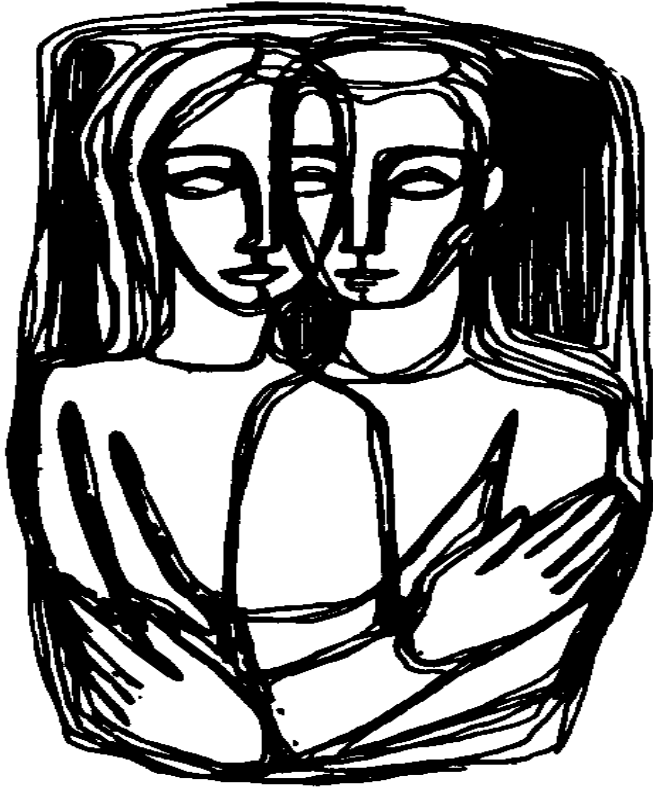


The United Benefice of West Wycombe,
Bledlow Ridge, Bradenham and Radnage



Getting Married

A Guide for Couples

We are blessed with some beautiful churches in our Benefice which are popular for weddings. This leaflet is to guide you through the procedure for arranging a wedding and is a brief summary of both the

legal and ecclesiastical procedures which have to be followed. It is not exhaustive and if you have any query please contact one of the clergy.

•If you live in one of our parishes

Your marriage can be solemnised in the parish church of the parish in which you live. Banns will be read in the church on three Sundays a few weeks before the wedding. Many couples like to be in church to hear them read.

•If you do not live in the parish in which you wish to be married

There are two ways to do this. Normally, in order for you to be married in the church of your choice you will both need to be on the electoral roll of that parish. To do this requires regular attendance at Sunday services for a **minimum** period of six months. This must be born in mind when choosing a date for the wedding. Regular attendance is defined as being at least twice a month and we do insist on this. It is also a requirement for enrolment that the person is a baptised member of the Church. We can arrange to baptise you if necessary.

There are some changes to the marriage rules which mean that a marriage can take place in the church of your choice provided that at least one of you-

1. Was baptised in parish
2. Has an entry for confirmation recorded in the parish register of the parish you wish to be married in.
3. Has had a usual place of residence in that parish for at least 6 months.
4. Has habitually attended worship at the parish for at least 6 months
5. A parent has lived in the parish for at least 6 months during your lifetime.
6. A parent has habitually attended worship for at least 6 months.
7. A parent or grandparent was married in the parish.

•Marrying someone who is a foreign national

It is strongly recommended by the Church of England that any

marriage involving a foreign national should be by common licence. In these cases it is desirable that the person making application for a licence should produce a document from the appropriate Embassy or Consulate to certify that there has been compliance with all the preliminary legal formalities necessary to enable a marriage in England. Also there will need to be evidence that the marriage will be accepted as valid in the country of origin. The granting of a Common Licence is discretionary and not a matter of right. A licence will not be granted where neither person has been baptised.

More details can be had from the clergy.

•Re Marriage in church of a divorcee during the lifetime of a former partner.

We welcome those who are divorced who come to church seeking the opportunity for Christian marriage. However, a remarriage will only be carried out after an interview with one of the clergy. The practice in this Benefice is to follow the House of Bishop's Guidelines. These require us to ask you questions about the previous marriage and the circumstances in which it ended. Careful consideration is then given over the decision to re marry.

The refusal to take the service in these circumstances is final, and there is no process of appeal to the Bishop in the Church of England. A minister is also within his or her rights to refuse to allow a particular church to be used for this purpose by another minister. At the same time, it is not possible for divorcees to search for another church where there may be a sympathetic minister prepared to take the service because of the legal restrictions on where couples may marry .

Occasionally a couple prefer a service of blessing after a civil marriage. Sometimes couples who have been married for some time also appreciate a Service for the Renewal of Marriage Vows, to give thanks for their marriage. If you would like to know more about these please ask one of the clergy.

Benefice Clergy

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