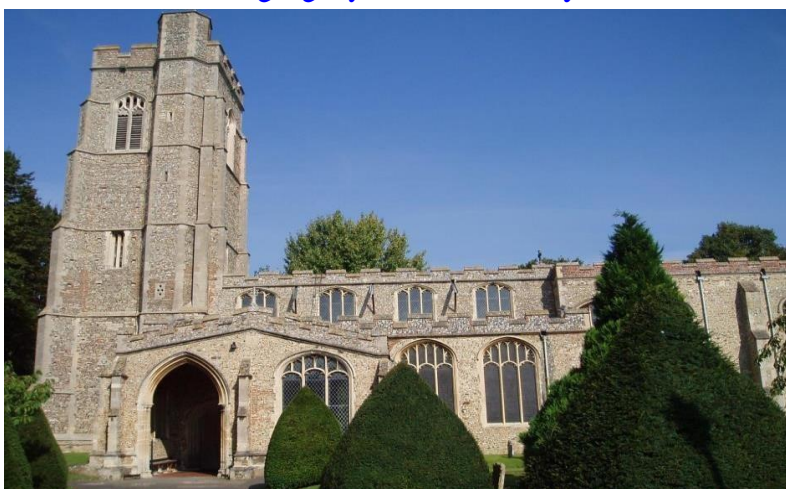


# Planning Your Wedding at St Gregory's Church Sudbury

[www.stgregorychurchsudbury.co.uk](http://www.stgregorychurchsudbury.co.uk)



NB Further information can be obtained from [www.yourchurchwedding.org](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org)

## A guide for those planning their wedding in church

Lord of love,  
we pray for these couples.  
Be with them in all their preparations and on  
their wedding day.  
Give them your love in their hearts throughout  
their married life together, through Jesus Christ  
our Lord.  
Amen.

To make an enquiry or book St Gregory's for your wedding, please contact:

Revd. Canon Cheryl Collins  
The Rectory,  
Christopher Lane,  
Sudbury CO10 2AS

**Phone:** 01787 375027  
**email:** [cheryl62collins@btinternet.com](mailto:cheryl62collins@btinternet.com)

# CONTENTS PAGE

	Page
<u>Introduction</u>	3
<u>Section 1: Booking and Planning your wedding</u>	4
The practicalities	4
The legal requirements	4
Getting married in your parish church	4
Examples of a qualifying connection	4
What if one or both of you has been married before?	5
Would you like a Wedding Blessing?	5
Banns	5
Who will take the wedding service?	6
Costs and payment	6
Bells	7
Wedding flowers	7
Wedding photography and videos	7
Confetti	7
Your perfect day	7
<u>Section 2: The Marriage Service</u>	8
What it's all about?	8
The Marriage service	8
Your vows	9
Choosing a Reading from the Bible	10
Music	10
Service sheets	11
Rehearsal	11
<u>Section 3: Useful legal information</u>	12
Getting married	12
Married by Banns	12
Married by Licence	12
Legal information	13
Changes	13

<b>Section 4: Wedding checklist</b>	<b>14</b>
A Time Frame to work to	14-17

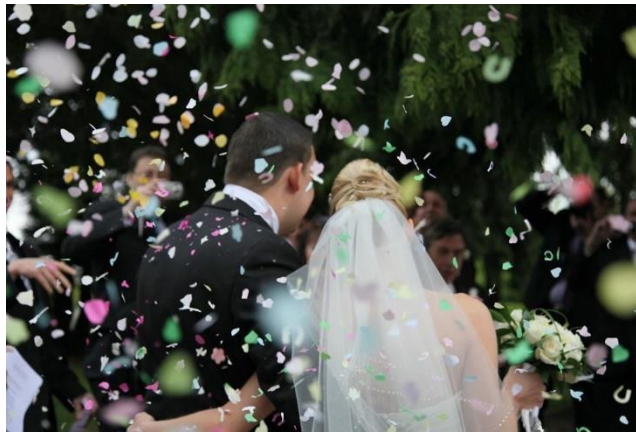
---

# Introduction

We are delighted that you are considering getting married at St Gregory's Church and we want to make the event go as smoothly as possible.

Your wedding day will be very special and memorable as you make your precious promises of commitment to love, cherish, support and care for each other. And, I'm sure you will agree, that although the rest of your lives together are even more important than just that one day, still it is really essential that that day should be perfect for you both.

**We have therefore compiled this booklet with lots of the practical information to help you in planning this special part of your wedding day.**



You will now have a lot of planning to do and we hope this booklet will be of help to you in the months to come. We have tried to cover all the aspects of the information you should need, but if you have any questions, please do ask me: -

*Revd. Canon Cheryl Collins*

*The Rectory*

*Christopher Lane*

*Sudbury*

*CO10 2AS*

*Tel.: 01787 375027*

[cheryl62collins@btinternet.com](mailto:cheryl62collins@btinternet.com)

Congratulations, we wish you joy as you make your preparations for this special day and the next step in your relationship.

You will be in our prayers.

# SECTION 1: Booking and Planning your Wedding

## The practicalities

You will need to have a planned date and time for the service. Hopefully the day and time are free (This can be any day of the week between 8am and 6pm provided it does not clash with regular commitments).

**Contact the parish administrator for an application form to fill in so we have all the important details and return the form.** One of the clergy will then make an appointment to meet you both to start planning your wedding and checking through your application.

Getting married is governed by law and legal requirements which must be followed. As the established Church, it is part of our responsibilities to act as quasi-Registrars, ensuring that your marriage is legal and you qualify to be married at St Gregory's.

## The legal requirements

There are rules governing who can be married in any particular church and whether they should be married after **Banns**, by **Common Licence** or **Archbishop's Licence**.

All of these processes are designed to ensure that you are who you say you are and that you are free to be married.

**IMPORTANT:** In Section 3 of this booklet under Useful Legal Information you will find a lot more covering legal matters which tells you the requirements to make sure your marriage is legal. Please check it though and make sure to ask if anything is not clear to you or if you are not sure if you fit a category or not.

## Getting married in your parish church

We are often asked who can be married at St Gregory's Church. The answer is, anyone free to marry under civil law (see Section 3) is entitled to get married here at St Gregory's, so long as they and their partner qualify.

In order for you to qualify, **one of you must live in the parish or have a "Qualifying Connection" with the church.**

## Examples of a qualifying connection

A "Qualifying Connection" could be that: -

- One of you was baptised in the parish or confirmed in the parish
- One of you are on the Electoral Roll of the Parish

You or your parents previously lived in the parish for at least 6 months while you were alive.  
A parent has lived in the parish or attended worship there for more than six months in your lifetime

One of your parents or grandparents was married in the parish church

At any time in your life one of you has lived in the parish or worshipped in the Church for more than six months

There is a Qualifying Connection form to fill in when we you come to meet with the minister so use the check list in Section 4 so you know what written evidence you could provide when you meet the minister.

There may be other strong family connections with the parish, not covered by the above. In some of these cases a Special License can be procured, see Section 3 below and don't be put off if you are unclear - discuss it when you come so the best solution for your personal circumstance can be arranged.

## What if one or both of you has been married before?

If one or both of you has been married before, or has been part of a dissolved civil partnership, then we may still be happy to carry out the service, but we are required to talk through your situation with you first and there is a further form to complete. We can't offer you a firm date till this process is complete, so please contact the clergy straight away to talk this through and to find out the possibilities for your marriage.

## Would you like a Wedding Blessing?

Sometimes people have been married abroad, or have had a local civil ceremony, and then come to church for a blessing. This can be booked in exactly the same way as a wedding - the only difference being that we will not need to "Call Banns" (announce in church your intention to marry), and you will not receive a marriage certificate from here (since you will receive one at the place where you are actually married).

## Banns

Before you can be married, you must have your Banns read (to find out why, see Section 3). This can happen on any three consecutive Sundays in the three months leading up to your wedding. At St Gregory's Banns are usually read at the start of the 10:00 am Sunday Parish Eucharist service on the first three Sundays of the month preceding your wedding.

You will need to have your banns called in all of the following:

The church where you are getting married.

Any church where you or your partner are a member of the electoral roll.

The church in the Parish in which you live: **IMPORTANT:** If either of you live in a parish other than the one in which you are getting married, you must contact the minister of that parish church and request your banns to be read there too—you will be charged a fee for this.

After the third reading of the banns, the minister of that church will issue you with a banns certificate. You **must** present this banns certificate to the minister who is officiating at your marriage service. The ceremony cannot proceed without it!

Most couples like to come and hear the Banns called, and we encourage you to do so; it is very useful to know what the church is like when a service is taking place. You will be told when your Banns are being called so we look forward to seeing you.

## Who will take the wedding?

It is usual for one of the clergy of St Gregory's to conduct marriages in the parish, but if you would like to be married by another Anglican vicar who you know, please let us know and we can talk this through. (It doesn't alter the fees charged)

## Costs and payment

Marriage fees are surprisingly reasonable, and will usually be a small part of the total cost of your day. The fees are set by Parliament at the beginning of each year which means that your final bill may differ slightly from these which are 2017 figures.

Church	£ 455
Banns and certificate	£ 44 (may be required from another parish also)
Marriage certificate	£ 4 (per copy)

The other fees below are optional and subject to personal requirement. Make sure you discuss these options and say which you might require so we can book appointments with the appropriate person for you as you plan your perfect wedding.

Organist's fees	£ 100 (subject to couple's requirements)
Verger	£30 (required)
Bells	£ 175 (subject to availability)
Choir	£ 75 (subject to availability)
Flowers in the church	£ 100 (approximate cost, depending on flowers and display required – We usually have some flowers in church, but if you would like a special display or colour, it is worth discussing)
Winter wedding (heating)	£ 70 (Sorry, but this is a big expense to the church and if heating specially for your service, we may need to charge this)

The fees should be paid by cheque made payable to "St Gregory's Church" four weeks before the wedding. Or, if you wish to make a bank transfer, the details are: Lloyds TSB, 30 Market Hill, Sudbury. Sort code: 30-98-31. Account name: St Gregory's Church. Account no.: 19447568  
Please email us with date and reference of transfer, if using that method.

## Bells

St Gregory's has a wonderful peal of bells. Unfortunately, there are no resident ringers but we can often arrange for visiting ringers to ring the bells for you. Please speak to us about this.

## Wedding flowers

There are always flowers in church but if you wish to add extra or have a special colour theme you are very welcome to do this. If you are having all your own flowers, please will you leave one pedestal in the church after the wedding service, in order that we have some flowers in church for the Sunday service. Just let us know what you have decided. We are also able to do the church flowers in colours or style of your choice, so it is worth asking for an appointment with the Flower Team to plan what you would like. They know the church and will give you an idea of where flowers are most effective, the cost of arrangements and flowers used. St Gregory's charge is to cover the cost of the flowers used and preparation.

## Wedding photography and video

Most couples like to have photos of their wedding. Your photographer may take photos before and after the service, as the bride enters the church, as you move down the aisle at the end and during the signing of the register, but we ask that no photos are taken whilst the ceremony is in progress because this distracts from the special atmosphere of this very important occasion. If in doubt, please ask the photographer to check before the service.

If you want a video, please ensure you ask for permission. To comply with copyright laws the church might have to make a charge for this. The recording will not be allowed to interfere in any way with the service so no extra lighting will be allowed. The organist and choir might also be entitled to a recording fee.

## Confetti

Your guests are welcome to throw biodegradable confetti, but we will ask them to keep this to the churchyard and not to throw any in the church.

## Your perfect day

In the next Section we look at the Marriage service. Much of the ceremony can be shaped and chosen by you – and, as long as you legally qualify to get married in St Gregory's Church, the legalities on the day are few, although there is a lot of tradition. However, you don't legally need to have a best man, bridesmaids, flowers, photographs, a white dress, a suit etc. – although you may well want to!

Feel free to discuss your ideas. Do remember that it is your day, and you do not have to follow all the traditions, if you would want something different.



# SECTION 2: The Marriage Service

## What it is all about?

Marriage is intended by God to be a creative relationship, as his blessing enables husband and wife to love and support each other in good times and in bad, and to share in the care and upbringing of children.

For Christians, marriage is also an invitation to share life together in the spirit of Jesus Christ. It is based upon a solemn, public and life-long covenant between a man and a woman, declared and celebrated in the presence of God and before witnesses.'

This introduction to the Marriage Service reminds us that:

*'A wedding is one of life's great moments, a time of solemn commitment as well as good wishes, feasting and joy'.*

St John tells us how Jesus shared in such an occasion at Cana, and gave there a sign of new beginnings as he turned water into wine.

In the service itself, the preface near the beginning sets out this understanding of marriage in more detail. During your marriage service, you will make lifelong promises. These are at the heart of the marriage service and some of the text is printed below.

There will be a chance to talk this through at your preparatory sessions. But it will help your preparation if you take some time together thinking about what it means for you and write your own Christian names on the dotted lines.

## The Marriage Service

### Introduction:

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.

..... and ..... 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 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.

### 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:

#### To the bridegroom:

....., will you take ..... 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.

To the bride:

....., will you take ..... 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.

To the congregation:

Will you, the families and friends of ..... and ....., support and uphold them in their marriage vow and in the years to come?

Congregation: We will.

## The vows

Usually at this point you will be invited to ‘repeat after me’, but some couples like to learn these vows off by heart. The choice is yours.

The bridegroom takes the bride’s right hand in his, and says:

I, ....., take you, ....., 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, ....., take you, ....., 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.

The rings your ring(s) are blessed:

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

The rings(s) are given, one at a time, with the following words:

..... / ....., 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 declaration

The marriage has now been made. The vicar says these splendid words:

In the presence of God, and before this congregation, ..... and ..... 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.

Their right hands are joined and the vicar says:

Those whom God has joined together let no-one divide.

## Choosing a reading from the Bible

The wedding service normally has at least one Bible reading, which is chosen from a wide range of topics such as love, commitment and the best foundations for living. Some deal more specifically

with the love of God and the example Jesus gave us. What follows gives a number of readings that are suitable. Try to get hold of a modern translation of the Bible and check them out. If you need any help, your minister will help you make the final decision.

**John 2:1-11** An account of how Jesus went with his mother and friends to a wedding and gave some miraculous assistance when all the wine had been drunk before the end of the feast.

**1 Corinthians 13** Although talking about love in a broader sense than marriage, this well-known passage is often read at weddings.

**Colossians 3: 12-17** Paul describes how important it is for Jesus to be at the centre of everything we do.

**1 John 4: 7-12** John shows that God is love, and that because of God's love, for us we too should love one another.

**Ephesians 3: 14-21** Paul prays that the reader should know the love of Christ as the very foundations of their life.

In addition to a Bible reading you may also like to include other readings of your choice. Please let the Vicar know.

## Music

There are several opportunities for you to select music during the service.

You can choose:

One, two or three hymns

Music as the bride enters the church

Music as you leave the church as husband and wife

Music to be played during the signing of the register

It is well worth getting an appointment with the organist if you would like guidance with this and to hear the music played in the church.

There is also the possibility of playing recorded music at any time in the service although you will need to get a licence for this. Whatever you chose, it is important to liaise with the minister and the organist before finalising your music.

Here is a list of some popular wedding hymns:

All things bright and beautiful

A new commandment

Be thou my vision

Dear Lord and Father

Guide me, O thou great redeemer

Lord, for the years

Lord of the dance

Make me a channel of your peace

Now thank we all our God

O perfect love

Praise my soul, the king of heaven

Amazing Grace

At the name of Jesus

Bind us together

Give me joy in my heart

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us

Lord of all hopefulness

Love divine, all loves excelling

Morning has broken

O Jesus, I have promised

Praise to the Lord

Tell out, my soul

## Service sheets

Many couples like to have a service sheet for their wedding and many people now either produce these themselves or get friends to help. The order of service may contain the words to your chosen hymns and will help the congregation to follow the stages of the ceremony.

Having a service sheet is not essential, but if you do produce one, please do not do this until after you have talked about your service with the person conducting your wedding service. It is a good idea to have the vicar check through the text before going to print just to make sure you haven't forgotten anything.

Most wedding services in the Church of England use the Common Worship marriage service. If you are on e-mail, let us know your address and we can easily send you the text of the wedding service, Bible readings and the words of hymns. It is important to acknowledge copyright on your service sheet. We can help with this when discussing the service.

## Rehearsal

We can arrange a wedding rehearsal at the church in the week before your wedding day. This is a great opportunity to calm nerves and get used to the pattern of the ceremony. It also helps, in the midst of all the last-minute arrangements, for you both to focus on the important part of getting married!

While it is only essential for the bride and groom to be present, it is helpful if the best man and giver-away are able to come. Bridesmaids, ushers and others are also welcome; it's quite a romantic occasion and can be a lot of fun. You can also sort any last-minute problems so that you can really enjoy the day.

## SECTION 3: Useful Legal Information

### Getting married

There are rules governing who can be married in any particular church and whether they should be married after **Banns**, by **Common Licence** or **Archbishop's Licence**. These processes are designed to ensure that you are who you say you are and that you are free to be married. Therefore, if you are in any of the categories below, you must let your priest know straightaway:

If either of you will be under 18 on the proposed day of marriage.

If either of you has a spouse still alive from a previous marriage.

If either of you has ever entered into a civil partnership under the terms of the Civil Partnership Act of 2004.

If you are related to one another by blood or marriage.

If one of you is not a British Citizen.

If either of you is being coerced into marriage.

If you have any reason to suppose the legality of your proposed marriage will be challenged, appropriately or otherwise - e.g. after Banns or at the ceremony itself.

### Married by Banns

There are three groups of people who are able to get married after the reading of Banns in an Anglican parish church -

Those who live in the parish

Those who are on the Electoral Roll of the Parish

Those who have a qualifying connection (explained earlier on pages 4-5)

Please discuss it with the minister as soon as possible if you are unclear on this. In certain circumstances a Common Licence may be required e.g. if either of you resides outside England and Wales. Foreign nationals from outside the European Economic Area need a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate or an Archbishop's Licence where there is no qualifying connection.

### Married by Licence

If you will need to be married under Archbishop's Licence, then you will need to telephone the Church of England Faculty Office to ask for a form of "Application for a Special Marriage Licence". (Open Monday - Friday 10.00h - 16.00h. Telephone number: 0207 222 5381). When you have received it, before starting to fill it in, arrange to meet your priest and complete the application with him/her; answers to some questions are best phrased in accepted ways. The Faculty Office advise that application for a Licence should be made "immediately the officiating minister has agreed to solemnize the marriage and not [left] ... to the last moment. Applications may be made up to 18 months in advance". There is a charge for such a Licence, payable to the Faculty Office.

Note that the granting of a Licence is at the absolute discretion of the Archbishop - there is no appeal from his refusal. The Archbishop is especially keen to see some worshipping connection with a parish if no other qualifying connection exists. "Couples should be dissuaded from proceeding with other arrangements until the Faculty Office has indicated that a Licence will be granted".

Note that if a Licence is granted, banns are not published.

***It is your responsibility to ensure that the necessary legal preliminaries to marriage are completed in time. If they are not, you may have to postpone your wedding.***

## Legal Information you need to know

In order for the marriage to be legal the Bride and Groom and the minister must be present. You will also need two witnesses who must attend the service and who must be over 18 years of age to sign the registers.

By law, a wedding is a public event and must be open to all.

Legally, a wedding can only take place between the hours of 8am and 6pm and you can get married on any day of the week.

## Changes

If any of your details change (especially your address) after you have booked your wedding, it is vital that you let us know, as it could affect your legal entitlement to get married in St Gregory's Church.

***Please let us know in writing if you need to change, postpone or cancel your wedding.***

Wishing you every blessing in this new chapter of your life together.

# SECTION 4: Wedding planning checklist

## Time Frame

Book the date for your wedding and get an application form to complete and return.

Date and time of wedding .....

If either or both of you have been married before, you need to ask to have the special form for that situation sent to you to complete also. The minister need to see this form before arranging a first meeting, but if you have discussed it already, you can bring them with you to your first meeting.

Set date of meeting with your minister (date, time, place): .....

.....

## Things to do at the first meeting with the minister

Make sure you have the name, address and telephone number of the minister who is to conduct the service (see page 3), and ensure that you are agreed on the church, date and time of the ceremony, and that s/he has all the details s/he needs from you both.

Provide photographic ID and birth certificate	Bride	Groom
---	-------	-------

Provide proof of address or qualifying connection	Bride	Groom
---	-------	-------

Bring your completed application form with you if you have not already sent it to the parish administrator. If you move, or your telephone number changes, or there are other significant alterations, please let the minister know at once. Changes of address may mean you cannot legally be married in the church you have agreed.

Check whether you need Banns read in another parish also and if so do you know who to contact?

Or if you will need a special licence to marry. If you do, it is important that you apply for it as soon as possible because nothing can be finalised until this is agreed.

## Other things to begin to think about

Start planning who will be your **Best Man**: .....

**Who will give the bride "away"** ..... and who else will make up your bridal party, e.g. Ushers, bridesmaids, witnesses etc.

.....

Have you picked a **photographer** .....

Do you want an **organist** and would you like an appointment to discuss your music with our organist? Let us know so arrangements can be made.

.....

Would you like the **choir** to sing? Yes / No

Would you like to have the **bells rung**? Yes / No

Would you like to talk about **flowers** with our Flower team? Again, let us know so an appointment can be arranged.

.....

### About 3 months before the wedding

At least three months before you are due to be married, you should arrange to meet your minister

Set date of meeting with your minister (date, time, place): .....

You will need to agree on which service you wish to use, and where necessary, which options within the service, and whether you would like communion at the same time. (There are currently three marriage services that are legal for Church of England use, and one that may, with the bishop's specific permission, be used for the marriage to a Christian from a different church. Your minister will advise you about these).

Confirm readings and who will be reading: .....

.....

Confirm hymns and other music: .....

.....

Any additional material to be used in the service: .....

.....

Agree the text and arrangement for producing an Order of Service, if you wish to use one.





## At the rehearsal

It is helpful if the following people can attend: the bride and groom, the best man, the bridesmaids and page-boys; the person giving away the bride, (if anyone is), anyone who is reading, singing, etc. in the service

In addition, parents of the bride and groom are welcome, as are ushers and people who are to be witnesses on the day. It will be helpful if you bring a dozen or so Orders of Service, if you will be using them at the wedding and you may also find pen and paper useful.

It is essential that if you have not already given them to your minister, that you bring with you your certificate(s) of publication of Banns in any other church, if you had needed these, and/or any payment if any is still outstanding. Without these the wedding can't go ahead.

## Getting married in church ... and then?

When you get married in St Gregory's, you carry with you the blessings of the Church and the prayers and goodwill of the congregation. It is always a pleasure when couples who are to be, or have been, married in church come to meet that church community at one of the regular services. Please accept our warm invitation to do so. If you have not previously been used to attending church, we will try to make you feel at home without overwhelming you, and, if you wish, someone will sit with you and guide you discretely through the service - just ask on your way in. It is particularly lovely when a couple comes to church to hear their Banns read, however please don't worry if you are unable to come, there is no legal requirement to do this.

I wish you great happiness in your life together.

### If things go wrong ...

At the beginning of married life, it may be difficult to imagine that later on, your life together may become problematic; or the world outside your marriage may throw at you difficulties that can seem insurmountable. Families may be too far away to be able to help when the going gets tough, or, not uncommonly, they are the cause of problems. Children, debt, alcohol and domestic violence can be other common sources of anxiety.

At such times, there are almost always other people who can give assistance, and it is almost always worth seeking help. **The clergy are one source of help that may not come to mind at first.** Most clergy have a broad experience of life, and are virtually unshockable. They are free, and will try to be impartial and available (and not just to regular church-goers). They will also maintain complete confidentiality if you wish.

If you think they may be able to help, or if you would like someone simply to listen, please do not be shy of asking. If you do not know your local clergy, the noticeboard to be found outside almost every church, or inside the porch, will usually give contact details or you may find [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com) or the Church of England website [www.england.anglican.org](http://www.england.anglican.org) or [www.cofe.anglican.org](http://www.cofe.anglican.org) are helpful starting places.