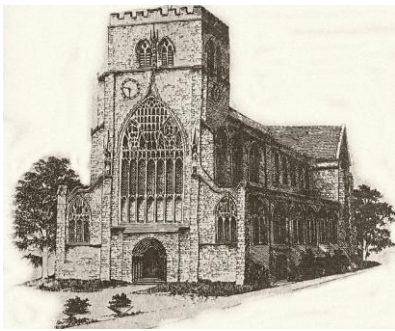


Holy Cross Shrewsbury
Shrewsbury Abbey &
St. Peter's Monkmoor

Getting Married

In the Parish of the Holy Cross, Shrewsbury



Welcome to the Abbey and St. Peter's and welcome to this little booklet which we hope will help you as you prepare for Marriage.

The aim of this booklet is several fold;

Section 1 - (Page 3) will take a look at the legalities of Marriage and will try to answer questions concerning just who can be married at the Abbey and St. Peter's church.

Section 2 - (Page 4) will look at some possibilities relating to Marriage and/or Blessing. This is particularly relevant if one or other of you has a 'previous marriage dissolved'.

Section 3 - (Page 8) will look at the nitty gritty of preparations for a Wedding and also take a look at the Christian understanding of Marriage and exactly what it is you will be asked to solemnly vow in the presence of all your guests and witnesses.

Section 4 - (Page 19) will look at 'Orders of Service'

I will not be giving you any other reading to do (you will no doubt have enough of that with all the other preparations) but I do ask that you read this booklet very carefully - and in particular the few 'peculiar' rules near the end.

The Vicar's phone number is **01743 – 232723 (office Monday – Friday)**
You can also contact him by e-mail: **vicar@shrewsburyabbey.com**

His day off is **usually Friday**

Please keep him informed of any changes to your plans.

Do please obtain a copy of the Cream Coloured Church of England 'Marriage' Book as soon as possible. The ISBN is 0-7151-2038-7. This can be ordered from most good book shops.

Or – if you are on the internet you can download it at – all one address -
<http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/pastoral/marriage.aspx>

Section 1

You have an automatic right to be married if you comply with the following criteria:-

- You are over 18 years of age at the date of the Wedding, or over 16 years of age and have the permission of your parent or guardian.
- You are not presently married to someone else.
- You are not too closely related - i.e. brother & sister (etc).
- One of you is male and one of you is female.
- You are consenting.

In addition to this, in order to be married in the Church of England you must comply with the following criteria:-

- One of you must live within the boundaries of the Parish of the Church in which you wish to be married - **or**
- If neither of you live in the Parish of the Church in which you wish to be married, one of you must be on the Electoral Roll of that Parish (see note below) – **or**
- You must have a qualifying connection – see page 21
- If none of the above apply there are some other more complex possibilities called Common Licence or Special Licence, but these are granted as a privilege and not as a right and only in very exceptional circumstances.

The Electoral Roll: - This is a kind of ‘membership’ list of the Church of England and should not be confused with the statutory Register of Electors which is kept by the local authority. In order to go on to the Electoral Roll you should be a regular worshipper at the Church of England for a period of not less than 6 months before applying. Please speak to the Vicar about this for more details.

Where a former marriage has been dissolved and the former spouse is still living there is not (as rules presently stand) an automatic right to Marriage in the Church of England. The next section seeks to apply itself to this particular circumstance.

Once you have ascertained with the Vicar if you are eligible to be Married at The Abbey or St. Peter’s there are another set of requirements which come into force:-

- You must be able to prove that you are who you say you are. A Passport is the normal documentation or a birth certificate.
- You must give public notice of your intention to get married. This will usually be by way of Banns, although it may be by way of Superintendent Registrar's Certificate and there are some other methods. The Vicar will guide you in this.

Please note - if you are to be married following the publication of Banns, your Banns will need to be called in the Parish of Residence of the Bride, the Parish of Residence of the Groom and the Parish of the church in which you intend to be married. Depending on personal circumstances this may all be in one parish, or two, or three. Again the Vicar will guide you on this.

Once all of this is completed and in order you can be married. It sounds complex but the legalities are usually very straight forward.

Section 2 - A Wedding or a Blessing (Second time around?)

'Till death do us part' is a phrase spoken by both Bride and Groom as part of the vows made to each other. 'For as long as you both shall live' is a phrase said by the Vicar (in the role of Registrar of marriages) to both Bride and Groom as part of the consent, to which each replies 'I will'.

But marriages are known to fail.

- Sometimes (it has to be said) they have been entered into lightly, irreverently and without serious thought. Fortunately this is still a rarity.
- Sometimes people marry for lust and not for love. This is sadly not so rare.
- Sometimes people marry very young and then grow up and apart (although this is by no means always the case).
- Sometimes people marry because the cracks are already appearing in a common law relationship and marriage is seen as some kind of cement. It doesn't work and is at the root of the failure of many marriages which break up in a short time after years of living together.
- Sometimes issues brought into the marriage which have not been honestly raised during courtship cast a shadow on the relationship.
- Sometimes there is infidelity.
- Sometimes there is violence or abuse.
- Sometimes there is desertion.
- Sometimes there are other reasons.

We live in a culture where all too often marriages start 'hot' and then grow 'cold'. Criticism can be levelled against the perceived 'ease' of Divorce, but this also has to be balanced against the circumstances where a relationship sours and in former days might well have resulted in a lifetime of abuse and misery. It is very easy to say 'marry in haste, repent at leisure', but for innumerable reasons marriages fail and today the availability of divorce means that there are more and more people in second or subsequent relationships.

At the Abbey and St. Peter's we do not believe in an automatic right to remarriage in church where one or other of the parties has a previous marriage dissolved. This does not however mean that remarriage in the church is impossible. The first suggestion is that you talk to the Vicar.

This may not be easy because he will certainly touch on painful areas of the past - even though he is friendly!

At the earliest stage in any discussions we should wish to reinforce the understanding of marriage as 'an honourable estate instituted of God' and to ask of any divorcee you please do not seek remarriage in the Abbey or St. Peter's church lightly.

Because each and every circumstance is different it would be impossible to put down a set of criteria (as in the first section of this booklet) which could be used to decide whether a marriage of a divorcee could take place in the Abbey or St. Peter's.

We should however prefer NONE of the following to apply:-

- Where there is not a Decree Absolute.
- Where a former spouse would be dishonoured by the proposed marriage. This is most particularly the case where the former spouse was left for the proposed spouse.
- Where there are children by a former marriage and orders relating to alimony, maintenance or Child Support Agency payments payable by either of the proposed parties of the new marriage are not fully up to date, or where there is no clear agreement to cover the satisfaction of arrangements up until the time when those children are fully independent.

- Where there is not 'clear blue water' between a former marriage and the present time.
- Where neither party to the proposed marriage complies with the residency and / or electoral roll criteria in section one at the time of the approach.
- Where there is more than one previous marriage dissolved.

In addition to these very practical issues we would wish to encourage couples to take the time to consider a Christian understanding of marriage, perhaps at a considerably deeper level than the preparations which preceded a previous marriage.

We would also hope that part of this exploration would include a commitment to getting to know something of the worshipping fellowship at the Abbey or St. Peter's by way of more than occasional attendance at services.....most particularly we would encourage this to continue after the wedding.

All of the above may sound hard, but we wish to take very seriously the vows of marriage. Put terribly, terribly bluntly we do not wish to

- Dishonour a former spouse **or**
- Become a 'pretty' Registry Office.

And perhaps more importantly than any of the above, we don't wish to dishonour God..... we can find quite enough opportunity to do that as it is!

By the time you have got this far it is likely that you will have some understanding of where we stand, but as we stated earlier every circumstance is different. Please feel free to speak to the Vicar who might well ask you to have a chat with one of the Leadership Team here at the Abbey and St. Peter's. We don't run an inquisition - at least, not with thumbscrews - but we do wish to do what is right.

For some people there may now be a very settled past and it could be right to move on and into Marriage. For others there may be issues which are outstanding and which need to be settled.

Statistically, second marriages have a breakage rate which is higher than for first marriages. There are several reasons for this:-

- Sometimes the same mistake is made again.
- Sometimes there are unresolved issues from the first marriage which haunt the new marriage.
- Sometimes the hard work which is part and parcel of any marriage is too much - and another divorce seems the easy way out.
- Sometimes there are other reasons.

In every case of a second marriage the 'baggage' from the past should be as light as possible. Part of the Christian message is the awfully bleak understanding of the conviction of sin (or whatever you want to call the wrongdoing which hurts other people and God), but even more important there is the glorious and joyful understanding of the gift of forgiveness.

To be able to forgive and to accept forgiveness is part of the Christian life and it is wonderfully refreshing and well worth exploring. We should like to see a clear developing of faith in the lives of both persons in any second marriage proposed in the Abbey or St. Peter's.

We know (from real experiences) whatever hoops we might put up, some people will 'religiously' jump them all, and having got their nice day in a fine building it will be the last we see of them. We would find this sad and we would feel a little bit used.

Our plea to any couple seeking to take vows of lifelong fidelity, love and companionship is to see the 'church' as not simply the Vicar and the 'day', but much more as the whole worshipping fellowship. Get to know us and then we might be able to be of more support to you as you proceed to the next chapter in your lives.

In addition to all the above, should we together agree to proceed to a remarriage in church, we would seek to include as part of the marriage service a section which we call 'penitential' – which we promise will be gentle.

In any normal Christian service, particularly those of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer or Holy Communion, one of the first parts of the service is a time of reflection followed by a prayer of confession and then a statement proclaiming the promise of forgiveness. We believe it would be appropriate in every case for this gentle 'penitence' to be part of a second marriage.

By the time you get to this stage - if you have stuck it out - you will have some idea of how appropriate it will be to pursue matters at the Abbey or St. Peter's. Please do talk to us, even if you decide you might not yet be ready to consider marriage in the way we have outlined in this booklet.

Section 3 - Content & Preparations for the day.

The legalities have already been mentioned, these need to be done and please speak to the Vicar if you have any questions about these.

The very first thing to do is to remember, this is your day, not any one else's. Please don't be bullied into something you don't want and, at the risk of upsetting the providers of wedding paraphernalia, do question whether you really want the 'whizzo super dooper' (expensive) version of their wares, or will simplicity be best?

At the Abbey & St. Peter's we have the experience to help you with some of these things although the decision must in the final resort be yours.

We also have a number of people who are experienced in things such as Flowers, Cakes etc., etc., and we do have a Church Hall which can accommodate up to 100 people (though we suggest a little less than this) which can be hired subject to availability.

For the most part however, our task will relate to the Marriage Service and it is to this we now turn.

At a Church of England Marriage Service you will have a lot of options which will enable you to make your wedding unique. There are some things which are obligatory and your wedding will be a blend of both the obligatory and the optional.

First things first; you may choose to have Traditional Language or Contemporary Language. Our recommendation is, unless you are very familiar with the Traditional Language you choose the Contemporary Language Version.

The next thing to remember is to balance tradition with modernity. It might be great to have a solo jazz saxophonist playing during the registration but it might seem a little odd to have no traditional music at all. Remember that guests will include all ages.

We'll start at the very beginning - with the music.

The entrance music:

This marks the beginning of the service and it helps if the congregation recognise the music as such.

The hymns:

It really is safer to have hymns which are either well known or very easy to sing. As a rule go for well known ones. It is a good idea to have 3 hymns. Try looking for one that is a hymn of praise, one that is a hymn of love and one that is a hymn of thanksgiving. Ask around....and if in doubt, ask the Vicar!

During the Registration:

This might be the occasion for the saxophone solo. If you do not state any preferences the organist will play something appropriate, but do please consider asking a friend(s) who are GOOD singers or instrumentalists to play their part in your special day. Put simply, if they are an adult can they be good. If they are a child, can they be not bad.

The exit music:

The walk down the aisle as newly married husband and wife should be one of the great moments of your lives. Do choose music that reflects this.

All in all the music can play a major part in the service; if you stick to the following summary you should do well:-

- Is it well known; if not think very carefully.
- Is it suitable for the organ?
- Is it appropriate; do you really want 'Fight the good fight'?

What tune do you want - some well known hymns have more than one tune. Always, if in doubt, ask the Vicar.

We have a very good organist, a church choir at the Abbey, a music group at St. Peter's and soloists. All can be booked (well) in advance.

There are other things to think of in the service.

The Reading from the Bible:

The Church of England Marriage Service is a Christian Service and it is traditional to have a reading from the Bible. We ask you to provide a reader for this important part of your day. Please ask one of your relations or friends to do the reading for you. We shall want them to practice at the wedding rehearsal because reading in public is a special art and believe us, there is nothing worse than a badly read passage. Ask someone who is a confident reader.

Another Reading:

At least one reading from the Bible always forms part of an Anglican Wedding Service. If you want more than one this is very permissible. If you want a second reading which is not from the Bible this can also be possible, please talk to the Vicar. Passages from Shakespeare, poems, and various other sources might be entirely appropriate for this.

Being 'Given Away':

The bride may ask a relative (usually, but not always, her Father) to give her away.

Prayers:

The prayers in the service book are good but you or someone else may want to write your own or use one that is special to you.

In the next section, below & page 11 pencil down your choices as you decide on them.

Entrance Music	
Hymns	
Bible Reading	
Reader	
Vows: To obey or to cherish?	
Rings: One or Two	

Bride given away by	
Prayers	
Exit Music	
Music during Registration	
Any other special items	
Any other Readings	

Traditional Wedding Music

- Check out <http://www.cul.co.uk/music/wedding.htm>

- **Entrance and Exit Music**

- Bridal Music from Lohengrin by Wagner
- Bridal March by Mendelssohn
- Canon in D by Pachelbel
- Trumpet Voluntary by Clarke
- Hornpipe in D from Water Music by Handel
- Trumpet Tune by Purcell
- Grand March from Aida by Verdi
- Toccata by Widor
- Entrance of the Queen of Sheba by Handel
- Te Deum by Charpentier
- This is not an exhaustive list - choose pieces you feel right.

- **Hymns - check out**

<http://www.yourchurchwedding.org/hymns-media-player.aspx>

All things bright and beautiful
 Amazing Grace
 Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
 Christ is made the sure foundation
 For the beauty of the earth
 Give me joy in my heart
 Guide me O thou great Jehovah
 I danced in the morning when the world was begun

King of glory, King of peace
Lead us heavenly Father, lead us
Lord of all hopefulness
Love divine all loves excelling
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
Praise to the Lord the Almighty

-This list is in no way exhaustive but you may find it helpful. Talk with each other; talk to family & friends, but please don't just leave it to the one of you.

- **Traditional Bible passages suitable for Weddings**

These – and quite a few more – are suitable. Do read through them and choose one which feels right for you. We will ask you to choose a reader from your friends.

Genesis 1:26-28

Creation

This creation passage is about the creation of a new family

Matthew 7:21 & 24-27

A Firm Foundation

Tells of how we must work hard to build a relationship

John 2:1-11

Jesus goes to a Wedding

How Jesus' first miracle took place at a wedding

John 15:9-17

Love one another

Love is a commandment from God

Romans 12:1-2 & 9-13

True love changes us

A challenging passage about love and its affect upon us

1 Corinthians 13

Love never fails

How love is the greatest gift

1 John 4:7-12

God is Love

All that is love comes from God and so we should love

-The above are, as with the music, far from exhaustive. Have a look on this page - <http://www.yourchurchwedding.org/your-wedding/readings.aspx>

The Service itself....and what it contains

By now you should have an idea of what the Service is going to look like, maybe you have decided some of the options, you may even have a very clear picture.

But before we make any final decisions, let's go through the Service

From the beginning:

A Wedding is a huge mixture of people and emotions, but think of it like this. It is personal and unique to you, it is a time of spiritual exploration and it is also 'theatre'. It is my intention that your guests will go away thinking your wedding was the best they have ever been to.

When the Bride arrives and before she enters I will welcome everyone, give out any notices – the 'housekeeping' - and then read the 'Pastoral Introduction'. I will then 'fetch the bride'.

I would encourage all brides to take the entrance walk slowly and deliberately.....enjoy! Now look at:

<http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/pastoral/marriage/marriage.aspx>

The Church of England structures the service as in the left column below & page 14 I tend to adjust this a little bit – I'm allowed to! Look at the right column.

Introduction	Pastoral Introduction
The Welcome	The Welcome
Preface - the long bit	Preface - the long bit
The Declarations - Legalities	The Declarations - Legalities
The Collect	The Collect
Readings	The Marriage
Sermon	The Vows
	-continued over

The Marriage	The Giving of Rings
The Vows	The Proclamation
The Giving of Rings	The Blessing of the Marriage
The Proclamation	Registration of the Marriage
The Blessing of the Marriage	Readings
Registration of the Marriage	Short Address by the Vicar
Prayers	Prayers
The Dismissal	The Dismissal

I prefer to put the Reading(s) and the Sermon (a short address by the Vicar) after the Registration of the Marriage and before the Prayers. This is so it is addressed to the newly married husband and wife.

When the bride and groom arrive at the foot of the Chancel it is a good idea to have a hymn. So why have a hymn here? It will help the congregation settle down and feel part of the Service. It will also help the bride and groom release a little bit of tension; enjoy that first hymn!

After the hymn the service will continue with the Preface

In the presence of God.....'

This isn't just 'time filling', it does say something.....

- **In the PRESENCE OF GOD**
- **To WITNESS**--everyone in the Church is a witness,
- **To SHARE** in their Joy
- **Marriage is a gift of God**

This has been so ever since the creation.

-as a man and woman grow together in love & trust.

This should be compared with expectations. If you go into your marriage only expecting to GET, then you might be disappointed. It is much, much more about GIVING. God gave Jesus to die upon the cross, which is giving.

-may find strength, companionship and comfort

This means much more than going 'there, there' when something has gone wrong. It will mean listening; it might mean challenging the behaviour of the other.....but if this is the case, do it in private and not in public! It will mean having to set time aside daily to talk.

-marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty

If you cannot trust your partner you will sow the seeds that WILL destroy your marriage. At this time when you are preparing to marry, it is easy to see everything through rose coloured spectacles. Remember that the opportunities for extra-marital relationships will be there. Of course it doesn't mean that you should not be friends with other people, far from it, but it DOES mean that you should be a one-woman man and a one-man woman! If you can build trust, your marriage will have a much better chance of success.

-marriage is a way of life made holy by God

It mentions that Jesus was once a wedding guest, He knows about weddings, he often used the wedding as a symbol for the coming together of mankind and the Kingdom of Heaven, and it was at a wedding that he performed his first miracle. He changed water into wine. At your wedding we shall take two normal, ordinary people and turn them into something special, a new family.

-in the delight and tenderness of sexual union

The Christian view of sex is that it is very good, but like anything else it can be corrupted. Adultery is a corruption of sex; rape is another very extreme corruption. A caring and trusting husband and wife will be able, more often than not, to enjoy sex because it is vitally part of that care and trust. Through the joy, and perhaps the mishaps, of sexual union they may be strengthened in so many other areas of their lives.

-in which children are born and nurtured

Not they will, but they may. This should be something that both want. When children arrive, care must be taken to include them in the family that existed from the wedding day. Children too often supplant the relationship between husband and wife. Remember the most important relationship in a marriage is that between husband and wife. If this relationship is right, the chances are the relationship between parent and child will also be right. It must be said at this point there are a percentage of couples who will be unable to have children even though they desperately want them. If this happens to you it will, more than ever, point to the primary importance of the husband / wife relationship.....remember the vows say '**to have and to hold**'.

-marriage enriches society and strengthens community

The chances are that you are both employed and you each have a circle of friends from work and clubs and where you grew up. Get yourself involved with something

in your locality. It might help you keep your sanity if you became unemployed, or if you are at home with children all day.

-they may fulfil God's purposes.

Your marriage will be blessed by God; you make your vows in the sight of God and all those in the church on your wedding day. Those vows are just that, vows, meant for life. For goodness sake, if you do not feel that you can make those vows with honesty and integrity, please rethink now why you want to get married. It would be much better that you say 'we have made a mistake' now, than go through with a wedding you feel is doomed to failure.

-they will each give their consent

-they will join hands (I add this in)

-make solemn vows

-they will (each) give and receive a ring

This is a fourfold symbolic act that will constitute your wedding. By these you marry each other. Remember that it is you who marry each other and it is not the Vicar who does it.....though his presence is necessary!

-we pray for them

It may be that your guests are very used to praying, but it may be that for some of them it is a rarity. This is therefore an invitation to all of them to pray for you on your wedding day. There will be opportunities at the registration and at the formal prayers later to do this.

By this point we shall have stated very precisely why we are all present in the church and what we intend to do.

Now there is a question to be asked of all present and of you.

The Declarations

Firstly I ask those present if there are any reasons why you should not marry, and then I ask you, the bride and groom the same question.

The reasons include (amongst others) being under-age, incest, bigamy, insanity and, in all honesty, by the time you get to this stage you should be certain there are no reasons not to go ahead.

The next section is the first of the 4 fold shape when I ask the bridegroom and bride to give their consent. This consent is given to me as 'Registrar'.

The consent asks for promises on the following; Love, comfort, honour, protection, faithfulness. It stresses that the promise are for life. There is then a 'Collect' which is just a fancy name for a prayer.

As I have said above, I prefer to place the Readings and the Sermon later in the service so they are addressed to the new husband and wife.

The Vows

Before you exchange vows it is traditional that the bride is given away. This is an option, not a requirement and in some cases it might not be a task allocated to her father. Whoever it is, they 'give' the bride to the minister and not to the groom. The traditional reasoning behind this is that her parents give her up to the world and they have no more control over her. The bride will shortly belong to her husband, **as he will equally belong to her**. The bride and groom take hands as a sign of this. This is the second stage of the 4 fold shape.

For the vows you have a choice. The vows deal with the uncertainties of life and call upon you to remember that you have GIVEN yourselves to each other for good or bad. This is the third stage.

The Giving of Rings

This is the fourth and final stage. Usually there are two rings, but need only be one. It might be old fashioned, but it can be good to picture this as though you wear your partner's ring. It is a part of them that you wear, even when they are not physically with you. The minister describes the rings as a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, and rings are just so; unending.

The Proclamation

This confirms all these four stages have been done and that they are now husband and wife.

It is traditional (but not obligatory) to kiss. If you do – remember it is your first married kiss – Enjoy it!

I will then wrap my stole (the scarf which is the symbol of priestly office) around the newly weds' hands and draw attention this has been done in the sight of God and

command those present to do nothing to come between this husband and wife. This is addressed to everyone present.

There follows a blessing in the name of God upon the couple. The next mandatory part of the service then takes place;

Registration of the Marriage:

You will be asked to sign two registers and receive a Marriage Certificate. Please sign them as instructed as mistakes are very cumbersome to correct in this kind of document. The two official witnesses will also sign the registers and likewise we ask you to instruct them to sign as requested. It is a good idea to agree beforehand who the witnesses are and to check with the Vicar to ensure that they are suitable (i.e. over 18 etc).

After the registration you can take a deep breath.

The Bible reading:

This will be read by the person of your choice. Following this the minister will give a short address. After this address there will be a further hymn to bring the congregation back into participation in the service.

Short address by the Vicar – I promise it will be encouraging.

The service will continue with **the Prayers**.

There are any numbers of other prayers which you might consider using, should you want any others to be included tell the Vicar.

After the prayers we shall sing a final hymn, the minister will bless the couple and the congregation, and then the couple will walk down the aisle to music that should catch the flavour of the occasion.

Should you have any questions please ask the minister at any time before your wedding so you feel happy with the way your wedding will happen.

Section 4 - A guide to Service Sheets

Most weddings have a specially printed service sheet which at the very least has the hymns printed on it. Some people design and print up sheets for themselves; some have them done professionally and (at a small fee) we can do them for you.

The only restrictions are these.....

- You have the format and content agreed by the Vicar.
- You have them printed up in good time.
- If you 'do it yourself' please show the Vicar a draft for 'proof-reading'.
- Check with the Vicar about copyright of more modern hymns - we do have a Copyright Licence.

A standard Service Sheet would be as follows;-

- **FRONT PIECE---**

This would usually describe who is getting married, where and when.

It would usually be entitled "**Order of Service**".

If you would like a Black and White print of the Abbey or St. Peter's I can supply a copy on paper or via e-mail at no extra charge.

- **INSIDE PAGES---**

Would usually include the following:-

Entrance Music; Title and Composer

The **First Hymn** written out in full. (Check with me, I have a database of around 2500 hymns which are correctly typed out and I can supply a copy in the same way as the picture).

The words - '**The Marriage Service**'

The words - '**The Registration**'

If you have chosen special music for during the registration you could note what this is.

The words - '**Bible Reading**'

- Together with the title of the passage being read.

The words - '**The Address**'

The **Second Hymn** written out in full (if having only 2 hymns delete this one).

The words - '**The Prayers**'

The **Third Hymn** written out in full.

The words - '**The Blessing**'

Exit Music; Title and Composer.

Alternatively you might include only the hymns, in the right order and written out in full. If you want samples ask me for some, and I will be able to supply you.

Sometimes people include a list of 'who's doing what' – fine – just check all the spellings!

If you include hymns – please include the following words at the very bottom of the final page –

'All hymns are reproduced with permission.

Church Copyright Licensing no. 472840'

QUALIFYING CONNECTIONS

Recognising the more mobile nature of people in the 21st Century the Church of England recently changed the 'rules' relating to who could be married where.

In addition to living in the parish or being on the electoral roll there is now an additional list of 'qualifying connections'.

You may be married in the Abbey Parish – at either the Abbey or St. Peter's if either of you:

- Lived in the parish for a period of not less than 6 months.
- Was a regular worshipper in either church for a period of not less than 6 months.
- Was Baptised (Christened) in either church.
- Have parents who were married in either church.
- Have grandparents who were married in either church.

There is a bit of fine-print to this, but the above are the basic normal 'qualifying connections'.

RULES WHICH ARE PECULIAR TO THE ABBEY & ST. PETER'S

Videos (including camcorders) – These may be used only if prior arrangements have been made. Use of a video is included in the Wedding Fee. **Any video or camcorder operator so designated must use a tripod and will not be permitted to wander around the church at will.**

Photographs - There is no restriction to the taking of photographs during the service and this is included in the Wedding Fee. Please note from the moment of the entrance of the Bride through to the final blessing **NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY IS PERMITTED.**

If you have booked a 'professional' photographer for the day they will be invited to come forward to record the registration (posed immediately after the registration). Anyone taking advantage of the permission to take photographs will be expected to be entirely discrete.

Flowers – The Abbey has flowers on regular display – if you want additional flowers please speak to the Vicar in the first place.

Music, Choir or Music Group – Most initial discussions about music will probably be with the Vicar. If you require the Abbey Choir, St. Peter's Music Group and / or any non standard musical items or if you wish for any soloists with or without accompaniment please talk to our Choir contact whose details will be provided upon request. The Wedding Fee includes the services of an Organist but if you want to have a Choir this will be an additional fee negotiable with our Choir contact. If you want your own 'Organist' this may be permissible, but the fee is still due to our own Organist.

Confetti - We ask confetti be restricted to **outside the church** and **all confetti must be entirely bio-degradable.** Please ensure all confetti containers are taken away.

Smoking – It is illegal to smoke in the Abbey or St. Peter's and we would ask there be no smoking in the immediate vicinity of the front or side doors.

Mobile Phones - We will ask for these to be switched off or put on silent mode during the service.

Wedding Fees - All fees must be paid in full at least 21 days before the wedding. No fees = no wedding.

On the initial booking of a wedding we will ask for a deposit of £100.

Car Parking – Parking is available in the car park opposite the Abbey and a fee is payable at the ticket machine. We ask any parking on the Abbey's own car-park is limited to the Bridal vehicles.

Toilets – Are available in the North-West corner of the Abbey or in the Church Hall adjacent to St. Peter's

Children - We welcome children to weddings. We do however remind parents the service will take 45 / 60 minutes and they should bring a supply of appropriate 'quiet' toys etc. for smaller children. We encourage parents with young children to sit on the end of pews and, if children get fractious, we encourage parents to feel free to get up during the service and walk children around the church.

Disabled Access - The 'Bridal' entrance has steps, but our South Door is fully equipped for disabled access and there is plenty of room in the church for wheelchairs.

Collection - There is (usually) no planned collection during the service, it is however possible for the Bride and Groom to request a collection be taken (usually this would be during the final hymn) and we would suggest such a collection come in full to the Abbey to help with its general maintenance or be shared 50/50 between the Abbey and another charitable cause.

Heating – Heating is included in the Wedding Fee and will be turned on as appropriate.

Verger(s) – We supply Verger(s) to ensure the church is ready for your wedding, to welcome your guests and to ensure service sheets etc are handed out correctly. Verger(s) are included in the Wedding Fee.

Service Sheets – It is normal for couples to produce their own Service Sheets, however if you would like the Vicar to do this for you he will produce a very simple service sheet on white or cream card. Up to 50 of these are included in the Wedding Fee.

A firm booking of a Wedding at the Abbey or St. Peter's is taken to be full assent and agreement of the Bride and Groom to all these 'peculiar' rules.

I hope this booklet will have been helpful. I am always open to suggestions to improve its contents - please advise me of any shortcomings.

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