MARRIAGE AT



THAME CHURCH
AT ST MARY'S

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Weddings at ST MARY'S

We're really pleased you're considering having your wedding service at St Mary's, Thame Church.

This brochure is designed to help you in your preparations and may answer some of your questions. If you have any queries, you can also contact the Church Office on 01844 213491/office@thame.church or the minister who is going to take your wedding, (contact details are at the end).

Including God in your marriage doesn't mean that you will avoid all the usual ups and downs, but you will know that you can look to God for help and guidance and that God's love will sustain you. You will also have the support and encouragement of the Christian Church family.



Huge congratulations on your engagement.

This is an exciting time for you, and we would be delighted to support you on your journey toward married life. We would love to help you prepare not only for your big day, but also for your life together, through marriage preparation.

St Mary's is a beautiful space in which to make your promises before God, and offers great flexibility for you to tailor the day to suit your plans.

Please feel free to contact us to arrange your wedding.

Mike, Andy, Heather and Graham
Thame Church Clergy Team

BEFORE WE GET PLANNING...

We need to establish that you have a qualifying connection. **Anyone who lives in the Parish of Thame has the right to get married in St Mary's**, and in addition you can also be married in St Mary's if you can show that one of you:

• has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months or
• was baptised in the parish concerned or
• was prepared for confirmation in the parish or
• has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church* for a period of at least 6 months or

That one of your parents, at any time after you were born:

• has lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months or
• has regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months or

That one of your parents or grandparents:

• was married in the parish

We are also required by law to have proof of your identity and your residence. Please see page 10 for further details.

We also need to read out your Banns of marriage. The Banns of marriage are public announcements, traditionally made in a Church of England parish church, of an impending marriage. Your Banns will be read in St Mary's, Thame or at any of the churches in the Thame benefice* over three consecutive Sundays, two months prior to the date of the wedding, usually at the 9am service. You are very welcome to come and hear your Banns being read.

If one or both of you live in a parish other than a church in the Thame benefice, you will need to contact your Parish Priest in good time to arrange for your Banns to be read in your parish church as well as in Thame. You will then need a Certificate from that Parish to confirm that the Banns have been read - this is known as Away Banns. This is a legal requirement and without such a Certificate a marriage cannot proceed. Please deliver the certificate to St Mary's church office at least two weeks before the Wedding. The fee payable to your parish of residence is £56. They will advise you on the payment details; please be aware that this cost is likely to be increased by the Church of England in November 2026 for 2027 marriages.

Couples also need to apply for their Marriage certificate from the Registrar's Office. The fee is payable to them directly. We will advise how to do to.

*Churches within the Thame benefice include St Catherine's at Towersey, St Margaret's at Lewknor, St Giles' at Tetsworth, St Mary Magdalen at Stoke Talmage, St Lawrence's at South Weston, St Mary's at Adwell, and St Andrew's at Wheatfield.

FEES

The fees set out below are current for Weddings taking place from 2026.
For weddings being planned for 2027 and beyond, the fees for that year will apply.

2026	Fee
Marriage service, including publication of Banns and admin, verger fee, and heating*	£790
Away Banns (if required - see page 2)	£59
Optional: Use of organist and organ	£120
Optional: Use of piano/organ only	£25
Optional: Bell ringing	£200
Optional: Full sound system, video projection, live streaming, and recording – includes one trained church technician**	£175
Optional: Donation towards upkeep of historic building	Suggested amount: £100-£300

All fees must be paid **at least one calendar month** before your wedding. Please make payment by bank transfer to
St Marys PCC, Sort code: **40-52-40** Account No.: **00021784**

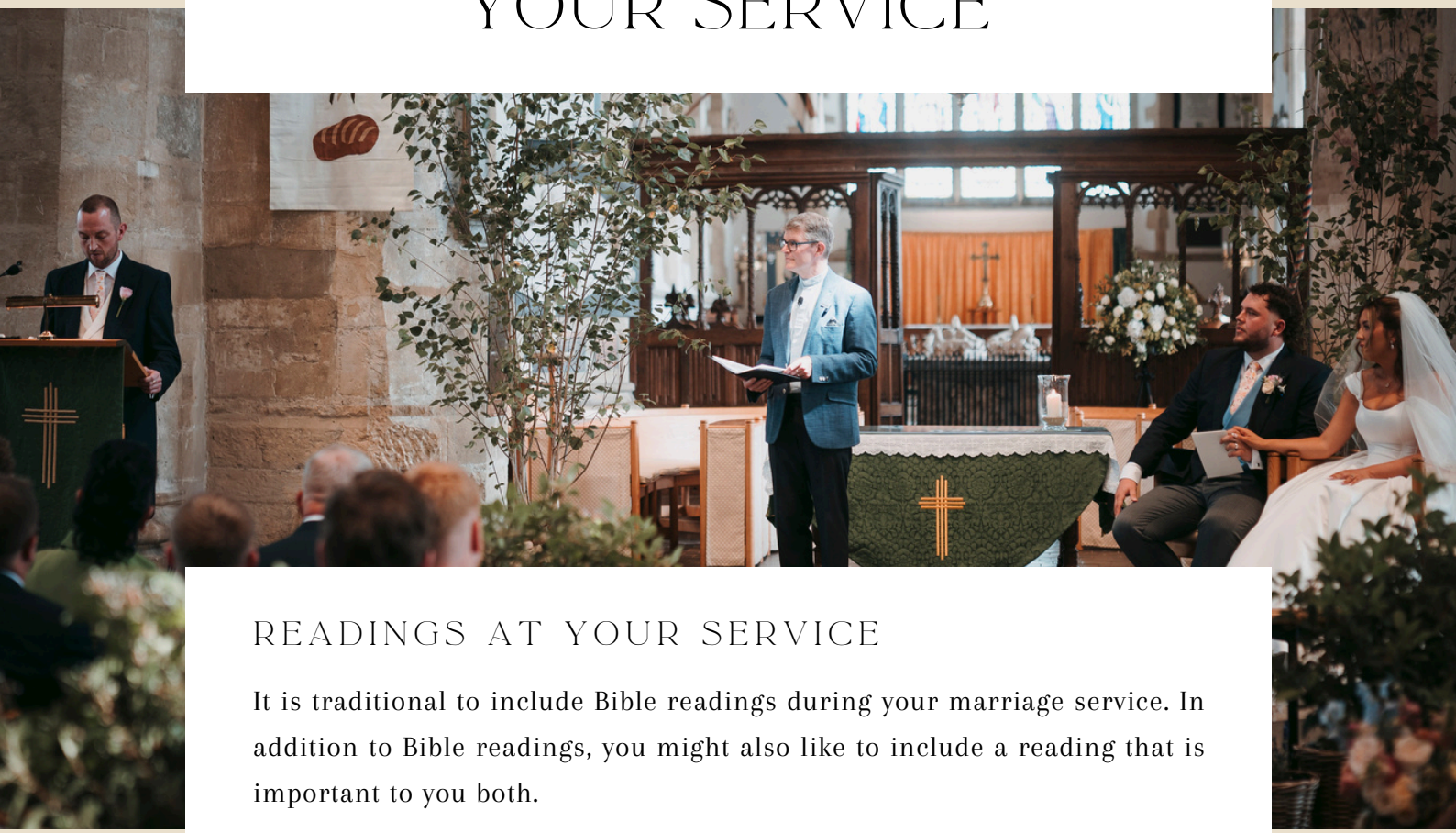
Please use your Surname and date of wedding as a reference.

*The church has experienced a very significant increase in heating costs and it is now necessary to include an additional cost to ensure that the church is warm for a wedding. This charge is made from September to May.
**Your marriage service includes the use of the space and basic AV setup (Radio Mics, an HDMI input & Aux In / CD Player). Additional church technician (if required) - £75. Only applicable for more complex setups. This is at the discretion of the church tech team. Most technicians can cover a maximum of two of the following roles:

- Sound System
- Video Projection
- Web Streaming

This is subject to the availability of our technicians so please specify if this is something you would like as early into your enquiry as possible.

YOUR SERVICE



READINGS AT YOUR SERVICE

It is traditional to include Bible readings during your marriage service. In addition to Bible readings, you might also like to include a reading that is important to you both.

The Church of England wedding website www.yourchurchwedding.org has some useful resources including hymns and readings. You will find some suggestions for music and Bible readings in the Pre-Wedding workshop pack given out at the workshop and on our website.

MUSIC AT YOUR WEDDING

You can choose to include an organist at your wedding service. If you choose to have an organist, please contact them three months beforehand to discuss your music choices. Contact Graham Choldcroft if you would like to arrange for a local organist to play at your wedding. You can choose to include any music you wish to play before, during or after your service. Please inform the clergy member officiating the wedding if you are planning to have external performers during your wedding.

YOUR SERVICE

ORDER OF SERVICE

It is essential to have an order of service. Please ask if you would like an example of what to include. If you choose to have your order of service printed, do make sure that it is exactly what you have ordered. Ask to see a draft and proof-read carefully, and please ask us to check it before it is printed. Ensure there are ample copies for unexpected visitors and friends who will turn up for the service, and especially for late arrivals. You may, of course, have the order printed professionally and this can cost a considerable amount depending on your design.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

It is normal practice before the wedding to have a rehearsal in church with the minister who is going to conduct the service. As well as yourselves, the Best Man and Bridesmaids should attend, and those involved with official photography and video recording. You might like your parents to attend as well. To arrange the rehearsal date please contact the minister who will be conducting the service.

TIMINGS

To ensure your service runs well and to help us as a church, please can you make every effort to be on time for your wedding. There is no guarantee that the service can take place or the bells will peal if the service is commencing late.



YOUR SERVICE



PHOTOGRAPHY & FILM

If you wish to make your own arrangements for your wedding to be recorded, we are pleased to be able to offer recording or streaming of your service through a separate contract. The cost of this, as of 2026, is £175.

If possible, we ask that the person responsible for the photography comes to the rehearsal so that we can agree the recording position. It is important that the camera is as unobtrusive as possible and that no additional lighting is used. It is also a good idea for your photographer to attend the rehearsal or be already familiar with the church building.

SEATING CAPACITY

The seating capacity is 300 people. Arrangements can be made to extend this while still maintaining our fire and health & safety regulations.

FLOWERS

With the exception of Lent (the six weeks leading up to Easter) and Advent (the four weeks leading up to Christmas), we have seasonal flowers, refreshed for each Sunday, displayed in St Mary's throughout the year.

You may have a particular colour scheme in mind for your wedding day, and we are very happy for you to bring in your own floral arrangements on the day. If this is something you would like to do, please ask your florist to liaise with the church office so we can ensure the church is available for them to bring the arrangements to church before the ceremony.

YOUR SERVICE

USHERS

Make sure that there are plenty of ushers and tell them what is expected of them on the day. They should arrive in good time. Make sure they escort your guests, especially any elderly relatives, to the front of the church so that they will be able to see and hear and join in the service. Inform the ushers if there will be any guests in wheelchairs or with any disability, so that they are ready to take care of them. We have a ramp available for easier access to the church through the South door (main entrance).

CONFETTI

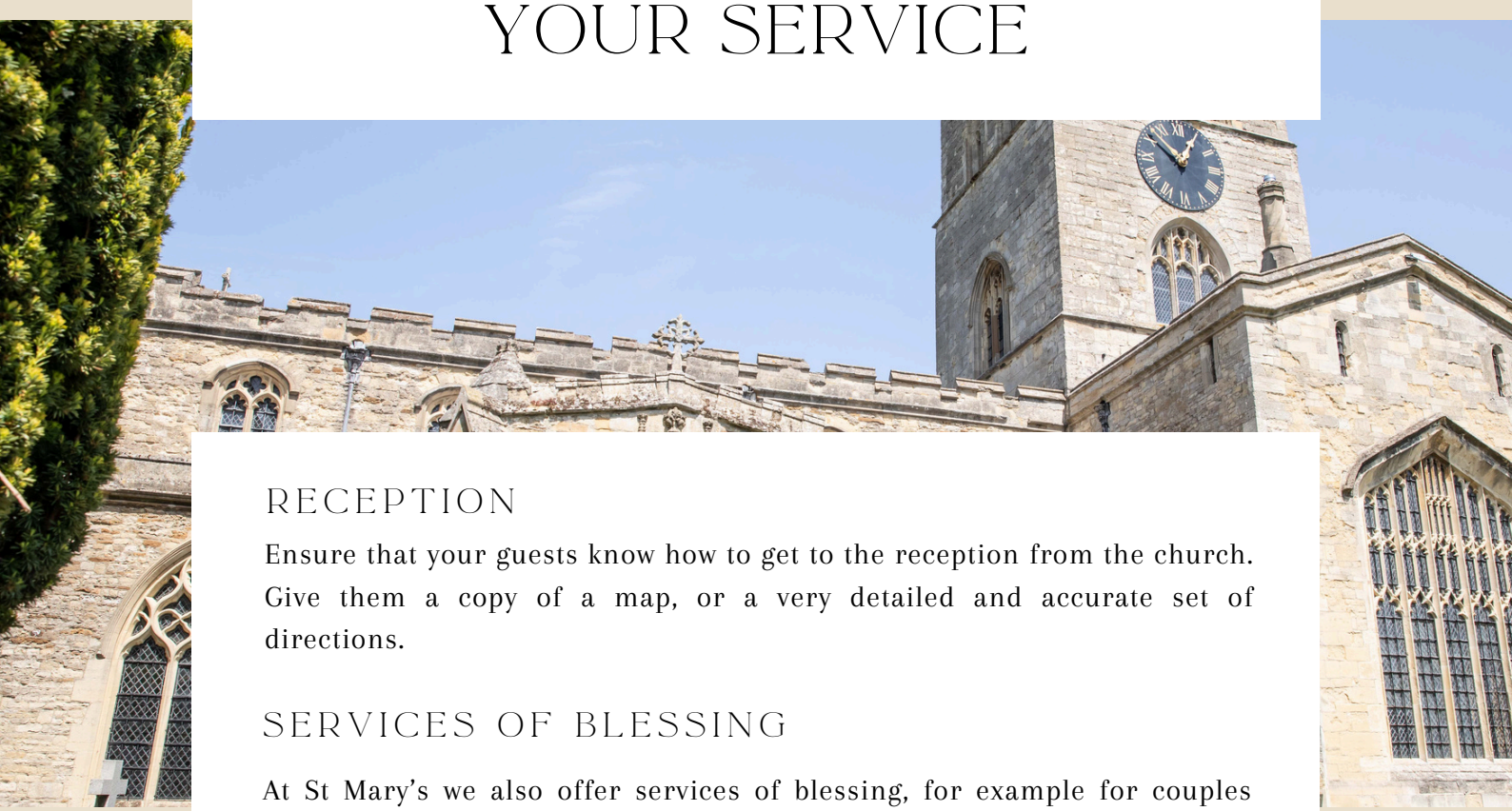
Only biodegradable confetti may be thrown in the churchyard.

PARKING

Please encourage your guests to park in Priest End, and to come up the steps and through the churchyard to the church. Those who are elderly or disabled can be driven to the church gate in Church Road, and then the car parked in Priest End. The church gates need to be kept clear for the wedding cars. Parking at the Thame Barns Centre and Thame Cricket Club is for their patrons use only. Parking in town is available at the Cattle Market. Street parking and off-road parking is time restricted and controlled.



YOUR SERVICE



RECEPTION

Ensure that your guests know how to get to the reception from the church. Give them a copy of a map, or a very detailed and accurate set of directions.

SERVICES OF BLESSING

At St Mary's we also offer services of blessing, for example for couples who have married abroad and want something at home which friends and family can be part of. We can also bless the marriages of those married in a Registry Office and who would like God to bless their new life together. People who have been married 20, 25, 30 or more years may also like to mark the event with a renewal of vows and have approached us to hold a special service in church. Please contact the church office if you would like to discuss a service of blessing at St Mary's, Thame.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

We would love you to keep in touch. Details of our services and special events can be found on our Facebook page and website.

ASKING QUESTIONS

Your wedding is an important moment in your life together.
If there is anything we can help with to make it a special day for you, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Meet the Clergy Team



1 **Revd Mike Reading**
Rector

2 **Revd Andy McCulloch**
Team Vicar

3 **Revd Heather McCulloch**
Associate Vicar

4 **Revd Graham Choldcroft**
Associate Minister

St Mary's Parish Office – Thame Church
Thame Barns Centre
Church Road
Thame
OXON
OX9 3AJ

Tel: 01844 213491
Office@thame.church
www.thame.church

PROOF OF IDENTITY

We are required by law to have proof of your identity (under the Immigration Act 2014 and The Registration of Marriages Regulations 2015) and your residence. We need to see original documents rather than copies (unless the copy is one that is verified according to law).

In most cases we will need to see:

- Your passports or national identity cards for European Economic Area (EEA) or Swiss nationals. If one or both of you are foreign nationals from outside of the EEA it is unlawful to marry you by Banns or Common Licence and an alternative route is required.
- Evidence of your address(es) which should normally take the form of a driving licence showing the person as resident at the address in question and official correspondence to the person at that address in the form of bank statements or correspondence from a government department or local authority covering at least a six month period.
- If you are not resident parishioners or on the church electoral roll, evidence to support your qualifying connection: if you, or your parents, are known to us and have a worshipping qualifying connection this will be sufficient for our records, however, we may need to ask to see Baptism or Confirmation Certificates or parents' and/or grandparents' Marriage Certificates or evidence that you (or your parents, during your lifetime) lived in the parish for over six months (by means of bank statements covering six months, for example)
- If there has been a previous marriage:

i.e. death certificate, if the previous marriage ended due to the death of your spouse, or
ii. your Decree(s) Absolute, if your previous marriage ended in divorce

If your name has changed since your birth you will need to supply documentary evidence by means of a marriage certificate or deed poll.

We will arrange a convenient time to meet with you to gather this information and take copies where required. Any questions, please contact the church office as soon as possible office@thame.church.

SUGGESTED SUPPLIERS

Photographers

Sarah Minchin Photography who kindly provided the photos in the brochure: www.sarahminchinphotography.co.uk

Marcus Howlett who also kindly provided the photos in the brochure: i-photography.co.uk

Paul Nelson Photography: www.nelsonphotos.co.uk/wedding

Megan Guard Photography: www.instagram.com/meganguardphotography/

Florist

Busy Lizzie 01844 212970

The Flowers by Sue Robinson 07795 571253

Reception venues

Thame Barns Centre - a two-minute walk from the church! www.thamebarnscentre.co.uk/wedding-packages/

The Oxfordshire: www.theoxfordshire.com/weddings

The Oxford Belfry Hotel: www.theoxfordbelfry.co.uk/weddings/

Spread Eagle Hotel: www.spreadeaglethame.co.uk/weddings.html

Notley Tythe Barn: www.notleyfarm.co.uk/

voco Oxford Thames: www.ihg.com/voco/hotels/gb/en/oxford/oxfdt/hoteldetail/meetings-events/weddings

Old Luxters Barn: www.instagram.com/oldluxtersbarn/?hl=en

NB: Thame Church cannot take any responsibility for the products or services provided by external individuals or companies.

