

### **What is marriage?**

Marriage, according to the Church of Scotland, is a partnership which lasts for life between one man and one woman. Marriage is about companionship, where there is real giving and receiving, helping and being helped, caring and being cared for. Each of you is wholly committed to caring for and looking after the interests of the other.

### **Why get married?**

Nowadays, lots of people feel that they can get along fine just by living together which is of course their choice. Marriage is different, because unlike cohabitation there is a public declaration by the couple to the world that they are now together. It is more than a piece of paper, it involves people showing that they love one another and promising to be committed to each other.

Marriage isn't just the wedding day rather it is life long companionship, love and respect. Promises are made on the day, promises- which are to be kept., in good times and in tough times. And the fact that such promises are made help people to face the good times and the tough times together.

The church also believes that a stable marriage is the best place for children to be brought up and stable marriages make a difference to the society in which we live.

### **God is with you as you get married**

We really do wish God's richest blessing on you both as you take this important step in your lives. As Christians, we believe God has quite a bit to do with your wedding. You have asked to be married in church, where people meet week by week to worship God. You make your solemn promises to each other, and also before God who is aware how these promises are kept in the years ahead. We also believe that God can help you, because he cares for you. You can come to him in worship, and you can talk to him in prayer. We would very much like to see you around church, if you care to come. If you would like to learn more about the God of love we worship, just have a word with the minister.

### **Who can get married in church?**

The policy of the church is to marry anyone who is a member of the church or a son or daughter of a member, or anyone who lives within the parish. You don't have to be a member of the church to be married in church. However, as we have already said, you want God to be involved if you are being married in a church and we are happy to let you have any further information you might wish.

If either of you has been married before, you must let the minister know. The minister may be prepared to marry those who have been married before, and this must be discussed fully. During the marriage service mention is generally made of the fact that we have all made promises in the past and these have been broken and we need sincerely to say sorry to God that we have not kept our word. But we also believe God is a God who forgives us when we are truly sorry, and so we will pray that you will know God's peace and his blessing upon your marriage. If you wish to discuss this further with the minister, please contact him.

### **The Marriage Schedule**

**This is critical.** You must give notice of your wedding to the registrar in the district where you will be married. You should do this 10 to 12 weeks before the Wedding and not later than 29 days. They will issue a marriage schedule. Your marriage cannot proceed unless you hand this to the minister. There is no way round this at all, so do make sure you have it. Please also note that the Schedule, duly completed, has to be returned to the Registrar within three days of the marriage taking place.

### **Witnesses**

Your marriage must be witnessed by two people over the age of sixteen. They, together with each of you, sign the Schedule after the marriage has been solemnised.

### **The Wedding Rehearsal**

It is a good idea to run through the wedding service beforehand, normally on the night or two before the wedding.

### **Flowers**

For access to the church please contact the Church Officer whose details are printed at the end of this leaflet.

### **Photographs**

Since your Wedding takes place in the context of a service of worship the policy of the church is that photographs are not to be taken during the wedding service itself. Photographs can be taken before the service, signing the Register and walking up the aisle as you leave the building but other than those occasions no photography will be permitted during the service. It is your responsibility to inform your photographer of this policy and to inform them than the Minister has liberty as he conducts the service to remind people of this and if need be halt the service.

### **Videos**

For the same reasons as above, the policy of the church is that videotaping wedding services is permitted, provided (a) the video camera remains static throughout the service; (b) the camera is placed in a discreet position so as not to interfere or detract from the service itself and (c) no additional artificial lighting apart from the church's normal lighting is used. It is your responsibility to inform the person videoing of this policy and to inform them than the Minister has liberty as he conducts the service to remind people of this and if need be halt the service.

### **Alcohol**

It is not permitted to drink any alcohol within the church building. Anxiety about the service is to be expected but any such anxiety can easily be handled without the need for alcohol. The minister reserves the right to delay or even postpone the service if this policy is not adhered to.

### **Fees**

Fees set by the Kirk Session are due to the church officers and to the organist for their time, since this takes place out with their normal duties. The fee also covers the cost of the use of the building and covers the CCL licence costs.

The current fees are: £300 which consists of £200 for church use, £50 church officer and £50 organist fees. The latter two can be given directly on the day, the church fee can be given to the minister at the rehearsal.

### Music at your wedding

It is the minister's job to decide the hymns to be used at weddings (just as with all other church services). However he is only too pleased to discuss the choice of hymns with the bride and bridegroom and to agree with their requests provided they are suitable. There is no need to have hymn sheets printed as we can print the words on a sheet, but if you are specially ordering an order of service, the minister should always be consulted before the order is put in.

There are lots of hymns, traditional and modern, which are suitable for singing at a wedding service. The minister is happy to help you select appropriate ones.

Our organist will be delighted to help you choose music to be played at the beginning and end of the service. His details are below.

### Marriage isn't just the Wedding!

We want this day to be very special for you, and we hope that it will be the first of many very enjoyable days of married life. We will do all we can to make sure you have a lovely day to remember, but if you have any questions or concerns we do ask that you mention these sooner rather than later!

If you are living in the area, we would be very pleased to see you along at church where we will make you feel as welcome as we can. If you ever need to discuss matters concerning your marriage, remember that we aren't just here for the big day, but for every day.

If you will be living in the area after you are married, why not think about coming along to church? While there's no requirement to come to church to be married, being married here means this is a special place for you and you may well find real benefit from coming along to worship with us.

### What Happens on the day?

The ushers should report to the church about 45 minutes before the service is due to begin. The Bridegroom and Best Man should arrive about 20 minutes before the service is due to begin. The Bride has the right to arrive a little late, but not too late! Out of respect for the guests, a maximum of 5 minutes is allowed for photographs outside church before the service begins.

The order of the Marriage Service can be altered if you wish, by speaking with the minister. However, the general pattern is this:

Opening Voluntary played on Organ  
Welcome to everyone  
Hymn  
Explanation of marriage and its purpose  
Prayer  
Marriage Vows taken  
Exchange of rings  
Bible readings  
Short Address by minister  
Prayer  
Hymn  
Benediction  
*(At this point the service proper is concluded)*  
Signing Marriage Register  
Procession from church while congregation stands.

#### Minister

Rev Gary Caldwell  
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#### Church Officer

Jean Protopapadakis  
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#### Organist

Michael Nolan  
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# Getting married in St Blane's

*Some information to help you*



We're pleased that you're thinking of getting married, and that you would may like to be married in church. We want to help you have not just a day to remember, but very many happy days of married life. However, we live in the real world and we know that it's becoming harder all the time to keep a marriage strong. That's why we want to help you to build a good, firm bond between you which will remain strong for many years to come.

We think that the best time to start building that strong bond isn't on the wedding day, but is right now! The promises which you make on the special day are very important, but they aren't the whole story! We would very much like to help you to think through some of the main issues about marriage in the months leading up to your wedding. We take very seriously the words of Jesus, that marriage is a lasting union between one man and one woman which, in an ideal world, will last for the whole time both partners are alive.