

GETTING MARRIED AT ST PETER & ST PAUL SEAL



A guide to planning your wedding

CHECKLIST

1. Arrange Banns
 - at Seal
 - at partner's church
2. Contact organist and flower arranger
3. Contact Priest again at least three months before the service
4. Arrange printing of service sheet if needed
5. Fix Rehearsal date and time
6. Arrange video licence if needed
 - return to priest three weeks before the wedding
7. Arrange payment of fees to priest at least two weeks before the wedding
8. Choose Ushers – at least two
9. Choose Witnesses – two adults

USEFUL CONTACTS

Priest in Charge The Revd. Anne Le Bas 01732 762955
annelebas@dsl.pipex.com

Organist Daniel Eaton 07977 157753
danieleaton30@hotmail.co.uk

Flower Arrangers Pat Walkling & Jane Saunders 01732 761473

WEBSITES

www.sealpeterandpaul.com

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/lifechanges>

<http://www.facultyoffice.org.uk>

<http://www.weddingguide.co.uk>

Seal church website
The Church of
England's website.
Legal information
General information

GETTING MARRIED AT SEAL

Preparing for a wedding isn't simple - you probably don't need me to tell you that!

There are many questions to be asked and decisions to be made. You will probably have moments when you wonder whether you are ready for this commitment and whether you are making the right move. It is important and healthy to ask these questions, and inevitable that you will experience doubt and anxiety. I am always happy to listen if you need someone to talk to in confidence. Feel free to contact me at the number listed on the inside front cover.

But often it is the multitude of small worries which crowd your mind as the big day looms closer - whether the bridesmaids' dresses will match the flowers, who will stand where...

I hope that this booklet will help to answer these practical questions as you work your way through the process of planning your wedding.

The Revd. Anne Le Bas

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THE FIRST STEPS

CAN I BE MARRIED AT SEAL?

This is the first question you must ask. There are legal restrictions on where you can get married. Most of these aren't church rules, but are laid out by the state.

To be married at Seal;

Either

At least one of you must live within the parish boundaries. I will tell you where these are when you first enquire about getting married.

Or

At least one of you must be on our electoral roll. This is the church membership roll, and to join it you must worship with us regularly – at least once a month - for six months. If you meet these criteria I can marry you after calling your banns (see below).

Or

You have a “qualifying connection” as defined by the Marriage Act which comes into force on Oct 1st 2008. This means that you were baptised or confirmed in the parish, or that you or your parents have lived here for at least 6 months or worshipped regularly here for 6 months at some point, or that your parents or grandparents were married here. Evidence may be required to support these qualifications or you may be required to make a sworn statement.

If you can't meet these criteria, you **may** be able to be married by “Special licence”, which is granted by the Archbishop of Canterbury . However this licence costs more and is more complicated to arrange. Licences are only granted under certain conditions. You will need to contact me to discuss this.

WHAT IF I HAVE BEEN MARRIED BEFORE?

Under certain circumstances I will conduct marriages of those who have been divorced. However, the issue of re-marriage is a complex and delicate one, affecting not only you but also the wider

community, especially the members of your first family, so I will need to talk carefully to you both about this. The final decision rests with me.

The process I will follow is this;

When you first phone to ask about getting married, I will send you a letter outlining broadly the kinds of issues I will need to talk and think about before I make the decision. I won't, for example, conduct a wedding if the present relationship was the cause of the break up of the former marriage.

If you feel you want to take things further you should then contact me to arrange a meeting, so that I can talk with you about both your former and your current relationships.

After I have met you I will consider whether I feel it is appropriate for the marriage to take place in church, and will let you know my decision.

Anything you say to me will be treated in the strictest confidence.

HOW DO I BOOK A WEDDING?

Please contact me to arrange a time when you can come to book the wedding as soon as you know you want to get married. Don't book anything else, like the reception venue until you have spoken to me – I may not be able to manage the date you want! This interview will normally take place at the Vicarage.

BANNS

“Calling the banns” is a legal requirement if you are to be married in the Church of England. I read out your names on three Sundays and announce that you are planning to get married. This gives people in the local community a chance to object if they know of a reason why you can't legally marry. (If you marry in a registry office, your names would be displayed for three weeks before the wedding for the same reason).

I will read your banns on the first three Sundays of the month before the wedding. I will tell you the dates of the banns. You don't have to be in church to hear them, although a lot of couples like to be there.

If one of you lives in another parish, you must have your banns read there as well. Banns must be read during the three months before the wedding. Please contact the other church in good time so that they can arrange this. When the banns have been called in the other church, they will give you a certificate (cost £30) which you must bring to me.

This is **your responsibility. I can't marry you if I have not seen this certificate** and it is something that is often overlooked and causes panic at the last minute.

WHAT IF MY PARTNER ISN'T CHURCH OF ENGLAND?

If your partner is, for example, a Roman Catholic or a Methodist, or of another faith, their banns must still be read in their local CHURCH OF ENGLAND church. This is a purely legal requirement.

If you would like a minister from another denomination to take part in the ceremony, I will be happy to discuss this. For legal reasons, however, a Church of England minister must conduct the exchange of vows.

PAYING FOR THE WEDDING

Wedding fees are made up of a number of charges. There is a minister's fee which goes into the central funds of the Church of England from which clergy are paid. I don't get paid extra for conducting weddings.

There are also fees payable for the organist, bells, choir and vergers. I will give you details of the fees when you book the wedding, but they will go up slightly on 1st January each year and the fee you pay will be the fee at the time of the wedding, not at the time of booking.

Because the fees are divided between several people, I ask you to pay in cash, in small denomination notes. Please contact me to arrange payment **at least two weeks** before the wedding. I will give you a receipt.

PLANNING THE SERVICE

A wedding isn't just a personal celebration; it is also a legal ceremony, marking a change in your legal status. Because of this, there are rules made by the government about how the service is conducted, who conducts it, where, and what is said within it.

However, within those limits I can work with you to plan a service which will be special for you. Ultimately the form the service takes is at my discretion, but I like to be flexible and I will enjoy hearing your ideas and helping you plan. For example, the law says that you can't write your own vows, but you can write your own prayers, choose readings or poems, and choose the music. So, don't be afraid to ask if there is something special you would like.

I will normally want to see you again about three months before the wedding to help you prepare for the service, both practically and emotionally. We don't run a formal marriage preparation course at Seal, but I will give you some literature to take away to help you think about your relationship and the commitment you will be making when you get married.

WHAT IS THE SERVICE LIKE?

There are two different types of service which I can use. One uses modern words and the other uses older traditional words. At the end of this booklet, you will find extracts from each service to help you decide (Appendix 1). I will be happy to talk to you about the ways in which they differ.

You can access the texts of the services, and some additional material at the links below.

The Marriage service in modern language.

www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/texts/marriage/marriage.html

The Marriage service in traditional language

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/1928/texts/marriage.html>

Additional material

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/texts/marriage/marriagefront.html>

Whichever service you choose will last about 40 minutes, and will contain not only the legal exchange of vows, but also a Bible reading, prayers, a blessing, a short talk and the signing of the registers.

SERVICE SHEETS

You don't have to print your own orders of service. However, if you choose to, please discuss the format with me before it is printed so that I can make sure that it is correct. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have any necessary copyright permission for the service sheets, but we do have a Christian Copyright licence which covers the words of many hymns. You will need to provide ten copies of the service sheet for the priest, organist and choir. Please bring these copies to the rehearsal.

HYMNS AND WEDDING MUSIC

The organist, Daniel Eaton, is always happy to discuss your choice of music. Please make it a priority to contact him early in the process of planning your wedding, as the process of choosing and preparing the music can take some time. His phone number is listed on the inside front cover of this booklet.

There are normally two or three hymns during the service. One hymn is near the beginning, one before the prayers and the third during the signing of the registers. You can choose, in place of the third hymn, to have a piece of music, or a song sung by the choir or a soloist. A list of suggested hymns is printed below.

You can use our hymnbooks rather than printing a service sheet with the words of the hymns but please make sure that the hymn you want is included!

You will need to choose music to be played for the arrival of the bride and for the wedding procession at the end. Please talk to the organist about this.

WEDDING HYMNS

Some of the most popular hymns in the hymnbooks normally used in Seal are listed below, but please don't feel that you have to restrict yourself to these. You are welcome to borrow our hymnbooks to help you choose.

Ancient and Modern (New Standard)

- 203 O praise ye the Lord! Praise him in the height
- 101 O worship the King all glorious above
- 104 For the beauty of the earth
- 115 Dear Lord and Father of mankind
- 116 All things bright and beautiful
- 126 The King of love my shepherd is
- 131 Love Divine, all loves excelling
- 133 Immortal love
- 154 Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost
- 156 Come down, O love divine
- 192 Praise my soul, the King of heaven
- 200 Fill thou my life, O Lord my God
- 202 Let all the world in every corner sing
- 205 Now thank we all our God
- 214 Guide me O thou great Redeemer
- 224 Lead us heavenly Father
- 230 O for a heart to praise my God
- 235 O Jesus, I have promised
- 249 Take my life
- 280 O perfect love
- 294 And did those feet in ancient time
- 336 All my hope on God is founded
- 343 Be thou my vision
- 356 Father, Lord of all Creation

- 365 God is love; let heaven adore him
- 378 Jesus, good above all other
- 391 Lord Jesus Christ, you have come to us
- 394 Lord of all hopefulness
- 415 Praise and thanksgiving
- 422 Tell out my soul
- 426 The Lord's my shepherd
- 459 Give me joy in my heart (sing hosanna)
- 516 This day God gives me strength of high heaven

Hymns Old and New (New Anglican Edition)

- 15 All my hope on God is founded
- 46 At the name of Jesus
- 53 Be still for the presence of the Lord, the holy one, is here
- 60 Bind us together, Lord
- 73 Brother, sister, let me serve you
- 121 Father I place into your hands the things that I can't do
- 137 For the beauty of the earth
- 169 God is love, his the care
- 170 God is love, let heav'n adore him
- 186 Great is thy faithfulness
- 310 Lord for the years your love has kept and guided
- 328 Make me a channel of your peace
- 337 Morning has broken
- 380 O Lord my God, when I, in awesome wonder

FLOWERS

Our flower arrangers will be happy to decorate the church for your wedding, and will discuss with you the cost of this. Other flower arrangers (amateur or professional) **will only be allowed to decorate the church with my permission**, having **read and signed** an agreement about how the church can be decorated. Please contact our flower arrangers, even if you intend to use an outside arranger, as they will be able to give advice about arranging flowers in our church. This may seem fussy, but St Peter and St Paul is a Grade I listed building, and some of the ancient fittings have been damaged in the past by ill-placed flower arrangements marking the woodwork or the brass plaques on the floor. Flowers arranged without my permission may be removed.

WITNESSES

You will need two witnesses to sign the registers at your wedding. They can be any two adults who are present, but are often members of the family. The registers are signed on the altar at the end of the service.

USHERS

You will need to have at least two ushers at the wedding. They should be in the church half an hour before the wedding and introduce themselves to me as soon as they arrive, so that I can tell them what they need to do. Broadly speaking, their jobs are to give out service sheets and hymnbooks and to direct people to their seats as they arrive. It is a great help if they can also collect books and clear up at the end of the service.

PHOTOGRAPHS

I want you and your guests to be able to enjoy your wedding without distractions. For this reason, I only allow your official photographer to take photos during the service, without flash, except at the signing of the registers, which usually happens at the altar near the end of the service. At this point your official photographer will be able to come up to the altar to take some pictures. Photographs can be taken as you enter and leave the church, and of course, in the churchyard after the service. If the weather is bad it may be possible for some photographs to be taken inside the church after the service, but this will depend on whether the church needs to be prepared for another wedding

VIDEOS

Copyright rules make the video recording of weddings a complicated business. There is blanket permission granted for the recording of the words of the service, providing you undertake to observe the

conditions that are set out in the video application form at the end of this booklet. (Appendix 2)

However, the copyright of the hymns and music resides with the publishers of that music for seventy years after the death of the author. Older, traditional hymns are often out of copyright, but many newer ones aren't. It is **your responsibility** to make sure that you are legally covered. We have a copyright licence which covers many popular hymns. I can advise you on whether those you have chosen are covered. If you do want to video your wedding you must complete the form which you will find in this booklet and return it to me. The fees for the organist and choir will be doubled if the service is videotaped and there are conditions which must be complied with.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE HAVE BOOKED THE WEDDING?

Please keep in touch with me as you make plans. If you have any questions please ask them as soon as you can, rather than leaving them to the last minute. In any case, please contact me about three months before the wedding so that we can meet to talk about the wedding.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Seal is part of a group of churches in the Sevenoaks area which has got together to arrange a one-day marriage preparation session, following a course called "Growing Together". I will give you more details and a booking form when I book your wedding. You don't have to take part, but we hope you will! The course will help you to see beyond the wedding day and think through some of the issues which can make a real difference to their lives together.

REHEARSAL

I will make an appointment with you for a wedding rehearsal, which will take place at some mutually convenient time in the few days before the wedding. The bride and groom are of course essential at the rehearsal, but it is helpful if anyone else who is involved in the

ceremony can be there. This would include the best man, the bridesmaids, ushers and whoever is giving the bride away. Incidentally, the practice of 'giving away the bride' is optional. It is up to the bride whether she wishes to be given away, and by whom. It need not be her father who does this. She can choose anyone, male or female, who she feels has played an important part in her life. The groom can also be given away if the couple wishes. It may help to think of this part of the ceremony as the moment when each partner's family of origin releases them to begin a new life together.

ON THE DAY

I hope your wedding day will be one to remember - for all the right reasons! The most important people on that day are the two of you, so try to relax and let others take as much of the strain as possible. The details of the service will be explained at the rehearsal, and I will talk you through the ceremony on the day. You don't have to learn any words or remember anything. However, there are some things you can do which will help.

BE ON TIME

Allow plenty of time for getting to church The photographer is likely to want to take pictures of the groom before the wedding so remember to allow time for that.

There is a belief that it is traditional for the bride to be late. In fact, though, it just makes everyone nervous - so don't do it if you can help it. Instead, please try to arrive five minutes early. This will allow time for unhurried photographs of you arriving, rather than a last minute dash. If you are early, don't let your driver persuade you to go once around the block. It is much better to stop the car at the church and wait there. There might be a traffic jam around the block!

ONE FOR THE ROAD?

I can't go ahead with your wedding if you are drunk. This is because you can't give consent unless you are in control of yourself. One

drink to relax you is fine, but a best man who fills you full of Dutch courage in the pub isn't doing you any favours.

WHAT IF THINGS GO WRONG?

No wedding goes like clockwork. Brides forget their flowers, guests get lost, and people fluff their lines. This is normal. It isn't the end of the world. I am practised at smoothing things out and keeping calm while we do so.

If the legal requirements have been met - banns called etc. - and if the bride and groom arrive (and are sober - see above!), the wedding will go ahead and there is no reason why it should not be a joyful occasion. Ultimately it is the love and the commitment between you which makes the day, not whether every detail goes to plan, and many of the things which have kept you awake at night will slip by without you even noticing them. So please, try not to worry too much.

Keep this booklet handy. Ask me anything which it doesn't cover, and don't hesitate to get in touch if you need me, either before or after the wedding.

A prayer for you to use as you prepare for your wedding

O God, creator and lover of the world, we offer to you our lives, our words and deeds, our hopes and fears, and our love for each other.

Accept us as we are.

Make us what we shall be.

And by the power of your Spirit enable us to be a sign of your presence in the world;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

(Jim Cotter)

APPENDIX 1

Some extracts are printed below from the two different services I can use for your wedding. I have to use one or the other in its entirety. I can't "pick and mix"

COMMON WORSHIP (2000)

Priest.

N, will you take N to be your wife? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

Answer. I will.

(The bride is asked the same questions, and then both bridegroom and bride in turn make the following vows)

I N, take you, N, to be my wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward; for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy law; In the presence of God I make this vow.

The Exchange of Rings

Priest

Heavenly Father, by your blessing, let these rings be to N and N a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, to remind them of the vow and covenant which they have made this day; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Groom

I give you this ring as a sign of our marriage.
With my body I honour you, all that I am I give to you and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(If there are two rings the bride says the same words as the groom. If there is one ring she replies "I receive this ring as a sign of our marriage... etc)

Priest

In the presence of God and before this congregation, N and N have given their consent and made their marriage vows to each other. They have declared their marriage by the joining of hands and by the giving and receiving of rings. I therefore proclaim that they are husband and wife.

Those whom God has joined together, let no one put asunder.

The Blessing

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, for you have created joy and gladness, pleasure and delight, love, peace and fellowship. Pour out the abundance of your blessing upon N and N in their new life together. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts and a crown upon their heads.

Bless them in their work and in their companionship; awake and asleep, in joy and in sorrow, in life and in death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that banquet where your saints feast forever in your heavenly home. We ask this through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully grant you the riches of his grace, that you may please him both in body and soul, and living together in faith and love, may receive the blessings of eternal life. Amen.

THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY, SERIES ONE (1966)

This service is very similar to that of the Book of Common Prayer, which dates from the seventeenth century.

Priest

N, wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour, and keep her, in sickness and in health;

and forsaking all other, keep thee only unto her, so long .as ye both shall live?

Answer I Will

(The bride is asked the same question)

Groom

I, N, take thee, N, to my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth.

(The bride's vows are the same)

The Giving of the Ring

Groom

With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and all my worldly goods with thee I share; In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

(There is officially, no provision made for the bride to give the groom a ring. However, if you want to do this then the bride repeats the words above.)

Priest

O Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, giver of all spiritual grace, the author of everlasting life: Send thy blessing upon these thy servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in thy name; that, living faithfully together, these persons may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant betwixt them made, (whereof this ring given and received is a token and pledge,) and may ever remain in perfect love and peace together, and live according to thy laws; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

Forasmuch as N and N have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have given and pledged their troth either to the other, and have declared the same by giving and receiving of a ring, and by joining of hands; I pronounce that they be man and wife together, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you and so fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. Amen.

Appendix 2

VIDEO RECORDING OF A MARRIAGE SERVICE

This notice is issued by the priest in charge to give permission for recording equipment to be brought into and used inside the church for the purpose of recording the marriage service subject to the following conditions:

The couple to be married must give these notes to the person making the recording.

- 1 The reply slip must be returned to the parish priest at least three weeks before the date of the wedding.
- 2 The siting of the camera is at the discretion of the minister conducting the service.

The attention of the video operator is drawn to the following important points:

The law of copyright is complex. It is most important that it is recognised that neither the incumbent nor the Parochial Church Council has any authority to give copyright permission for the lawful reproduction of any words or music which is protected by copyright.

Certain blanket arrangements have been made to facilitate the recording in church of the texts of the marriage and baptism services. Without prior application having to be made to the copyright owners, copyright permission, subject to the conditions in paragraph B3 below, has been given for the recording on either video-tape or audio-tape of the following material:

Solemnization of matrimony from the Book of Common Prayer.

Solemnization of Matrimony. First Series.

The Marriage Service in Common Worship

The Psalter in the Book of Common Prayer.

The Revised Psalter.

The Liturgical Psalter.

The conditions on which a tape of the material specified in paragraph 2 may be made without prior application to the copyright holders are as follows :-

- a) No rights in the recording and no copies of it shall be transferred or assigned in consideration of money or money's worth i.e. the rights in the recording and copies shall not be sold commercially except that the original recording and copies may be sold to the couple or parents who commissioned the recording.
- b) No more than three copies of the recording shall be made.
- c) The recording, including an extract from it shall not be broadcast, or exhibited in public.

These are conditions established by the legal copyright holders, and neither the clergy, nor the Parochial Church Council have power to alter them.

1. The copyright owners of the material listed in paragraph 2 charge no fee for this permission.
2. These blanket arrangements and the permissions relating to the material specified in paragraph 2 don't extend to any part of the service other than the text of the authorised service and psalms from the three Psalters.
3. ***Therefore, hymns, anthems, additional prayers etc. are not covered by these permissions and it is your responsibility to obtain permission for such copyright material which is included in the service.***

Copyright subsists in a work at least until the end of the period of seventy years from the end of the calendar year in which the originator (author, composer, etc.) died. Where there is doubt whether material is copyright, the publisher will usually be able to help.

For more information or help with copyright questions please contact the addresses below. Between them, these organizations cover the copyright of most hymns.

Christian Copyright Licencing Ltd. 26, Gildredge Road,
Eastbourne, East Sussex. BN21 4SA. 01323 417711
<http://www.ccli.co.uk/UnitedKingdom.cfm>

Or

Calamus

Decani Music Ltd, Oak House, 70 High Street, Brandon, Suffolk
IP27 0AU

0845 456 8392

<http://www.decanimusic.co.uk/Calamus.html>

When the Video form below is completed, please return it – at least three weeks before the wedding. The video fee must be paid when the total wedding fee is paid.

**PROPOSAL TO MAKE A VIDEO RECORDING OF A WEDDING
AT SEAL**

TO BE RETURNED TO THE PRIEST IN CHARGE

Date of wedding... Time...

Name of couple.....

Name of Video Operator.....

Tel No.....

I have read this notice. I accept that the incumbent has only given me permission to bring into and use video recording equipment inside the church subject to the conditions specified above. I acknowledge that the incumbent has not given copyright permission, nor authorised the recording of any performance which may be protected by law.

I agree to the terms of recording as set out in the above notes and accept full liability for copyright charges.

Signature of Video operator.....

Date.....

Please return this form at least three weeks before the Wedding.