

St. John's Knutsford 

TRUTH UNITY MISSION

Notes on your wedding

ST JOHN'S KNUTSFORD · 2026

**We are glad you are marrying here. These notes
answer most of what you will want to know; email or
ring the office if they do not.**

What marriage is

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

EPHESIANS 5.31–32

When the apostle Paul wanted to explain the beauty and the importance of marriage, he reached for the words spoken at the first wedding, in Genesis 2. Marriage is the intimate and permanent union of a husband and a wife, and the forming of a new family.

And the height of that beauty, Paul says, is that it paints a picture of what Jesus offers us: a welcome into his family, and into his love, for ever.

So the beauty of a marriage is found as a husband and wife imitate Jesus — in sacrificial love for one another, and in humble trust of one another — showing each other, and the world, the love that God has for them in him.

Confirming your booking

Once we have your enquiry we will be in touch about whether we are able to marry you and whether the date is free. We will then ask you to come to the office with the documents below, which prove who you are and establish your connection with the parish:

- **Your passport.** If you do not hold a British one, tell us and we will talk it through — a birth certificate may do instead, depending on where and when you were born.
- **Proof of your address and the name you currently use** — a utility bill under three months old, a bank statement under a month, a council tax or mortgage statement under twelve months, a current tenancy agreement, or a full driving licence.
- **Your birth certificate.** This gives us your parents' details for the marriage document you will sign on the day, and where your connection with us runs through a parent or grandparent, it is the evidence of that relationship.

We take a copy of each and hand them straight back. Until that has happened your date is held rather than booked: no wedding is confirmed until the clergy have confirmed it. We will go through this pack with you at the same meeting.

The legal side

Banns

Banns are the public announcement that you intend to marry, read aloud in church on three Sundays before the wedding so that anyone may raise a legal objection. We read yours at the main morning service on the first three Sundays of the month before your wedding — 10.30 at Knutsford — and we will give you the dates. Do come to at least one of them if you can.

If either of you lives in another parish

Your parish church must read your banns too, and will give you a certificate to prove it, for which they charge their own fee. **We cannot marry you without it**, so please arrange it early and send it to us as soon as you have it. If you are not sure which church that is, you can find it at achurchnearyou.com.

If either of you is not a British citizen

Where one of you is not a British citizen, the law does not allow us to marry you by banns. You will need a **marriage schedule** from your local register office instead: at least 28 days' notice, and sometimes as much as 70, so contact the registrar and arrange a meeting. We cannot marry you until we have received the marriage schedule. If you have EU settled status, you may marry by common licence — see below.

If banns cannot be read for some other reason

One of you living outside England and Wales, Scotland and the Isle of Man included, or a good reason for speed or privacy — then a **common licence** takes their place. It is applied for through the Diocesan Registry, costs £200, cannot be issued more than three months before the wedding, and is open only to couples who are both British citizens or hold EU settled status. Rarer still is an **Archbishop's special licence**, for exceptional cases. Tell us your situation and we will tell you which of these applies to you; you will not need to work it out yourselves.

Afterwards

We send your signed marriage document to the register office within 21 days, and your marriage is usually registered within a week of it arriving. You apply for your marriage certificate yourselves, and you can do that up to a month before the wedding — it is sent out once the marriage has been registered. Cheshire East Register Office takes the application at cheshireeast.gov.uk/register-office.

Before the wedding

Marriage preparation

We ask couples to do a marriage preparation course before their wedding, and we offer one ourselves — we will arrange it with you. If you live too far away, find a course near you and let us have evidence that you have done it.

Come and join us

You are very welcome at our Sunday services before the wedding as well as on the day — 8.30 and 10.30 at Knutsford.

Planning the service

The shape of the service

The enclosed marriage service is the service itself, word for word — the vows included — so you can read it through before you come. The member of clergy taking your service will go through it with you and settle the hymns, the readings and who will read them.

Music

A service typically has three hymns, and the member of clergy taking your service will talk them through with you. Hymn books are not provided, so we recommend printing the words in your service booklet.

Music is optional, and you may choose to have none. If you would rather bring your own musicians, let us know who they are and what they will play; we reserve the right to charge the organist's fee where live music is played by any musicians. If you would like pre-recorded music, we will need the files a month before the service.

Planning the service CONTINUED

Flowers

Your florist is welcome into the building either at your rehearsal — please confirm the time with them — or up to 90 minutes before the service begins.

Bells

We can ask the ringers whether they are free on your date. There is a fee, and availability is not guaranteed, particularly over the summer.

Photographs and video

Please pass the enclosed sheet to your photographer and videographer. They are very welcome at the rehearsal — do let them know when it is.

The rehearsal

The member of clergy taking your service will arrange a rehearsal with you in the week or so before the wedding. We would suggest the bride and groom, the best man, whoever is giving the bride away, and any bridesmaids who would like to practise processing.

On the day

Arriving

The groom, best man and ushers should be at church at least half an hour before the service is due to begin, and the bride about ten minutes before, bearing in mind the photographs that are usually taken outside first. If the bride is significantly late and another wedding is booked later the same day, the service may have to be shortened.

Ushers

Two to four is usual — welcoming guests, handing out service booklets, keeping reserved seats free, and collecting up afterwards.

Confetti

Biodegradable petals only, outside the building.

Afterwards

Please speak to the office if you would like to explore using part of the building for refreshments after the service, and we will tell you what is possible.



**If anything here raises a question, ring the office.
We would far rather answer it early than have you
wondering.**

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