of involving family and friends in your special day. They are usually needed to give out your orders of service, show people to their seats and generally help. After the service, they check to ensure cameras and handbags haven't

been left in the church.

What music can I have?

We have facilities in church to play music from our church speakers in addition to having the organ played. It is usual to have two or three hymns but you can have up to four or even none at all. If you're not sure about hymns, we've included some ideas at the end of this document. It is best to discuss your detailed requirements for music with the priest who will lead your service. This must be done in good time before your wedding and before your orders of service are printed. You may also provide your own musicians for the service if you would prefer.

Can we have Bell Ringers?

St John's bell ringers often take part in weddings. Please let us know at least six weeks before your wedding as most bell ringers have full time jobs and other commitments.

Can we make a video recording of our wedding?

Yes, but bear in mind that if you're providing your own musicians you will need to negotiate with them separately regarding their permission and any additional fee. The videographer should arrive in good time before the wedding and discuss with the priest where best to stand. Video camera operators are asked to ensure minimum intrusion into the service. We do not however allow the use of additional video lighting. The church is not dark and this should not present an issue for your videographer.

Can photographs be taken during the service?

Your wedding is a special moment within your lives and we appreciate that your friends and family will want to record it. However, flashes, clicking of cameras and moving around to

get the perfect picture is very distracting. In order that the service in church flows freely without too much intrusion, please tell photographers that during the service itself no flash photography is allowed (except when the bride arrives inside the church, at the signing of the marriage document, and as the couple finally walk down the aisle). Your official photographer may take non-flash pictures, but we ask that they arrive half an hour before the service to speak to the priest and agree where photographs are allowed without distracting from the service.

What time should the bride, groom and ushers arrive?

The bridegroom and best man should arrive at least half an hour before the service is due to start. The ushers will need to arrive in good time to prepare before the guests start to arrive—typically this will be 45 mins before. The bridesmaids and page boys should arrive about 10 to 15 mins before the service—this will also allow your photographer to take pictures before the service is due to start. If you have asked guests to do a reading or prayers, please ask them to arrive about 15 mins before the service and make themselves known to the priest when they arrive.

Sat nav systems

If your guests are using satellite navigation systems, the post code of the church car park is : GU4 7AA

Do we need an order of service?

Yes, but this does not need to be elaborate or expensive unless you wish to make it so. The order of service will include details of the music and readings as well as the words of hymns and responses to prayers. It is usual to pick two or three hymns, but you can have up to four or even none at all.

In order to comply with copyright laws, these should be selected from the hymn books within the church. If you wish to select other hymns, please talk to us and we will be happy to advise you.

Please note that the number of verses in hymns, the words and even tunes can vary on the internet, so it will be worth checking. You will also need to pick two readings, one of which must be from the Bible. The details of hymns, readings and words of the service need to be finalised and agreed in good time, at least three weeks before your wedding and before your orders of service are printed. It is helpful to include extra copies of your order of service for the priest and organist.

Is parking available?

We have a church car park outside the church centre.

Can our guests throw confetti?

We allow confetti to be thrown on the church path as long as the confetti is bio-degradable such as rice or rose petals other types are hard to sweep up.

Do we get a marriage certificate on the day?

From 4th May 2021 the legal Marriage Certificates are no longer given to the couple of the day. We will give you a St John's Certificate of Marriage (not a legal document) to take away with you as a memento of the day. You will need to order your legal document from Surrey County Council by visiting <https://surreycc.gov.uk/registration> after your wedding day.

What about flowers and candles?

You are welcome to provide your own flowers for your wedding. However, during Advent and Lent, all flowers must

be removed before the following Sunday. Please ask for more details if you are unsure. Please note, we do not permit the use of candles within flower arrangements.

Change of address or other personal details

If there are any changes of address or other personal details relating to the information given for your banns before the wedding, these must be notified to the Parish Office.

How much does it all cost and when do we pay?

The overall cost of the wedding is up to you! There are statutory (legal) fees set out by the Church of England plus additional fees charged by the Parish for our services provided, e.g. for heating during the winter months. We will be happy to talk you through this in detail when you book your wedding.

FEES FOR WEDDINGS IN A PARISH CHURCH

From 1st January 2024

Statutory Fees:

Banns	£36.00
Marriage Service Fee	£531.00
Total	£567.00

Please note, the above may be subject to the annual slight increase by the Church of England. Please contact the Parish Office for further details.

St John's wedding fees

These fees are updated every year and are dependant on what you would like on the day.

Invoices are normally sent out 4 months prior to the wedding and should be paid in full before the Banns are read in St. John's.

Verger	£45
Church heating (Oct – June)	£60
Organist without video	£90
Organist with video	£180
Church bells	£140
Video license to film wedding in church	£150
Suggested donation towards church running costs	£50

Fees for publication of Banns for Weddings

Elsewhere:

Publication (PCC) £ 36.00

Banns Certificate £ 18.00

Total £ 54.0

Payments are payable to:

By BACS

Sort Code: 30 93 74

Account: 43301960

Account Name: Merrow PCC

It's nearly time to call your banns – an ID checklist for couples and churches



Congratulations! It's nearly time to call your banns. To make sure everything is legal, all couples wishing to be married in the Church of England by banns must provide original identification documents to the vicar who'll be publishing the banns. We'll also need to see proof of your current address.



Proof of UK/Irish Nationality or Settled Status for EU Nationals

Option 1 – Passport, Certificate of Registration/Naturalisation/Evidence of Status

a valid (current) UK / Irish passport;

- OR** Certificate of Registration/Certificate of Naturalisation as a British Citizen from the Secretary of State plus proof of current use of name;
- OR** For those with Settled or Pre-Settled Status under the EU Settlement Scheme: A Share Code issued from www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status. This code is valid for 30 days. Or an email to our Church Office from the church where the wedding will take place, confirming they have checked your status.

If both of you can show us one of these documents, the only other thing we need is evidence of your current address. If not, you need to bring the documents described below.

Option 2 – for anyone without a passport and born before 01/01/1983

a UK birth certificate

- AND** proof of current use of name (see list below)

Option 3 – for anyone without a passport and born on or after 01/01/1983

a full UK birth certificate (i.e. a birth certificate that shows parents' full names)

- AND** proof that one parent was a British National or proof that they had indefinite leave to remain in the UK at the time of the person's birth (e.g. parent's UK birth certificate from before 01/01/1983)
- AND** [if relying on the father as the British National] the parents' marriage certificate
- AND** proof of current use of name (see list below)

Evidence of current address and current use of name

Please bring **one** of the following with your name and current address on it

- Utility bill (from last 3 months)
- Bank or Building Society statement (from last 1 month)
- Council Tax bill (from last 12 months)
- Mortgage Statement (from last 12 months)
- Current Residential Tenancy Agreement;
- Valid full UK Driving Licence or provisional Driving Licence.



Change of name

If either of you has changed your name from that shown on any of the above documentation, you need to provide evidence of the change (e.g. deed poll, previous marriage certificate, decree absolute).

St John the Evangelist, Merrow – Banns of Marriage and Wedding Application form

(Please complete fully in BLOCK CAPITALS for marriages at St John's. For marriages elsewhere please fill in white boxes only)

	Full Name	DOB and Age at Proposed date of Wedding	Condition (single, widow, previous marriage dissolved)	Rank, Profession or Occupation	Place of Residence (How long have you lived there)	Father's full name	Father's profession or occupation If retired add: (retired)
Man							
Woman							
	Telephone number	Email address	Nationality	Your Parish Church (ACNY)	Are you related by marriage	At which Church do you wish to marry?	
Man							
Woman							
Are you related or connected by marriage? If so how?		At which Church do you wish to marry?		At what date and time?		Future address?	
I hereby certify that, to the best of my belief, these answers are correct							
Signature (man)							
Signature (woman)							

WEDDING MUSIC

Music should be chosen for the Entry of the Bride, the signing of the marriage document, and the exit of the Bride and Bridegroom. Here are a few ideas :

Title	Composer
Arrival of the Queen of Sheba	Handel
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring	J.S. Bach
Toccatina and Fugue in D minor	J.S. Bach
Ave Maria	Schubert
Wedding March	Mendelssohn

Popular Wedding Hymns

Alleluia, sing to Jesus

And did those feet
(Jerusalem)

At the name of Jesus

Be still for the
presence of the Lord

Be thou my vision, O
Lord of my heart

Guide me, O thou
great Redeemer

How great thou art

I cannot tell
(Londonderry Air /
Danny Boy)

Lead us, heavenly

Father, lead us

Bind us together, Lord	Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy
Come down, O Love divine	Love divine, all loves excelling
Dear Lord and Father of mankind	O Jesus, I have promised
Father, hear the prayer we offer	O worship the King Praise my soul, the King of heaven
For the beauty of the earth	Seek ye first the kingdom of God
Give me joy in my heart (sing Hosanna)	Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord
Glorious things of thee are spoken	The King of love, my Shepherd is

Wedding Checklist

As soon as possible

- Arrange to meet the rector and book the church 12—16 Weeks before the wedding
- Arrange for your banns to be read at other churches (if necessary)
- If you're divorced, provide us with your Decree Absolute
- Let us know if you would like bells

4 Weeks before the wedding

- Ask the priest to check your draft order of service

- Pay the wedding fees
- Ask your florist to contact the flower team.
- Give the banns certificate to the church office

2 Weeks before the wedding

- Check the date for your rehearsal

1 Week before the wedding

- Bring service sheets to the church

USEFUL CONTACTS

Rector

The Rev'd Tim Clifford Hill

Email: rector@saintjohns.org.uk

Tel: 01483 951649

Parish Office

Harry Talboys

Email : office@saintjohns.org.uk

Tel: 01483 454621

Bellringers

Jane Farquharson

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