

Frequently Asked Questions

When can I book a date? Most people plan their wedding about a year in advance, but shorter or longer lead-in times are ok too. The Vicar will need to see your ID and other documents before a date can be confirmed. Please call or email the church office to begin the process.

What are the legal processes? To get married here, you will need a 'qualifying connection'. These include: residence in the parish, regular worship at HTHQ or another connection through parents or baptism. Once we've established this, most weddings take place after 'banns' - a public reading of your intention to marry, made on three successive Sundays. Other legal routes are required in other circumstances e.g if you are not a British national.

What preparation do I need? Usually, you will have three meetings with the Vicar. The first is about getting to know you and legalities. Next, we'll discuss together what marriage is all about, and finally plan your service. The Vicar and church office will be in touch throughout.

One of us is / both of us are divorced. Can we still get married in church? The current Vicar at HTHQ is perfectly willing to marry divorcees; you will need to produce the correct documentary proof. More may be required if you've been divorced several times.

Can I write my own vows? In the Church of England you must use the official vows and most people agree that they are wonderful! However, if there are additional things you would like to say, these can be added.

How long is the wedding service? Usually about 40 minutes.

What about music? Live and/or recorded music can be arranged - the Vicar will discuss the options with you.

Can I have confetti? Yes! As long as it's 100% biodegradable.

Do you have bells? Yes! (but just the two!)

What about parking? There is parking at the Quarry Road end by the Coach House, but not at the Trinity Road end. Don't worry, there'll be space for the bridal car to drop you off.

When do we get our marriage certificate? You will need to apply for this after the wedding. We'll give you all the information.

What does it cost? The fees for weddings are set centrally and change each year according to inflation and actual costs. A 'normal' church wedding includes the service itself, the legal processes, and all the preparation. This usually runs to about £700. Extras incur extra fees. You can discuss all this with the Vicar, and you'll get a full invoice explaining exactly what you are being charged for. If you are worried that the basic fee is genuinely beyond your reach, please talk to us.

Holy Trinity is almost entirely funded by donations which help to look after our historic church, contribute toward the cost of a Vicar, and keep us open for many future generations of wedding couples. You and your guests can support us by giving a donation on the day, or going to our secure giving page here:



Thank you.

Next Steps & Staying in Touch


We would love to stay in touch and you are welcome at any of our events and services. If you need any support throughout your married life, we are also here to help. Some couples like to visit us on a significant anniversary, and we will be happy to discuss celebrations and/or renewals of vows.

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 Holy Trinity
Headington Quarry

Getting Married at Holy Trinity

a short guide



“Clothe yourselves
with love...”

You're engaged! Congratulations!

We are delighted you're getting married, and thinking about a church wedding. We love weddings at HTHQ and will do all we can to support you. There are some important checks we need to do first, to establish your legal right to marry. All of this will be explained when you make your enquiry and is usually very straightforward. If it isn't, we have access to expert legal advice.

Church of England weddings are traditional, using time-honoured words and a lovely historic building. But 'traditional' doesn't mean dull! We'll work to make your service as personal as possible so it really celebrates you and your relationship. You can't take anything away from the words of the service - but there's lots you can add! If you have something special or unusual in mind - try us! We might have to say 'no', but we'll say 'yes' if we possibly can! (See over for some Frequently Asked Questions.) For ideas and inspiration see: yourchurchwedding.org

Before, after and during a church wedding, we will talk about God and ask for God's blessing. That's something you can't get at a secular ceremony. We think that makes church weddings really special, and we hope you'll agree. You don't have to be a Christian or a regular churchgoer to get married in your parish church. But it makes sense to explore a little of what Christian marriage means. The words included within this leaflet are some of the main parts of the marriage service. We will go through all of this when we meet. But in the meantime - read, ponder and pray over these words: they are some of the most significant you'll ever say. Finally, a reminder that we are here to support you not only on your wedding day, but in your marriage too, which we pray is happy and lifelong. The church is always here for you, in faith, hope and in love.

Every blessing,
The Revd Martin Little, Vicar

Note: We are unable legally to marry same-sex couples, and we recognise this is very painful for many people. Many in the Church of England would like to see this change, but some would not, and this has led to the current disagreement. We are always happy to meet you, to listen and to pray.

Some key parts of the marriage service:

The Preface

The minister will say this:

In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we have come together to witness the marriage of *N* and *N*, to pray for God's blessing on them, to share their joy and to celebrate their love. Marriage is a gift of God in creation through which husband and wife may know the grace of God. It is given that as man and woman grow together in love and trust, they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind, as Christ is united with his bride, the Church.

The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together in the delight and tenderness of sexual union and joyful commitment to the end of their lives.

It is given as the foundation of family life in which children are [born and] nurtured and in which each member of the family, in good times and in bad, may find strength, companionship and comfort, and grow to maturity in love.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God, and blessed by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with those celebrating a wedding at Cana in Galilee. Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty which all should uphold and honour.

It enriches society and strengthens community. No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly but reverently and responsibly in the sight of almighty God. *N* and *N* are now to enter this way of life. They will each give their consent to the other and make solemn vows, and in token of this they will [each] give and receive a ring. We pray with them that the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen them, that they may fulfil God's purposes for the whole of their earthly life together.

The Declarations

The minister says to the congregation:

First, I am required to ask anyone present who knows a reason why these persons may not lawfully marry, to declare it now.

The minister says to the couple:

The vows you are about to take are to be made in the presence of God, who is judge of all and knows all the secrets of our hearts; therefore if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

The minister says to the bridegroom:

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?
He answers I will.

The minister says to the bride:

N, will you take *N* to be your husband?
Will you love him, comfort him, honour and protect him, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?
She answers: I will.

The minister says to the congregation

Will you, the families and friends of *N* and *N*, support and uphold them in their marriage now and in the years to come?
All We will.

The Vows:

The bride and bridegroom say to one another, in turn:
**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 Giving and Receiving of Rings

(again, in turn):

***N*, 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.**