

Wedding Ceremony Program

The Marriage service

Beginning the service

The guests should be seated by the ushers who will seat the bride's family and friends on the left of the church, and the groom's friends and family on the right.

The bride's mother should be escorted to her seat at the front of the church.

By Tradition, the Groom will arrive at the church before the bride and will take his seat at the front of the Church with his Bestman, however, this is not set in stone. The couple are perfectly entitled to enter the Church together. More typically, the bride will enter the church behind the Priest on the arm of her Father, or another relative or even a friend (of either sex) and followed by her attendants. However, she may choose to walk down the aisle alone.

If the bride is walked down the aisle by her father (or other friend or relative), then she will be supported on their right arm. On reaching the altar, she will have her hand presented to her husband to be who will stand on her right hand side.

The Welcome

The Minister will open the service by welcoming the congregation and highlighting the importance of the fact that your family and friends are there with you to share and witness your marriage.

As this is a religious service, the minister will then read a passage explaining the Christian faith's belief in marriage and it is at this point that the minister will carry out the legal obligation of asking whether there is anyone who knows of any lawful reason why your marriage may not take place.

Declarations

Both the bride and groom will be asked to promise in God's presence and the presence of your family and friends to comfort, honour and protect each other and to be faithful to each other for as long as you both shall live.

The minister will also ask the congregation to make a declaration that they will support and uphold your marriage.

mrs2be

Vows

Facing each other, the bride and groom take each other's right hand and make vows:

'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,
till death us do part'

Rings

The couple then exchange a ring or rings as a 'sign of their marriage' and a reminder of the vows:

'With my body I honour you,
all that I am I give to you,
and all that I have I share with you,
within the love of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.'

Proclamation

You will now be pronounced as husband and wife!

Prayers

In the prayers God's blessing and help is asked for you. There may be a prayer for the gift of children, but every couple will have their own feelings about this, so it's best to discuss the details with your minister. You may wish to help choose the prayers or to write your own.

Readings and talk or sermon

It is usual to have one or more readings (one of which should be from the Bible) and the minister will generally give a talk or sermon.

mrs2be

Signing of the register

After you have exchanged your vows, the bride, groom and two witnesses must sign the register as a legal requirement. Often the 2 witnesses are the bestman and the chief bridesmaid. However,

this is a nice opportunity for you to involve other members of your friends and family if you so wish.

Often music may be played during the signing of the register.

The Finale

Once the register has been signed, the Bride & Groom will take their place at the alter once again, and the tradition is for them to walk down the aisle followed by the bridesmaids, the best man with the chief bridesmaid, the bride's mother with the groom's father, and the groom's mother with the bride's father.

mrs&be