

MARRIAGE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- What should I do first to arrange a wedding in Ruabon Parish Church or Pen-y-lan Church?
 - Talk to the vicar. The vicar can be contacted on 01978 810176. The enquiry should come from the couple not someone acting on their behalf. You should do this before establishing dates or booking reception venues. The vicar has considerable experience of weddings and may be able to advise you on far more than the marriage service in church.

- Where can I be married? Could I choose any church?
 - If both parties to be married are over 18 years of age, both are British citizens, and neither has been married before, you have a right to be married in Ruabon Parish Church or All Saints' Church, Pen-y-lan if you are able to tick one or more of the boxes below:
 - One of you is resident in Ruabon parish
 - One of you has lived in Ruabon parish for at least 6 months at some point
 - One of you was baptised or confirmed in the churches mentioned above
 - One of you has parents who live, or have lived for 6 months, in Ruabon parish
 - One of you has parents or grandparents who were married Ruabon Parish Church or All Saints' Church, Pen-y-lan
 - You are, or have recently, habitually attended public worship for a period of at least 6 months in Ruabon Parish Church or All Saints' Church, Pen-y-lan
 - One of you habitually attends public worship in the churches mentioned above for at least 6 months in the year leading up to your marriage
 - If you want to get married in Ruabon Parish Church or All Saints', Pen-y-lan, but are unable to fulfil the qualifying conditions above, you will need to talk to the vicar. 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! However, remember that the wedding ceremony in church has a distinctively Christian character and assumes that you accept the Christian understanding of marriage.

- Do I need to be baptised?
 - Baptism is the normal rite through which a person becomes a Christian. The church hopes that everyone who believes in Jesus Christ will be baptised but it is not a pre-condition for marriage in the Church in Wales.

- 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 the vicar.
- The Church in Wales believes that God not only loves us, but he promises he will always love us. Marriage is meant to be a reflection of that and is based on promises between a man and a woman - of lifelong commitment in love and faithfulness.
- Whilst passionately believing in this kind of relationship the Church in Wales also realises that marriages do break down and does offer the possibility of a second marriage in church under certain circumstances and at the discretion of the vicar.

- When may we marry?

- The day and time of the service is decided in consultation with the vicar. It must be between 8am and 6pm and not clash with other Church services. Saturday weddings are usually arranged at 11am, 1pm or 3pm. There are no weddings during Holy Week, the church season covering the week leading up to Easter. Weddings in the week before and after Christmas are only possible in special circumstances.
- Have you considered a day other than Saturday? It often reduces costs at the reception venue. Easter Monday and May Day Bank Holidays are worth considering.

- How much will it cost?

- The fees for a marriage cover the publication of the banns, the marriage service, a certificate of marriage, the use of the church building and the advice and support of the vicar throughout the preparations. In January 2010, the basic fees in Ruabon and Pen-y-lan churches were £420. There are additional fees for the organist (£50), choir (Ruabon £120), and bell-ringers (Ruabon £80).

- Can we have a video recording of the service?

- You will need to ask permission from the vicar. There will be a charge (January 2010 - £50), but remember your video is likely to include the performances of the choir, organist, and bell ringers who are entitled to payment. The videographer will need a special licence for recording a marriage service in church. Copyright issues also arise: for further information, go to <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/downloads/litcopy.rtf>

- 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 which will involved an extra charge and a special application form.

- 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 on three Sundays during the twelve weeks before the wedding.

- 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. The vicar offers an open invitation as an experienced and neutral third party to talk about some of the issues which can arise.

- Will there be a rehearsal for the ceremony?

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

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

- Yes. At the discretion of the vicar. 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. The vicar will help you to apply for this.

- Can we renew our vows?

- Many couple like to come back to church to renew their vows after a number of years. The vicar will design the service to meet your needs.

- Can we be involved in planning the service?

- Yes. The vicar will discuss with you the arrangements for the service and help you decide on appropriate music and readings. Some parts of the marriage service are set in law and cannot be changed but there is considerable scope for personalisation of the service. It is better to have the discussion first and work in partnership rather than trawl the internet
You may wish to involve family or friends in the service: e.g. in doing a reading or playing a musical instrument.

- o The usual Bible readings are:

(Optional) Genesis 1.26-28,31a 1 Corinthians 13. 1-7 & Matthew 19.4-6 or John 15. 9-12

But you might consider choosing one of these:

A Journey

- Ruth 1. 1 6- 1 8 Where you go, I will go
- Ephesians 3.14-19 May Christ dwell in your hearts
- Luke 12,22-31 Do not worry about your life
- Luke 12. 32-34 Simple treasure

B Love

- Song of Songs 2. 8-14 My love, my fair one
- Song of Songs 8.6-7 Many waters cannot quench love
- Colossians 3. 12-17 Love which binds together
- 1 John 4. 7-16 Love is from God
- Luke 7. 36-38 Love and gratitude

C Joy

- Philippians 4. 4-9 Joyful in God
- John 2. 1-11 A wedding feast

D Companionship

- Ecclesiastes 4. 9-12 Two have a good reward in love
- Romans 12. 4-13 Sharing in love
- Ephesians 4. 1-6 The bond of peace
- Mark 10.6-9, 13-16 The new home

E God

- Genesis I. 26-29a, 31a Made in God's image
- Jeremiah 31. 31-34 I their God, they my people
- Philippians 1. 9-11 Love that overflows
- John 15. 1-8 Bearing fruit

F Faith

- Ecclesiastes 3.1-8 A time for everything
- 1 John 3.18-24 Love in truth and action
- Revelation 19.6-19 The celebratory feast
- Matthew 5.2-11 The true blessed
- Matthew 7.21,24-27 Hearing and doing

G Family

- Genesis 12.1-3 The families of the earth
- Ephesians 3.14-19 Every family in heaven & earth
- Mark 10.6-9,13-16 What God has joined together

It is also possible to have one suitable reading, perhaps poetry, from another source.

- o Popular Processional Music for the Arrival of the Bride and the Departure of the new Husband and Wife

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| ▪ The Bridal March (Wagner) | ▪ Toccata (Widor) |
| ▪ The Wedding March (Mendelssohn) | ▪ Trumpet Tune (Purcell) |
| ▪ Canon (Pachelbel) | ▪ Trumpet Voluntary (Clarke) |
| ▪ Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (Bach) | ▪ Air from the Water Music (Handel) |
| ▪ Arrival of the Queen of Sheba (Handel) | ▪ Hornpipe from the Water Music (Handel) |
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- Popular Hymns include:
 - All Things Bright and Beautiful
 - Amazing Grace
 - Bind Us Together Lord
 - 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 Jesus, I have promised
 - O praise ye the Lord
 - Praise my Soul the King of Heaven
 - The King of Love my Shepherd is

If you have any further queries regarding marriage in church, please ring the Vicar on 01978 810176.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING A WEDDING

Preparation for a wedding involves a lot of planning and considerable costs but it need not cost the astronomical sums that we often read about in the press and popular magazines.

Here are some things to think about if you are working to a small budget:

Establish a budget at the start and decide on which things are absolute priorities.

Little extras add up, so don't sign a contract unless you've read the small print. For instance don't commit to a marquee until you find out what the price includes. Lighting, electricity, a dance floor, toilets and heating could significantly increase your costs.

Most couples exceed their budget by up to 10%, so set aside a contingency fund. Confirm all arrangements in writing to prevent any hidden extra charges. Keep track of how much you're spending (try an online budget planner or a simple Excel spreadsheet).

Guests – it's great to invite everyone you've ever met but of food and drink costs a lot. You can always invite people to the evening do rather than the actual wedding, and have a pay bar in the evening.

Put a maximum one bottle of red wine and one of white wine on each table and let people go to the bar after that. If you know your guests are mainly beer drinkers, give them a voucher each for the first drink.

Don't just offer expensive booze like champagne and wine, especially on a hot summer day. Offer alternatives such as water and juice, and consider Buck's Fizz or a signature champagne cocktail named after bride and groom.

Your choice of venue also has a big effect on your budget. Do shop around and ask others what their experience has been. The flashiest venues don't always provide the best service and they're bound to be more expensive. If you can hold the wedding reception in a marquee in your parents' back garden and buy your own food and drink in, you will save significantly.

Getting married "off peak" such as mid-week or in the winter can get you better deals from venues and caterers.

Wedding dress - You could try a vintage dress, or make your own. For an informal ceremony, consider an elegant suit or cocktail dress. If you have bridesmaids, you could get cocktail dresses instead of specific bridesmaids' dresses. The label "bridal wear" carries a premium price tag and you'll never wear it again!

Invitations –you must know someone who can create something on the computer and undercut the printers by hundreds of pounds. You can also send save-the-date emails.

Flowers - Wedding bouquets can cost a bundle. To save money, choose in-season blooms and scale down the bouquet. Ask the vicar if there is anyone at the church who will arrange flowers at a fraction of the cost of local florists. If there's another wedding at your venue on the day, speak to the other couple about sharing arrangements. If you can agree on colour and style, you could both save hundreds of pounds.

Pony and traps and classic cars look great, but the guests will already be inside the venue and won't witness your arrival so stick to cheap (or free) transport.

Entertainment - A solo performer will cost less than a band or just get a DJ.

Photography - Professionals can cost a fortune, so shop around and ask those who've been married recently about their experiences. Consider a talented friend or relative to snap away on the day - but make sure they won't suddenly pass out after one drink too many and make sure they're up to the job, not just of taking pictures, but of marshalling the guests. This is one memento that matters.

Video - how many times are you really going to watch it?

Remember that the vicar has officiated at lots of weddings and can offer advice far beyond the service in church.