
Fisherwick Presbyterian Church

GETTING MARRIED



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INTRODUCTION

Marriage in church is an agreement between three parties, a man, a woman and God. Ecclesiastes says 'a cord of three strands is not easily broken'. All of the arrangements, the form of service and the post service reception and party should reflect this. However, the marriage is not between any man and any woman but between you and you, two unique individuals whom God created and designed for each other. The service and the day should also reflect your individual personalities and tastes. You will discover, if you haven't already, that you have had differing upbringings and that your families think differently about surprising things. Things that are unimportant to you may be vital to one or other family, and vice versa. One of the most important rules is not to allow any such differences to take your mind off the central purpose of celebrating your love for each other and God's love for you both. This plus patience and sometimes a lot of talking can solve most problems.

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

You will be given a draft of an order from a previous wedding. This is not prescriptive – you may alter the order, the contents, and the style as seems right. Keep the minister involved at all times. The absolute essentials are the exchanging of vows and declaration of marriage.

Scripture readings, prayers, hymns or songs, either sung together or as solos or anthems accompany these. The entire service may be taken by the Minister or Assistant Minister, or your friends and family may participate in readings, prayers etc.

A second minister may also take part either as a friend or from the other party's church.

You need to choose the hymns or songs and the music to be played before and after the service, and whilst the registers are signed. You should consult with the Director of Music about these and about any soloists as well. Always remember that wedding guests may be unfamiliar with some hymns or tunes that you know well.

Choose also the lessons to be used in the service and who will read them. We can supply suggestions but within reason any passage of scripture may be used and it is possible to have other readings if appropriate in addition.

You will receive a copy of the vows used here. These can be used in traditional or contemporary language, or where you do not wish to use the full vow, you may substitute an 'I do' response to the vow asked as a question.

In making the choices seek to keep the pattern of the service as a whole in mind so that all runs smoothly.

NOTICE OF MARRIAGE

Notice of all marriages has to be given to the Registrar of the District where the marriage is to be solemnised. (In the case of Fisherwick, Belfast City Hall).

Residency by both of the parties in the district where the marriage is to be solemnised is no longer required. Both parties will have to give notice in writing, to the Registrar of the District in which they wish to marry.

Notice may be given up to one year in advance of and no less than 28 days before the date of marriage. Notice may be given by post.

The Officiant must sign one or both of the marriage notice forms to indicate that he or she is willing to solemnise the marriage.

Parties will be required to produce birth certificates or passports when giving notices.

REHEARSAL, FLOWERS, MUSIC, and FEES

Rehearsal

It is usual to hold a rehearsal one or two nights before the wedding so that all involved might be at their ease on the day. Those required are the bride, groom, best man, grooms- men, bridesmaids (or the witnesses where there are no bridesmaids, best man etc.), father of the bride (or whoever is giving her away) and the ushers (if it is a large wedding where their role in seating guests and keeping the day going is crucial). Often both sets of parents come too. However where this involves someone travelling a great distance for a half-hour rehearsal, it is not necessary that they should come.

Flowers

If you intend to put flowers in the church, you must contact the Church Office 028 90666683 (email office.fisherwick@gmail.com) about access to the church for the arranger and to know if you are leaving any of them so that the Flower Secretary knows not to arrange flowers for the following Sunday.

Music for Your Wedding

You must consult with Fisherwick's Director of Music and Church Organist, Neale Agnew, to discuss music arrangements for your wedding. The Church Office will put you in touch with Neale. A fee for the Director of Music may apply following your meeting with Neale depending on the detail of the musical

requirements for the wedding. Contact the Church Office on 028 90666683 (email office.fisherwick@gmail.com).

Church Fees:

Church Officer Fee

There is a Church Officer fee payable to Fisherwick Presbyterian Church for the Church Officer to attend the rehearsal and wedding day to operate the sound system and manage logistics. Details from the Church Office on 028 90666683 (email office.fisherwick@gmail.com).

Hire Fee

There is no hire fee for the use of the church if you are church members. If you are not a church member you will be asked to contribute a fee for the hire of the church. Details from the Church Office on 028 90666683 (email office.fisherwick@gmail.com).

Couples who have no relationship with Fisherwick may hire the church for their marriage ceremony provided that the ceremony is a Christian service consistent with the PCI policy on Christian marriage and is to be conducted by a recognised minister or pastor. Details of the ceremony must be agreed between the Fisherwick Minister and the presiding minister/pastor before a hire agreement can be finalised.

PERSONALISING YOUR WEDDING

Choose the music – you may consult with Neale Agnew about the music before and after and whilst the register is signed.

Choose the hymns – see the suggestion list – make sure that the tune is well enough known or easily picked up.

Choose the lessons – see the list for ideas – you may wish to reflect your own faith or passages that have spoken to you both.

Involve your friends/family. They may read lessons, sing a solo, form a band, play instruments, form a choir etc.

Involve your fiancé(e)'s minister – we can easily arrange to involve them in the service.

Alter the usual order to reflect yourselves. Sign the register in Church or in the Session Room. Include Father (and Mother?) in giving you away.

Repeat the vows or read them to each other.

A Church Wedding means

We declare that we wish to discover what faith in God means for our marriage

We recognise that a wedding is not a marriage – only the beginning of one

We look to God for forgiveness and love to make our marriage

We long to bring up our children (if we have any) to know God and his love in Jesus Christ.

Possible Readings for your Wedding

Genesis 2:18-24 - The principles of marriage

Matthew 19:4-6

Ecclesiastes 4:9-11 - Three strands in marriage

John 2:1-11 - Jesus was a guest at the wedding in Cana of Galilee

I Corinthians 13 - Arguably, the finest words ever written on the subject of love!

Ephesians 3:14-21 - A prayer that we would know the full dimensions of Christian love

Ephesians 5:21-33 - The marriage relationship

Galatians 5:13-16 and 22-23

Colossians 3:12-17 - God's new wardrobe

1 John 4:7-11 - Love God, love one another

... or any other passage that is significant for you. The PCI leaflet 'Getting Married' has more suggestions.

Possible Hymns

From Irish Presbyterian Hymnbook

Praise 227, 98, 233, 458 and many others. Wedding Prayers 575-584 End of Worship 509, 221 *From the Source*

Praise 366, 367, 8 and many others Wedding Prayers 23 *From Songs of Fellowship* Praise: Come now is the time to worship *From Praise*

Wedding Prayers 927, 928, 929

From Hymns and Psalms

Wedding Prayers 364, 365, 370, 373

From Spring Harvest Praise

Jesus, all for Jesus

Marriage Vows

A. Traditional form (updated)

Jack will you have Jill to be your wife? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and keep her in sickness and in health and will you, leaving all others, remain with her as long as you both live?

I will

Jill will you have Jack to be your husband? Will you love him, comfort him, honour and keep him in sickness and in health and will you, leaving all others, remain with him as long as you both live?

I will

Who gives Jill to be married to Jack? I (We) do

I Jack take you Jill to be my wife to have and to hold from this day on for better, for worse for richer for poorer in sickness and in health to love and to cherish till death do us part

I Jill take you Jack to be my husband to have and to hold from this day on for better, for worse for richer for poorer in sickness and in health to love and to cherish till death do us part

As a sign of the agreement between you, this ring (these rings) is given and received.

Rings are exchanged Prayer

Forasmuch as Jack Uphill Bucket and Jill Brownpaper Vinegar have consented together in marriage before God and this congregation, I pronounce you husband and wife in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Aaronic Blessing.

B Alternative Form.

Minister: Who gives Jill to be married to Jack?

Andrew: I do Minister: Will you join their right hands Jack, will you please repeat after me . . .

“Before God, and in the presence of our families and friends, I, Jack, declare my love for you Jill.

I give myself to you as your husband.

I promise you my love, my loyalty and my trust, for as long as we both shall live”.

Jill, will you please repeat after me . . .

“Before God, and in the presence of our families and friends, I, Jill, declare my love for you Jack.

I give myself to you as your wife.

I promise you my love, my loyalty and my trust, for as long as we both shall live”.

Minister:

As an outward sign of the covenant into which you both have entered rings are given and received.

Jack, please say after me (as Jack puts the ring on Jill’s finger),
“Jill, I give you this ring in God’s Name, as a symbol of all I have promised and of all that we shall share together”.

Jill, please say after me (as Jill puts the ring on Jack’s finger),
“Jack, I give you this ring in God’s Name, as a symbol of all I have promised and of all that we shall share together”.

Prayer

Forasmuch as Jack Upthehill Bucket and Jill Brownpaper Vinegar have consented together in marriage before God and

this congregation, I pronounce you husband and wife in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Aaronic Blessing.

Please relax and enjoy both the preparations and the day. We will do our part to make it easy and hopefully meaningful for you. Do not hesitate to contact me at any- time about anything.

Rev Michael Anderson

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