YOUR WEDDING IN ST. NICHOLAS BUCCLEUCH PARISH CHURCH

**Welcome**

A warm welcome to you from all associated with St. Nicholas Buccleuch Parish Church. In deciding to be married in church, you are choosing to make sacred promises before God as well as in the presence of your family and friends. You are also seeking the blessing of God at the beginning of your married life.

The wedding service affirms that marriage is instituted for the companionship, help, comfort and enjoyment of each other which those who marry ought to have. It provides an opportunity to make a public commitment to one another, and for family and friends to commit to supporting you in your marriage.

In Christian marriage, those who marry not only make promises to each other, but make them within the context of a sacred covenant in which God promises his eternal presence. Marriage is understood as being about more than just the couple. God is an integral part of it.

**First steps**

The first thing to do is to arrange to see the minister to decide on a date, but since you are reading this, it probably means that you have already done this. If at all possible, do not make any other arrangements until this has been done. If you have already made other bookings, let the minister know about this, but bear in mind that another couple may already have arranged their wedding on your preferred date. The minister will inform the organist and the Session Clerk, who arranges for a member of the congregation to be on duty on the day of the wedding to make sure the church is prepared, of the date. The minister will wish to see you a couple of times before the day itself to discuss the details of the service.

In order for the booking of your wedding to be confirmed, it is necessary to pay the required fees as soon as possible. These should be remitted to the Church Treasurer, Mrs. Lynda Sneddon. In the event of the wedding being cancelled, the fees are refundable, with the exception of the part due to the Organist. This is because the Organist may have had to turn down another engagement in order to play at your wedding or may have had to engage another organist to play.

**The Registrar**

It is very important to attend to the legal formalities surrounding your wedding in plenty of time. If you do not, the wedding may have to be postponed with all the hassle and expense that would entail. Eight weeks or so before your wedding is fine, but there is no harm in going sooner. On no account, leave this any later than five weeks before the wedding day. If one or both of you are not citizens of a country in the European Economic Area, visit the Registrar as soon as possible as it will take considerably longer to complete the formalities to allow you to get married in this country. You will be given the necessary forms to arrange the publication of your intended marriage as required by law or these may be downloaded from the internet (www.gro-scotland.gov.uk). You will be required to produce various documents such as birth certificates and death or divorce certificates in the event of this being a remarriage for either party.

You will have to go back to the Registrar to collect the Marriage Schedule. Without this document, the minister cannot proceed with the wedding. After the wedding, the signed schedule should be handed in to the Registrar within three days. It is important to note that these legal matters are entirely the responsibility of the bride and groom.

Please also inform the Registrar if you are intending to go abroad on honeymoon and if the bride intends to travel under her married surname. You will be given a form which will need to be signed by the minister officiating at your wedding.

**Coming to Church**

It is not a condition of being married in St. Nicholas Buccleuch Parish Church that you are a church member, but you are asked to take very seriously the possibility of joining the church. The minister will ask you, if you are not regular attenders, to start coming to church. There are several reasons for this. At your wedding, you are coming to church to seek the blessing of God at the beginning of a new chapter in your life and it makes sense, when you are making plans for your future, to explore the question of church membership. Also, it is good to become familiar with being in Church if you are not already. Members of the congregation will always make you feel welcome and by becoming part of the congregation, then the church in which you get married becomes for you more than just a place. It becomes a supportive and caring community for you.

**Planning the Service**

The minister will meet with you at least a month before the service to plan the wedding service. It is helpful if you can give some thought to this before that meeting and also if you can call the minister well in advance to arrange a suitable time to meet up.

The usual order of service is as follows.

1. Call to Worship

2. Hymn

3. Statement

4. Prayers

5. Exchange of Vows

6. Giving and Receiving of The Ring(s)

7. Declaration of Marriage

8. Marriage Blessing

9. Signing of the Register

10. Scripture Lesson(s)

11. Address

12. Prayers and Lord’s Prayer

13. Hymn

14. Blessing

If you have suggestions about alternatives, speak to the minister about them. He is always happy to make Wedding Services as personal to the couple as possible.

Most couples choose to print an Order of Service and if you do so, remember that it is sufficient to print the text of the hymns. If, however, you want to give more detail, please follow the order set out above and, in any case, let the minister see it before you have it printed or copied. It is recommended that you print the text of the Lord’s Prayer as many people find it helpful to have it in front of them as they say it. The form normally used in St. Nicholas Buccleuch Parish Church is as follows, but others may be chosen.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

 hallowed be thy Name.

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts,

 as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,

 but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the Kingdom, and the power,

 and the glory, forever.

Amen.

**The Vows**

The usual vows taken by husband and wife are as follows:

**I, *Name*,**

**take you, *Name*,**

**to be my wife/husband.**

**In the presence of God**

**and before this congregation,**

**I promise and covenant**

**to be a loving,**

**faithful and loyal husband/wife to you,**

**so long as we both shall live.**

The giving of a ring or rings in the service symbolises the intention to “take each other, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish for as long as you both shall live.”

You will be asked to say some words while exchanging rings. These are as follows.

***Name*, I give you this ring in God’s name, as a symbol of all that we have promised and of all that we shall share.**

Don’t worry if you think you will not be able to remember all the words. There is no need to memorise them as the minister will guide you through them. You may wish to write your own vows, and to have special elements in the service, such as readings or poems, which mean a great deal to you. You may also wish to have friends doing readings in the service.

**Hymns**

Two hymns are normally sung, though more - or less - may be sung if the couple wish it. Here are some suggestions from the Church Hymnary (CH4). It is by no means exhaustive nor exclusive.

14 The Lord’s my shepherd

52 How lovely is thy dwelling place

### 63 All people that on earth do dwell

110 Glory be to God the Father

124 Praise to the Lord, the almighty

137 All things bright and beautiful

141 Oh, the life of the world is a joy

and a treasure

153 Great is thy faithfulness

154 How great thou art

160 Praise, my soul, the King of heaven

181 For the beauty of the earth

182 Now thank we all our God

184 Sing to the Lord a joyful song

200 Christ is made the sure foundation

268 O God of Bethel, by whose hand

462 The King of Love my shepherd is

465 Be thou my vision

489 Come down, O Love Divine

519 Love divine all loves excelling

528 Make me a channel of your peace

530 One more step along the world I go

### 555 Amazing grace

686 How happy are all they who hear

694 Brother, sister, let me serve you

695 Your love, O God, has called us here

696 We come, dear Lord, to celebrate

697 Let’s praise the Creator

who gave us each other

698 The grace of life is theirs

699 God beyond glory

700 As man and woman we were made

702 Lord in love and perfect wisdom

738 Glorious things of thee are spoken

804 You shall go out with joy

The minister will wish to discuss your choice of hymns with you. You might also wish to sing a seasonal hymn like a Christmas carol if you are getting married at that time of year.

**Readings**

There are many readings which are suitable for weddings. They may be chosen from a variety of sources but should always include at least one biblical reading. As you prepare for your wedding, it would be a good idea to read through these selected passages to help you choose readings which you feel have a particular meaning for you. The minister can offer help and advice.

*Old Testament*

Song of Songs 2

Song of Songs 8: 6-7

Jeremiah 31: 31-34

Psalm 67

Psalm 33: 2-9

Psalm 118: 1-4

*New Testament*

Romans 12: 1-2, 9-13

1 Corinthians 13: 4-8a &13 or 1-13

Ephesians 3: 14-21

Philippians 1: 9-11

Colossians 3: 12-17

1 John 3: 18-24

1 John 4: 7-13

Revelation 19: 1, 5-9a

*Gospel*

Matthew 7: 21, 24-27

Matthew 5: 3-10

Matthew 5: 13-16

Mark 10: 6-9

John 2: 1-11

John 15: 1-8

John 15: 9-12

**Organ Music**

This is a matter for the couple to discuss with the organist. The Church Organist, Mr Willie Hendry, is always willing to discuss wedding music, either by phone (0131 663 1785), or at the church, usually after a morning service. There is usually music before and after the service and during the signing of the register. He has a wide repertoire and will be pleased to discuss pieces with you. It may even be possible for him to play some to you before you make your final choice.

If you plan to have a piper, please inform the organist in advance of the service.

**Flowers**

Normally, wedding couples make their own arrangements for flowers in Church. Some will leave an arrangement in church for the following Sunday service while others choose to take them away, perhaps to give to a relative. Please let the minister know what you decide to do. Please make arrangements to have any pew end decorations removed directly after the service. If you have any questions about flowers for your wedding, the Congregational Flower Convener, Mrs. Margaret Hood, (0131 663 1262) will be happy to advise.

**Rehearsal**

At your second meeting with the minister, he will arrange a rehearsal (normally on an evening in the week before the wedding). At the rehearsal, he will go through the form of service once more, this time in the Church. Bride, groom, best man, bridesmaids, father of the bride (or whoever is accompanying her down the aisle) and ushers should attend. Other close family members are welcome.

**Video Recording and Photography**

Both of these can be a serious distraction and detract from the special atmosphere of the service so it is essential that it is done unobtrusively. Please ask any official photographer/video camera person, whether they are professional or not, to speak to the minister before the service for advice. Video recording of the service may take place, provided the camera can be put on a tripod and left running unattended during the service. The taking of photographs during the service is permitted only during the hymns, provided it is done without flash, without excessive moving about and as quietly as possible. An opportunity for photographs will be offered after the signing of the Marriage Schedule.

**Confetti**

Confetti and rose petals, whether or not they are biodegradable, are not permitted except at the gate of the churchyard, just by the street.

**Smoking and Drinking**

Please make your guests aware that smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the church grounds. The consumption of alcoholic drinks is also forbidden anywhere on the church premises, even if this is just a swig from a hip flask.

**Mobile phones**

A phone ringing or beeping during the service can be both a distraction and an embarrassment. Please consider putting a note in your Order of Service asking your guests to ensure that theirs are off for the duration of the service. They owe it to you not to spoil your service.

**Catering**

Occasionally, people have asked about offering refreshments in the church directly after the service. Because the church is looked after almost entirely by volunteers, and any members who are on duty for your wedding will be there in a voluntary capacity, it is not easy to arrange this. Please enquire about using the hall if you wish to hold a reception on the church premises, for example if not everyone at the service is expected to attend the meal too.

**Chewing Gum**

Chewing gum is not appropriate during the service. If you can spread the word to your guests, that would be appreciated.

**Fees**

*See separate sheet for current prices.*

Fees are payable at the point of booking the service, otherwise the booking will only be considered as provisional meaning that another couple could request, book and pay for the same day, forcing you to select another. If, in the unlikely event that your wedding is postponed or cancelled, the fee will be refunded to you, less any fee due to the organist.

Please pay by bank transfer or by sending a cheque, payable to St. Nicholas Buccleuch Parish Church, to the church treasurer.

**Contacts**

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