



Getting Married in Church in the Vale of Pewsey 2026

A Guide to Arrangements for Weddings in

St. John the Baptist, Pewsey

St Mary, Alton Barnes

St Stephen, Beechingstoke

All Saints, Stanton St Bernard

St James, North Newnton

St Peter, Manningford Bruce

St Mary Magdalene, Woodborough

St Nicholas, Huish

Holy Trinity, Oare

Holy Cross, Wilcot

St Peter, Milton Lilbourne

Holy Trinity, Easton Royal

St Andrew, Wootton Rivers

St Peter, Charlton St Peter

St Matthew, Rushall

St Mary, Upavon

January 2026

Welcome to The Vale of Pewsey Churches

*Team Rector: Canon Rhona Floate
Team Vicar`: The Reverend Mark Windsor
Team Vicar: The Reverend Hazel Davies
Assistant Curate: The Reverend Matthew Haynes
Associate Priests: The Reverend Ann Massey
The Reverend Robert de Berry
Canon Gerald Osborne
Team Administrator: Mrs Brenda Woodrow*

Being married in church means something very special for many people because God has an important place in their lives. Each year lots of couples plan to start their married life with a church wedding, because it really matters to them to make their marriage vows in the context of Christian worship. Christians believe that God is the source of all love, and they want to know that they have his support and blessing as they set out together on a new and different stage of their lives. We are great believers in Christian marriage and hope that you are ready to take that step for your future.

Preparation

This leaflet provides you with most of the basic information that you will need about getting married in church, and we will do our best to help you prepare for your wedding and to make sure that everything is right on the day. Marriage is not just about the wedding day and, in addition to meeting with your officiating minister, we may invite you to a marriage preparation day to give you an opportunity to think further about your life together. This is led by people with a great deal of experience of married relationships and is a valuable time for those preparing to get married during the year.

SOME THINGS YOU WILL NEED TO KNOW

Eligibility – Currently, qualification to be married in the parish church is restricted by law to those who actually live in a parish or, as regular members of the congregation, have their names on the church's Electoral Roll. In addition, those who have a 'Qualifying Connection' with a parish may be able to be married there. If you're not sure if you qualify, please check with the clergy through the Team Office; you will find contact details inside the back of this leaflet.

Banns – Before your marriage can take place, it is a legal requirement that the public must be given notice of your intention to marry – in theory so that anyone who knows of any 'impediment' (or legal bar) to your proposed marriage can say so. In most cases, this is done by your 'Banns' being read out in church on three (usually consecutive) Sundays in both of your parishes of residence. If either or both of you live in another parish, it is your responsibility to make sure that your Banns are published in the other parish(es), and that you arrange to collect the certificate issued by the other church and give it to the Priest who will be taking your service. If you are not sure which is your parish church, you may find the website www.achurchnearyou.com helpful. Put in your postcode and it should identify your local Anglican church and tell you how to make contact.

There are a few cases in which the publication of Banns is inappropriate – for example, if one of you is not a British citizen. The legal requirement can be met in several other ways, all of which involve extra cost – Special Licence from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Common Licence from the Bishop of the Diocese, or Superintendent Registrar's Certificate. We will advise you as to which procedure applies to you.

Whether you marry after Banns or by Licence, we are required to check your ID and nationality (usually by seeing your passport).

Meetings with clergy - The officiating minister will need to see both of you together at least twice to help you plan the content of your marriage ceremony and to take the details necessary for the legal documents.

Booking the church – Getting married in church is more than just an event. It is something rooted in your local community and touches hopes and dreams, and our sense of the sacred and special. When you ‘book’ a wedding in church, it is not like booking a venue. The fees do not give ‘rights’; they are for the legal costs of marriage, the time of the officiating minister and a statutory contribution to the ministry of the church. The service and the decorations should be appropriate for a country church and if you have plans for something more elaborate, please discuss them with us before making a firm booking.

Date and Time – Most church weddings are on Saturdays, but they don't have to be; if you have a different day in mind, discuss it with the clergy, and we will do our best to meet your request. If, however, we have several weddings in one church on the same day, we allow at least two hours between services to avoid feeling hurried.

Marriage Service – The form of service from The Church of England's *Common Worship* is used for most marriages. In consultation with the clergy, you will need to choose a Bible reading, hymns and other music. The officiating minister will go through the service with you in detail to help you in your planning. Ideas can also be found on <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/your-church-wedding>.

Marriage Certificate – Churches no longer issue marriage certificates. It is your responsibility to contact the Registration Service ahead of your wedding to pre-book and pay for your marriage certificate(s). Email ceremonies@wiltshire.gov.uk or telephone 0300 003 4570 for more information. The certificate(s) will then be issued after they receive the signed marriage document from the church minister. We will post your certificate to the Register Office using the standard first class postal service.

Rehearsal – It will be necessary to arrange a rehearsal, usually one evening in the week before the wedding. Obviously, both the bride and the groom must be there, but if possible, the bride's father (or whoever is walking her up the aisle), the best man and at least the principal bridesmaid should also try to be there. Others are welcome to come too. If you are having a video recording made, it would be helpful for the recordist to come, and

sometimes it's a good idea for your photographer to be there too, to agree in advance what is possible.

Music – You will need to decide what music will be played as the bride enters the church, and as the bride and groom leave after the service. There is a wide range of suitable music, but we suggest that you discuss it with the organist to make sure he/she is happy to play what you want. The clergy will tell you how to contact the organist who will be playing for your wedding.

Hymns – Most people have two or three hymns in their marriage service and, unless you are having your own printed Order of Service, these should be selected from the hymn books in use at the church in which the service is to be held. It is very important to choose hymns that the congregation will know, because if they don't know them, they won't sing them! You can borrow hymn books to help you make your choice, or the clergy will be happy to help you make your selection.

Readings – There are many wonderful readings that can be used at a wedding. As the service is in a place of Christian worship, we expect at least one of those readings to be from the Bible. Your officiating minister will be happy to advise and make suggestions.

Orders of Service – Please let the officiating minister see a proof copy of your order of service before going to print to make sure that everything is in the right order.

Photographs and Videos – There is a general rule that members of the congregation are not allowed to take photographs during the service, but your 'official' photographer is welcome to consult with the officiating minister on what might be permitted before, during and after the service. Video recordings and live streaming are permitted if technically feasible – again, subject to discussion with the officiating minister. It is important that the taking of photos or videos doesn't disturb the "flow" of the service or act as a distraction from everyone's enjoyment of the occasion. If the photographer and/or video recordist cannot come to the rehearsal, it is

important that he/she sees the minister before the service starts, to agree on positioning, etc.

Please note that for video recording and/or live streaming, you must ensure that you are covered by a performing rights licence (PRS – Limited (LM) Licence) from <https://www.prssformusic.com/licences/releasing-music-products/limited-manufacture>. Charges for this vary.

You will be asked to send a copy of your licence to the minister officiating in advance of the service. Further information is also found at :
<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/your-church-wedding/planning-your-ceremony/filming-wedding>.

Flowers – We have flowers in each of our churches most of the time, except in Advent and Lent. In some, but not all of our churches, the regular flower arrangers may be willing to arrange the flowers for your wedding. We normally expect the flowers to remain in the church for Sunday services, but if your wedding is during Advent or Lent, you are asked to arrange for the flowers to be taken away after the service.

If you plan to arrange the flowers yourself or employ a florist, you must discuss your proposals with the church's flower arrangers before making any final arrangements, just to make sure that your plans are acceptable. Yours may not be the only function taking place in the church!

Confetti – Throwing confetti is traditional and part of the fun! However, as it's not easy to clear up, so we ask you to make sure that your guests save the confetti until you get to the end of the church path. We also ask you to ensure that your guests do not bring plastic glitter confetti, which is not bio-degradable.

General Points - You will need to choose at least two witnesses to sign the marriage document. Typically, these may be any combination from the mothers, fathers, best man and bridesmaids, but you can choose anyone (over 16 years old) to be your witnesses. We suggest that your guests should arrive no more than half-an-hour before the service begins. If you are having

ushers, their main role is to conduct members of the congregation to their seats, but it is helpful if they also assist with tidying the church afterwards. Please note that those responsible for the upkeep and running of the church will do their best to ensure that the church is in good order for your wedding, but please bear in mind that our churches are witnesses to the Christian faith and may have children's work or other artwork on display. The work is usually to one side or by the entrance to the church and is not moved for occasional services such as weddings. Noticeboards and displays are not to be moved or covered.

What does it cost?

There are statutory fees (set nationally) for the calling of your Banns and for your marriage service. In addition, there are local fees for the verger, the organist, and for the bells (which varies between the churches, according to the number of bells). The fees for **2026** are as follows:

Statutory Legal Fees

Marriage Service	£566.00
Banns (in parish of wedding)	£39.00
<u>£605.00</u>	

Additional Fees

Not all of these will be applicable in every case, please check with your Vicar.

1. Seasonal Heating £40.00
2. Verger £30.00
3. Organist - fees may vary but please budget for £80-£120, (or more if special choir practice is required)
4. Choir (in Pewsey) £100.00
5. Bells (Pewsey, Milton Lilbourne, Wootton Rivers, Upavon only) £150
6. Car Park (at Woodborough) £35.00.
7. Church Flowers - check locally for suggested donation if the church flower arranger team have agreed to provide the flowers for your wedding.

Payment of Fees

An invoice will be sent to you before the Banns are read, with payment due one calendar month before the wedding. Most couples find it convenient to pay this electronically, details of which are on the invoice. However, the

bellringers and church choir, if we have arranged this on your behalf, should be paid in cash, so we ask you to bring cash for these in marked envelopes to the rehearsal.

If you need any more information, please get in touch with a member of the clergy or the Team Office.

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