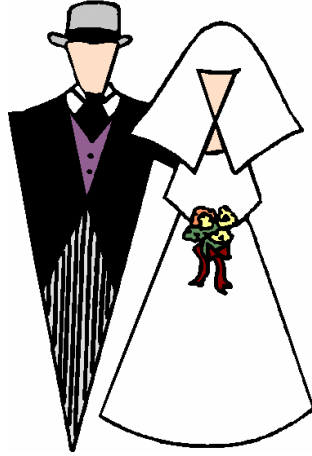




Getting married in Church



You've asked to get married in our church. Good! We want to help you discover what your request might mean. We want to give you a clear idea of what the Church believes about marriage so that you are sure this is really what you want, and that it's appropriate for you.

The Church takes its beliefs about marriage from the Bible, which we believe is God's word to us. The Bible gives a sort of definition of marriage when it says:

"A man shall leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

In consequence of this, we believe marriage should be:

Important

There is no other human relationship as deep or fulfilling as marriage. That means that you need to think deeply about why you want to be married in church. Is it because you think the ceremony will be "nicer" or because you think you "ought to"? If that's the only reason perhaps you should think again. We believe that getting married being aware of the presence of God is more important than that. Do you really believe God watches over us? Do you want to know more of what He asks of you? If you do, then be willing to find out more. We ask all couples to attend a short series of preparation sessions before the wedding.

Exclusive

There is no place for a "third party" in marriage - it's for one man and one woman. We don't believe in so-called "open marriage". We are sure that you both intend to be faithful to each other through good and bad times, and we are sure that God will help you in this.

Lifelong

God's design for marriage intends that the relationship should last for the whole of our lives, and so we are not in favour of divorce. The marriage bond is permanent and should not be entered into lightly. As a church, we have a responsibility to uphold God's principles as set out in the Bible. The only exception Jesus allowed for divorce was the marital unfaithfulness of the other partner. In the case of a marriage broken in this way we feel able to re-marry the other partner - though we recognise that no-one is totally innocent in such circumstances.

Sexual

Sex is an important part of marriage. God gives it to us as His wedding gift. We believe that sex is to be discovered within marriage and is part of the commitment we make to our partners. We believe that keeping sex within marriage is the way to know more of God's blessing of your marriage relationship.

God-centred

God gave marriage for all people, not just for committed Christians. Yet we believe that the revolution in life that we find when we accept Jesus as our Lord is the biggest factor in finding true fulfilment in marriage. We would ask you to attend our church for at least a few weeks to find out more about the God we serve. After all, you want to get married in His church, and you want Him to bless your marriage, so why not get to know Him a little better first?

Ask yourselves: Do you really want God as part of your married life? Are you prepared to take this seriously? Will you take on a few preparation sessions? Would you seriously consider attending Church? Do you accept the basis of Christian marriage that this leaflet presents? If you can answer "yes" to these questions then our Minister will arrange to see you again and talk through the details.

If you have any questions about anything on this leaflet or anything else please do get in touch with our minister, Wayne Clarke on 280 7253

