



**Preparing for
your**

Wedding Day



*We hope that this booklet will help you as you start planning your Wedding Service.
Please remember that the clergy are available to assist you at any time.*



from
The Revd Dr
Jonathan N Bauer
Priest-in-Charge

INITIAL ENQUIRY FOR MARRIAGE

Marriage in the parish of St Nicholas, Chislehurst

I am delighted that you are seeking to be married at St Nicholas'. As with most legal processes, there are some preliminaries that must be attended to.

Qualifying Connection

To be married in a Church of England church a **Qualifying Connection** is required (see overleaf). Obviously, if one or both of you live within the parish, then you are legally entitled to get married at St Nicholas'. If both of you live outside the parish, then at least one of you will need to qualify by fulfilling at least one of the other Qualifying Connection categories, ii to vii. We will need to discuss this with you before a wedding date can be provisionally booked.

Maintenance Works at the Church

Please be aware that whilst we shall always try to keep St Nicholas looking as attractive as possible throughout the year, from time to time it is necessary to carry out repairs to our historic church. To accommodate increasing or changing demands we also undertake projects that, like repairs, require scaffolding, fencing and other building work items that must stay in place throughout all our services. Very occasionally we shall need to close the church even though a wedding may have been booked. On these occasions the law provides that we use a neighbouring church so that the wedding may proceed.

In the meantime, I should be grateful if you would sign and return one copy this letter to me, thereby indicating to have read and understand its contents. Please retain a copy for your own records.

I very much look forward to hearing from you in due course to arrange a meeting to complete your marriage application paperwork.

Yours sincerely

The Rev'd Dr Jonathan N Bauer

bringing People & God together

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MARRIAGE ENQUIRY

Initial paperwork

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH
CHISLEHURST



Please complete and return a copy of this form to the Rev'd Dr Jonathan Bauer.

We, the undersigned, have received and understood the information about **Qualifying Connection** and **Maintenance Works** at the Church, overleaf and as set out below.

Name (please PRINT) _____

Tel No. _____ **email:** _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Name (please PRINT) _____

Tel No. _____ **email:** _____

Signature _____

Date _____

QUALIFYING CONNECTION:

That one of you:

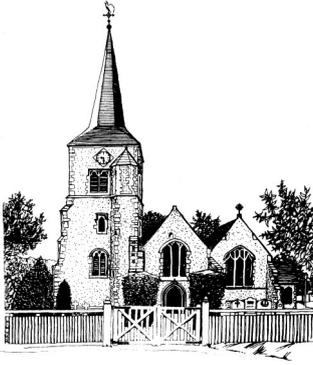
- i) has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months **or**
- ii) was baptised in the parish concerned **or**
- iii) was prepared for confirmation in the parish **or**
- iv) has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months **or**

That one of your parents, at any time after you were born:

- v) has lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months **or**
- vi) has regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months **or**

That one of your parents or grandparents:

- vii) was married in the parish



We are delighted that you wish to be married at St Nicholas.

If you have booked your date (even a provisional booking) you will be on the way to planning your special day. This booklet will help you to think about what happens in church both before the day and also on the day itself.

In order for us to prepare for your marriage as fully as possible we ask that you contact us **AT LEAST SIX MONTHS** before your wedding to arrange an interview (see 'Contacts').

For weddings less than 6 months away **please make contact as soon as possible.**

Weddings will usually be conducted by one of the clergy at St Nicholas.

For resources that will assist you, from now until well after 'The Day', including much more help on planning your service please visit:

www.yourchurchwedding.org

PLANNING YOUR SERVICE

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The Marriage Service - An Overview of its Shape & Content

The Preparation

Arrival of the Bride
Welcome
Opening Prayer
Hymn
Christian Understanding of Marriage (*The Preface*)
Declarations of Intent

A Message for Your Wedding

(*The Liturgy of the Word*)
Bible Reading (s)
Another Reading you have chosen (if you wish)
A short talk
A hymn (if you want more than two)

The Marriage

The 'Giving Away' (if you want it)
The Vows - of love and faithfulness
Giving of the ring(s)
Declaration of the Marriage
A hymn (if you want more than two)

Prayers

We ask for God's love and blessing on your life together
The Lord's Prayer

The Blessing

Hymn
Final Blessing

The Legal Formalities

Signing of the Registers

The Ending

Procession of the newly-weds

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

THE PREPARATION

Welcome

Prayer

Hymn

The Christian Understanding of Marriage (The Preface)

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 joyful commitment to the end of their lives. It is given as the foundation of family life in which children may be [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.

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

The priest 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 Declarations of Intent

The priest 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 priest 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 priest 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 LITURGY OF THE WORD

Bible Reading

Address

THE MARRIAGE

The Vows

N and N, I now invite you to join hands and make your vows, in the presence of God and his people.

The bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his and says

I, N, take you, N,
to be my 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 law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.

They loose hands.

The bride takes the bridegroom's right hand in hers, and says

I, N, take you, N,
to be my 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.

They loose hands.

The Giving of Rings

The priest receives the ring(s), and says this prayer

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.

All Amen.

The bridegroom places the ring on the fourth finger of the bride's left hand and, holding it there, says

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.

If rings are exchanged, they loose hands and the bride places a ring on the fourth finger of the bridegroom's left hand and, holding it there, says

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.

The Proclamation

The priest addresses the people

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.

The priest joins their right hands together and says

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

The Blessing of the Marriage

THE PRAYERS

THE BLESSING

Personalising the Service

The Preface

You may choose either of these two prefaces. Each describes the Christian understanding of marriage.

Preface 1	Preface 2
<p>We have come together, [from near and far] to celebrate the marriage of _____ and _____ in a covenant of love.</p> <p>This covenant is the promise of hope between two people who love each other, who understand their love as a gift of God, who trust that love, and who wish to create and share a new future together.</p> <p>Marriage, as a covenant of love, enables two people to share their desires, longings, dreams, and memories, and to help each other through challenge and support each other through opportunity. In this covenant, _____ and _____ will belong together, providing mutual support and stability, and if it be God's will, a place in which their children may grow.</p> <p>Here in the presence of God we recognize and bless their relationship as they begin their married life together in the community.</p> <p>Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty which all should uphold and honour. No one should enter into it lightly. It involves a serious and life-long commitment.</p> <p>_____ and _____ are now to enter this way of life.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>We pray with them that the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen them, that they may fulfill God's purposes for the whole of their earthly life together.</p>	<p>In the presence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we have come together to witness the marriage of <i>N</i> and <i>N</i>, to pray for God's blessing on them, to share their joy and to celebrate their love.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together in joyful commitment to the end of their lives.</p> <p>It is given as the foundation of family life in which children may be [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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p><i>N</i> and <i>N</i> 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.</p>

The Vows

You may choose any of these sets of marriage vows.

Vows A - Groom

The bridegroom takes the bride's hand in and says:

I, N, take you, N,
to be my 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 law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.

They loose hands.

Vows A - Bride

The bride takes the bridegroom's in and says

I, N, take you, N,
to be my 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.

They loose hands.

Vows B - Groom

The bridegroom takes the bride's hand and says:

I, N, take you, N,
to be my 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 law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.

They loose hands.

Vows B - Bride

The bride takes the bridegroom's hand and says

I, N, take you, N,
to be my 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, to cherish and obey,
till death us do part;
according to God's holy law.
In the presence of God I make this vow.

They loose hands.

Vows C - Groom

The bridegroom takes the bride's hand and says
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
plight thee my troth.

They loose hands.

Vows C - Bride

The bride takes the bridegroom's hand and says
I, N, take thee, N, to my wedded 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, cherish, and to obey, till death us do part,
according to God's holy ordinance;
and thereto I give thee my troth.

They loose hands.

If desired, the word 'obey' may be omitted, as follows
I, N, take thee, N, to my wedded 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 ordinance;
and thereto I give thee my troth.

They loose hands.

Hymns and Music for a Wedding

General Guidelines

You will have an opportunity to discuss the music for your service when you meet with the minister conducting your service. However, you are also welcome to discuss the music with our organist and musical director, Michael Bell BA, FRCO, on 020 8295 1811. We ask that the music be live and not recorded. If a soloist is to sing, a rehearsal with the organist will be necessary.

You must confirm your final choice of hymns, and the order in which they will be used, with the member of the clergy taking your service **before printing the Order of Service.**

The following lists are suggestions only, based upon our knowledge of what fits well within the service and people are likely to know. You are welcome to choose other hymns and music if you wish.

It may be possible to play appropriate CD's during the service. However you will need to discuss this and the choice of music with the minister taking your service. We recommend that the bride arrives to 'live' music, rather than a recording since this gives greater flexibility and control.

We welcome other performers, choirs etc. but please check with the clergy before making a booking. Our organists are professionals, for whom wedding fees are a source of income, so we will ask you to pay the church organist fee, even if you then use another organist (with whom you will need to make separate financial arrangements)

As the Bride arrives (Processional)

Bridal March from Lohengrin (Wagner)
Arrival of the Queen of Sheba (Handel)
Hornpipe in F from the Water Music (Handel)
Trumpet Tune (Purcell)
Trumpet Voluntary (Jeremiah Clarke)

As the newly-weds leave the church

(Recessional)

Crown Imperial (Walton)
Wedding March from Midsummer Night's
Dream (Mendelssohn)
Finale from the Water Music (Handel)

Hymns

Some suggestions.

1. Dear Lord and Father of mankind

forgive our foolish ways!
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper rev'ence praise,
in deeper rev'ence praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word,
rise up and follow thee,
rise up and follow thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with thee
the silence of eternity,
interpreted by love!
Interpreted by love!

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace,
the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm!
O still small voice of calm!

2. Immortal, invisible, God only wise,

in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the ancient of days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish; but naught changeth thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render: O help us to see
'tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

3. Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father,

There is no shadow of turning with thee;
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not;
As thou hast been thou forever wilt be.

Great is thy faithfulness!

Great is thy faithfulness!

*Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed thy hand hath provided,
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!*

Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

4. Be thou my vision,

O Lord of my heart,
Naught be all else to me,
save that thou art;
thou my best thought
in the day and the night,
waking or sleeping,
thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom,
be thou my true word,
I ever with thee
and thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father,
and I thy true heir;
Thou in me dwelling,
and I in thy care.

Be thou my breastplate,
my sword for the fight;
Be thou my armour
and be thou my might;
Thou my soul's shelter
and thou my high tower:
Raise thou me heavenward,
O Power of my power.

Riches I heed not,
nor all the world's praise:
Thou mine inheritance
through all my days;
Thou, and thou only,
the first in my heart:
High King of heaven,
my treasure thou art!

High King of heaven,
when the battle is done,
Grant heaven's joy to me,
O bright heaven's sun;
Christ of my own heart,
whatever befall,
Still be my vision,
O ruler of all.

5. Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down!
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion.
Pure unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy grace receive,
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing;
glory in thy perfect love.

Finish, then, thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee.
Changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place.
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love and praise.

6. Morning has broken like the first morning:
blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall, sunlit from heaven,
like the first dew-fall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung from completeness where his feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning
born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning,
God's re-creation of the new day!

7. Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring Your love;
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

*Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope;
where there is darkness, only light;
and where there's sadness, ever joy.

Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek . . .

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving to all men that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

8. Now thank we all our God,
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mother's arms
hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven,
the one eternal God,
whom earth and heaven adore,
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

9. Lord of all hopefulness,
(NB same tune as, be thou my vision)

Lord of all joy,
whose trust, ever child-like,
no cares could destroy,
be there at our waking,
and give us we pray,
your bliss in our hearts,
Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness,
Lord of all faith,
whose strong hands were skilled
at the plane and the lathe,
be there at our labours
and give us we pray,
your strength in our hearts,
Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness,
Lord of all grace,
your hands swift to welcome,
your arms to embrace,
be there at our homing
and give us we pray,
your love in our hearts,
Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness,
Lord of all calm,
whose voice is contentment,
whose presence is balm,
be there at our sleeping,
and give us we pray,
your peace in our hearts,
Lord, at the end of the day.

10. To the tune of "Jerusalem"
 We gather here, we gather now,
 drawn by the love we know and share.
 We come to celebrate in our joy
 the union of this special pair.
 To them our hearts reach out with love,
 on them the light of heav'n above
 shines down in grace abundant and free
 to bless them both eternally.
 And we who join to wish them well,
 offer them both our love and pray'r
 that they may walk in fullness of life
 the journey they have come to share.
 That they may know if storms come near
 that they have friends and fam'ly here
 for we commit ourselves to pray
 and love and cherish them each day.
 Susan Sayers (born 1946)
 Tune: "Jerusalem (Parry)"
11. To the tune of "I vow to thee my country"
 These vows of love are taken,
 as rings of love received,
 we witness here among us a mystery believed:
 that in God's holy presence a union has begun
 and these your precious children
 have now become as one.
 For the things of earth and heaven
 draw closer as we pray,
 and in heav'n the angels celebrate
 with us on earth today.
- For all our many blessings
 we offer thanks and praise,
 for gifts of love and fellowship
 our thankful hearts we raise.
 God's hand has held us safely
 and brought us to this day,
 God has guided and protected
 and taught us on the way.
 For the love we learn on earth
 is the love we'll find in heav'n
 and the human love we celebrate
 is love that God has giv'n.
 Susan Sayers (born 1946)
 Tune: "Thaxted"
12. To the tune of "Morning has broken"
 God of all living, Father, we praise you,
 Full of Thanksgiving, for so much love;
 Now in this wedding, come down among us,
 Pour out your blessing, heavenly dove.
- With love's true splendour, Father, delight us,
 Each giving honour, with faithfulness;
 And may the sharing, of this sweet union
 Deepen our caring, with tenderness.
- May there be children, fruit of our loving,
 True men and women, with faith beside;
 Grant us your keeping in all our future,
 Your love caressing bridegroom and bride.
 Canon Michael Walker

- 13. Praise to the Lord,**
 the almighty, the King of creation!
 O my soul, praise him,
 for he is thy health and salvation!
 Come ye who hear,
 brothers and sisters draw near,
 praise him in glad adoration.
- Praise to the Lord,
 who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
 shelters thee under his wings,
 yea, so gently sustaineth.
 Hast thou not seen,
 all that is needful hath been
 granted in what he ordaineth?
- Praise to the Lord,
 who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
 surely His goodness and mercy
 here daily attend thee.
 Ponder anew
 all the Almighty can do,
 he who with love doth befriend thee.
- Praise to the Lord!
 O let all that is in me adore him!
 All that hath life and breath,
 come now with praises before him!
 Let the Amen
 sound from his people again:
 gladly for aye we adore him!
- 14. Praise, my soul, the king of heaven;**
 to his feet thy tribute bring.
 ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
 who like me his praise should sing?
 Praise him! Praise him!
 Praise him! Praise him!
 Praise the everlasting King!
- Praise him for his grace and favour
 to our fathers in distress;
 praise him, still the same as ever,
 slow to chide, and swift to bless.
 Praise him! Praise him!
 Praise him! Praise him!
 Glorious in his faithfulness.
- Father-like, he tends and spares us;
 well our feeble frame he knows;
 in his hands he gently bears us,
 rescues us from all our foes.
 Praise him! Praise him!
 Praise him! Praise him!
 Widely as his mercy flows.
- Angels help us to adore him;
 ye behold him face to face;
 sun and moon, bow down before him,
 dwellers all in time and space.
 Praise him! Praise him!
 Praise him! Praise him!
 Praise with us the God of grace!

Choosing Readings

You must include at least one Bible reading or you may wish to use two. You can also include an additional reading (prose or poetry) from another source. Please choose readings that mean something to you as a couple.

Bible Readings for Your Wedding

The following are just some suggestions for Bible readings. These are in the translation usually used in our churches but, if you prefer a different version, that is fine. However, please check your choice of reading with the minister conducting your wedding. We have found some material on the Web that claims to be from the Bible but is not, or not in any format or translation that we recognise.

New Testament

John 2.1-11

Jesus' first miracle - at a wedding

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Matthew 5.1-10

A summary of Jesus' teaching from the "Sermon on the Mount" - sometimes called the Beatitudes.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him.

Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

1 Corinthians 13

A great poem in praise of love as the greatest quality of all Christian virtues, from the apostle, St. Paul.

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Ephesians 3.14-end

St. Paul's prayer for his friends.

I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

Colossians 3.12-17

How to get dressed - and live!

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

1 John 4.7-12

God's love is shown to us in Jesus Christ and in his followers.

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Old Testament

Genesis 1.26-28

A story of how God created men and women.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Song of Solomon 2.10-13; 8.6,7

From an ancient Hebrew love-song - probably written for a royal wedding.

My beloved speaks and says to me:

'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;

for now the winter is past,

the rain is over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth;

the time of singing has come,

and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs,

and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.'

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm;

for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave.

Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame.

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it.

If one offered for love all the wealth of one's house, it would be utterly scorned.

Ecclesiastes 4.9-12

The teacher extols the value of a companion.

Two are better than one,

because they have a good reward for their toil.

For if they fall,

one will lift up the other;

but woe to one who is alone and falls

and does not have another to help.

Again, if two lie together, they keep warm;

but how can one keep warm alone?

And though one might prevail against another,

two will withstand one.

A threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Choosing Prayers

We will be giving thanks to God and asking his blessing upon you and your families as you start out on your married lives. The prayers will include:

- Thanking God for the gift of marriage
- Praying that you will grow in your experience of the love of God
- Praying for your home, children and other family members.

A selection of suitable prayers are given in the following pages.

You can choose from these in consultation with the priest taking your service. You may also like to write your own prayer for your Marriage Service. This is the one that Prince William and Kate Middleton wrote;

God our Father,
we thank you for our families;
for the love that we share and for the joy of our marriage.
In the busyness of each day keep our eyes fixed on what is real and important in life
and help us to be generous with our time and love and energy.
Strengthened by our union help us to serve and comfort those who suffer.
We ask this in the Spirit of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Short Prayers thanking God for the gift of Marriage

1. *For you as you begin married life*

Almighty God, giver of life and love,
Bless N and N, whom you have joined in Christian marriage.
Grant them wisdom and devotion in their life together,
that each may be to the other
a strength in need, a comfort in sorrow,
and a companion in joy.
So unite their wills in your will,
and their spirits in your Spirit,
that they may live and grow together in love and peace
all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

2. *Thanksgiving*

God of love,
we thank you for the gift of marriage and for the joys it brings.
Bless us as we share in this wedding.
We thank you for the love which has brought N and N to each other
and for their desire to share that love for the rest of their lives;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

3. *For the sharing of love*

Father of all, in Jesus Christ you open to us
the treasures of your kingdom;
guide us by your Holy Spirit
that we may receive your redeeming grace
and reflect the perfect unity of your love,
for you live and reign
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen

Praying that you will grow in your experience of the love of God

4. *For the gift of love*

God of wonder and of joy:
grace comes from you,
and you alone are the source of life and love.
Without you, we cannot please you;
without your love, our deeds are worth nothing.
Send your Holy Spirit,
and pour into our hearts
that most excellent gift of love,
that we may worship you now
with thankful hearts
and serve you always with willing minds;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

5. *For grace to live well*

Faithful God,
giver of all good things,
give N and N wisdom and devotion
in the ordering of their life together.
May they dwell together in love and peace
all the days of their life,
seeking one another's welfare,
bearing one another's burdens
and sharing one another's joys;
through Jesus Christ our Lord

Amen

6. *A prayer for all marriages represented at your Marriage Service:*

Almighty God,
look graciously upon the world which you have made
and for which your Son gave his life.
Bless all whom you make one flesh in marriage.
May lives lived together
be a sign of your love to this broken world,
so that unity may overcome estrangement,
forgiveness heal guilt, and joy overcome despair;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

For children and other family members

7. *For children and home*

Heavenly Father,
maker of all things,
you enable us to share in your work of creation.
Bless this couple in the gift and care of children,
that their home may be a place of love, security and truth,
and their children grow up to know and love you in your Son
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

8. *For children and family*

Lord of life,
you shape us in your image,
and by your gracious gift
the human family is increased.
Grant to *N* and *N* the blessing of children.
Fill them with wisdom and love
as they care for their family,
so that they and their children
may know and love you;
through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

9. *For an existing family*

God of all grace and goodness,
we thank you for the new family formed here today
and for everything parents and children have to share.
Bless *A*, *B* and *C* as they share in this day and,
by your Spirit of peace, draw them together
and help them to be true friends to one another.
Let your love surround them
and your care protect them;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

10. *For the families of the couple*

Gracious Lord,
bless the parents and families of *N* and *N*
that they may grow in love and friendship.
Grant that, as they have witnessed these vows today,
they may find their lives enriched and strengthened
and their loyalties confirmed;
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

You may choose either version

'Modern' Language

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

'Traditional' Language

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.

Practicalities & Preliminaries

Reading of Banns

Most people who marry in church are married after **Banns of Marriage** have been published. They are a **verbal** and **public notice** of your intention to marry and provide an opportunity for any legal objection to be raised. However, in some circumstances a Licence is to be preferred to Banns.

Banns are the legal preliminary to a marriage in church and **must** be read both in the parish(es) where you live and the church where you will be married. We will take responsibility for ensuring your banns are read in the church where you are to be married. You will need to ensure they are read where each of you live if that is not in this parish.

Banns will usually be read during the main morning service on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sunday of the month. We will aim to read the banns 2 months before the wedding date.

If either or both of you are living elsewhere, having arranged for your Banns to be read at your local parish church you will need to obtain a Banns Certificate from that church confirming that this has been done. There will be a fee for this that is payable to your local parish church, this is in addition to the fees paid here.

The easiest way to find your local parish church is to use the website www.achurchnearyou.com

Witnesses

The witnesses are the two people who (as well as bride and groom) sign the Marriage Registers and your Marriage Certificate. They should be over the age of 18 years old. Being a witness is another way in which you can involve others in your wedding day.

Orders of Service

The Order of Service guides your guests through the service. You don't have to have one. However an Order of Service, which can be made quite easily on your own computer is a pleasing memento of the day and can be personalised to your wedding. Please note that they do need to be clearly laid out and easy to use. Look at how the service and hymns are laid out in this document to give you an idea. In particular, please ensure that:

- You have agreed all the elements and their order with the priest conducting your wedding.
- You use a good sized and clear font for the hymns and the other parts where the congregation will join in.
- You provide enough copies for each guest to have one, with enough extras for the priest, organist, vergers, bell-ringers and choir (where relevant) to also have copies.
- All the elements below are included.
- The priest taking your service has seen and approved a draft before you print them. We can usually (but not always!) pick up typos and have a lot of experience on what will help (and what will hinder) the congregation.

Order of service - contents

Entrance of the Bridal Party

(Give the title and composer of the music)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

HYMN

(Print full words here)

THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MARRIAGE

THE DECLARATION OF INTENT

During which the priest 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.

BIBLE READING

(Give the details of the Bible Reading and who will be reading it)

POEM OR READING

(Give the details of the any other reading and who will be reading it)

THE ADDRESS

THE MARRIAGE

Signing of the Registers

(May be here or at the end of the service)

HYMN *(if using 3 hymns)*

Print full words here

THE PRAYERS

You may need to include the bidding and response if using one of the longer prayers:

[During the prayers we sometimes use the following bidding and response:

Lord, in your mercy

All hear our prayer.]

The prayers will conclude with:

Our Father in heaven or Our Father, who art in heaven

(Put in the full words of the version you will use.)

HYMN

(Print full words here)

THE BLESSING

Signing of the Registers

(Usually in the side Chapel or Vestry)

Recessional as the Wedding Party depart

(Give the title and composer of the music)

Fees

Fees for a Marriage Service in the Church of England are set nationally.

The Church of England receives no help from the Government to maintain its churches. The income we receive from fees ensures that our beautiful buildings are kept in good order for weddings and other special occasions, both now and for future generations.

Fees for 2021 have been set as follows:

Statutory National Fees	£
Reading of Banns	31
Marriage Service	464
Marriage Certificate	11
Locally Set Fees	
Organist - to play at your Wedding	190
Verger- who will prepare the Church, assist the Clergy and your Ushers and help tidy up afterwards	20
Choir	210
Bells	175
Extra rehearsal for any musical soloists	15
Optional Extras	
Church Heating (Sept to April only)	30
Additional Marriage Certificates	11

Please make cheque payable to: **St Nicholas, Chislehurst**

Or pay directly to CAF Bank Ltd

Account: St Nicholas Chislehurst PCC
Sort Code: 40-52-40
Account No: 00020386

When using internet banking please use as reference:

Wedding - SURNAME

Flowers for your Wedding

If there is more than one wedding on the day you are getting married there will need to be some agreement with the other couple(s) about the kind of display that goes into the church. Please be aware that the church may already have some flowers in place, particularly near the time of Christian festivals.

General Guidelines

1. There is no **need** to do anything - the beauty of the building will be further enhanced on your wedding day by your guests and the bridal party. Less can be more.
2. You are welcome to remove any arrangements that you have provided to take them to your reception. When removing arrangements, please ensure these are on your own or your florists stands. Please do not remove any church flower stands, pedestals etc.
3. Please ensure that all waste is removed from the church and grounds by the flower arrangers.
4. At Festival times special conditions apply:
 - During Lent (the 6 weeks before Easter) and Advent (the 4 weeks before Christmas) please arrange for all flowers to be removed from church immediately after your wedding service.
 - At Easter, Christmas and Harvest our own arrangements are likely to be in place and no further flowers may be needed
6. Under no circumstances must anything be **nailed** or **pinned** or **glued** to any surface in the church.
7. If using arrangements on pew ends, please remember that you will need space to walk down the aisle. Florist's ribbon alone usually works best here.

Church Bells

If you would like the bells to be rung – six bells will be rung for 20 minutes after the service - please speak to the minister conducting your service at the interview who will inform the bell ringers.

Maintenance Works at the Church

Please be aware that whilst we shall always try to keep St Nicholas looking as attractive as possible for your wedding, from time to time it is necessary to carry out repairs to the church. Also, to accommodate increasing or changing demands we undertake projects that, like repairs, require scaffolding, fencing and other building work items that have to stay in place throughout all our services.

Photographs & Videos

You will probably want a visual record of your special day. We welcome photography and video recording providing the following guidelines are adhered to. They are provided to help ensure that your wedding service goes smoothly, without undue interruption or distraction, and in an attitude of respect for God, the church and yourselves. At all times the decision of the Minister taking the service is final and to be respected.

With respect to recording and copyright, Christian Copyright Licensing (Europe) Ltd is appointed by the Performing Rights Society (PRS) to administer church licensing and they state 'PRS for Music chooses not to license music played during acts of divine worship. A wedding would come within an 'act of divine worship'. However, if the wedding service is being recorded then you will need to obtain a Wedding Video Recording Licence which can be done so on line at [http://www.prsformusic.com/users/recordedmedia/dvdsanddigitalmedia/Pages/LimitedManufactureLicence\(LM\).aspx](http://www.prsformusic.com/users/recordedmedia/dvdsanddigitalmedia/Pages/LimitedManufactureLicence(LM).aspx) (or type **limited manufacture licence prs** into search bar). The MPCS rate will suffice, the price varying depending on the options chosen. It is your responsibility to ensure that an appropriate **licence** (which may include a licence for music videoed at your reception) has been obtained (either by yourself or your videographer). We reserve the right to withhold consent if a licence has not been obtained, as this protects copyright/royalty issues for composers and publishers.

Only your designated photographer/videographer is permitted to take photographs during the service. These guidelines must be followed:

- No flash photography in church during the service.
- Please remain stationary during the spoken parts of the service.
- The Registers will be signed without any photography. We will then immediately recreate the moment for your designated photographer, but please keep this brief: your guests are waiting for you!
- As the newly-weds leave down the aisle the photographer is welcome to do as you and he or she wish.

Confetti

Please do not use metallic confetti. Bio-degradable confetti is welcomed.

Getting in touch

The Rev'd Dr Jonathan N Bauer

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Mobile 07745753343

revjbauer@gmail.com

PRAYER

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 this couple
in their new life together.
Let their love for each other
be a seal upon their hearts
and a crown upon their heads.

(... from the Marriage Service)