

# GUIDANCE NOTES FOR WEDDINGS AT ST JAMES', ISLINGTON

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Thank you for enquiring about getting married at St James'.

This short guide is designed to help you as you prepare for your service here. Some of the legal requirements are important, but all the time spent in preparing for the service will make sure that your wedding day is both special and panic free!

## BANNS OF MARRIAGE

Weddings in the Church of England are generally performed after a public declaration that you are to be married (called Banns of Marriage). This official statement has to be read in the parish church of BOTH partners for three Sundays within three months of the day of the wedding.

The place to arrange to have banns read at St James' is via the Parish Office (Tel 020 7226 4108). Amongst the information requested will be the full name of the parish where the non-local partner lives (ie the Church's name and place eg: *St Paul's Church, Covent Garden, London*).

The banns of marriage will be called at St James' at the end of the 10am service on the first three Sundays two months before the month of the wedding (ie for a June wedding the banns are called on the first three Sundays of April). Many couples like to hear their banns called at least once.

After the banns have been called in the parish of the non-local partner, a certificate can be collected from that church. This must be given to the priest at St James' before the marriage can be held. In 2021 this certificate costs £46.

## FOR NON UK PASSPORT HOLDERS

Weddings involving foreign passport holders now require a *Common License*, only available through the local surrogate. Fr John will set up an appointment for you. Be advised that this process can take some weeks to complete.

## MARRIAGE REGULATIONS FOR THOSE PREVIOUSLY MARRIED

Under certain circumstances the clergy of this parish will officiate at a wedding where one or both partners have had their previous marriage dissolved by divorce. You will need to explore this possibility with the Vicar at St James' before making any arrangements for the wedding. Such weddings are performed at St James' by *Superintendent Registrar's Certificate* (available from the Islington Registry) rather than after the reading of banns.

## PLANNING THE WEDDING SERVICE

As you make plans for the whole wedding day, we hope that you will try to discuss as many details of the wedding service as you can together. As you discuss the details of your wedding, here is a list of questions you may like to consider:

- 1 What time should the service begin?
- 2 Do you want an organist to play for your wedding? Do you have special pieces for him/her to play? Do you want a choir? (see Wedding extras)
- 3 Do you want to sing hymns? If so, how many? Two is usual, more are possible.
- 4 Have you a special Bible reading you would like read? Do you know someone who would read it for you at the service - perhaps a friend or one of the family? Is there a secular reading/poem you would like to hear on your wedding day?
- 5 Will the bride be 'given away', and if so, by whom?
- 6 Is the bridegroom going to receive a ring at the service as well as give one?

Although there are many traditions about the way a wedding is conducted, please feel free to discuss with Fr John both the style of the occasion and the range of people you would like to invite to help you celebrate your wedding. For example Mothers can take the leading family role for their daughters as well as Fathers; couples sometimes like to write a prayer of their own for their wedding service.

Many couples find the official Church of England website [www.yourchurchwedding.org](http://www.yourchurchwedding.org) extremely helpful.

## PREPARATION

Fr John will generally want to see the bride and groom twice for about an hour and a half, some weeks before the wedding. Please ring as soon as possible to make an appointment. These are usually held at the Vicarage, 1a Arlington Square.

## WEDDING REHEARSAL

In addition there will be a rehearsal. This is usually on the Wednesday evening before the wedding, at 7.30pm. Please check this. Parents, the best man, attendants, photographers and video operators are very welcome to discuss details at the beginning but the rehearsal itself is just for the wedding couple.

## FLOWERS IN CHURCH

There are almost always flowers in Church but you may wish to have extra stands of flowers to enhance the service at St James'. At present we are not able to offer to arrange flowers for you. Professional or amateur arrangements are welcome, in consultation with Fr John.

## BELLS

One of the features of a wedding at St James' is the possibility of having the bells rung as the bride and groom leave the service. The Bell ringers can be booked by ringing Helen Schofield on 020 7359 5301.

## MUSIC

Adam Dickson, the Organist at St James' (dicksonlukeadam@gmail.com / 07722 019693) will be very pleased to discuss any organ music you would like to have played at your wedding. Fr John will happily help with the choice of suitable hymns and songs.

Recorded music on CD/i-phone etc may also be played in Church either in place of, or in addition to, music played by the organist.

## FEES

At the end of the wedding rehearsal the following fees need to be paid to the Parish and to the Diocese:

Legal fees:	£495 (£464 if banns have not been called)
St James' Church Maintenance Fee:	£ 60

It would be of great assistance if you could pay the legal fees in the following way:

- 1 A cheque for the sum of £344 (£313 if no banns have been called) made payable to '**St James' Church, Islington**'.
- 2 A cheque for the sum of £211, made payable to the '**London Diocesan Fund**'.

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### *Wedding extras:*

Organist:	£ 135
Bells:	£ 150
Webcam connection:	£ 25
Wedding Verger:	£ 35

This fee covers payment of £20 to each of the team of six ringers required to ring, and a donation of £30 to the PCC at St James'.

## LASTLY

Everything will be done to allow you, your families and friends to feel at home in St James'.

The Church is at your service and we hope that you will tell us in good time of your hopes and plans. The wedding service requires just as much attention as any reception or honeymoon you may have booked, for in it God not only teaches us how to make the most of our married life, but he also gives us the grace and power through his blessing to achieve it.

In his name we wish you every success in all the preparations for your wedding and we very much look forward to sharing your very special day with you.

Fr John Burniston, Vicar  
22 March 2021