



Church Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk L39 6SB  
Parish Office (Mon–Fri, 9 am -12 noon): 01695 424457  
[www.aughtonstmichael.org.uk](http://www.aughtonstmichael.org.uk)

---

### CAN WE GET MARRIED AT ST MICHAEL'S?

The law states that you can be married in St Michael's church (or any other church for that matter) provided you qualify under one of the following headings:

1. One or both of you is resident in the parish, or has been resident in the past for at least six months.
2. A parent is resident in the parish, or has been in the past for at least six months **during your lifetime**.
3. One of you is on the church electoral roll, or has worshipped here in the past for at least six months.
4. One of you was baptised or prepared for confirmation at St Michael's.
5. A parent or grandparent was married here.

If you do not qualify under any of the above, in order for the marriage to take place at St Michael's, it is likely that one or both of you would have to attend church at St Michael's over a period of at least six months so that you can apply to have your name(s) on Church Electoral Roll and then qualify under number 3 above. (Please note these are not our rules - it is the law of the land!)

### BANNS OF MARRIAGE

Before you can be married at in any church, there is a legal requirement that Banns of Marriage are called (read out) both in the church in which you are to be married and in the parish church in which each of you resides. If you both live within St Michael's parish, you will not need to make any other arrangements. However, if one of you lives outside the parish you will need to contact the church (usually the Minister/Vicar) of that parish and arrange for banns to be read there. This needs to be arranged three to four months before the wedding (the banns cannot be read more than three months before the wedding), and there will be a small statutory charge. When the banns have been read in this other church, they will give you a certificate which you must then bring to the us in order for the wedding to take place. If you book your wedding at St Michael's, you will be advised about this in more detail. Please note this applies when both of you are UK or EEA (European Economic Area) citizens.

### MARRIAGE BY LICENCE

The alternative to marriage after banns (as above) is to be married by 'licence'. Sometimes this is necessary because, for example, one of you lives in a place (e.g. Scotland) where banns are not called, or because one of you is not a UK or EEA (European Economic Area) citizen. There are different types of licence for different circumstances, and different rules about how they are obtained. If you book your wedding at St Michael's and a licence may be the appropriate route for you, we will advise you in more detail.

## BOOKING YOUR WEDDING

If you have not already done so, we recommend you contact us as soon as possible to check whether your preferred date and time is available. You can make enquiries by telephone, but you should regard your booking as provisional until we have confirmed the date and time to you in writing - which we will only do after we have received a completed application form from you.

Some people choose to be married on a day other than Saturday, which is absolutely fine (although not all days and times are possible due to services and other activities that may be taking place in the church). However, you may wish to bear in mind that we cannot guarantee to provide bell ringers or a choir on week days. Please below for more information about the bells and the choir.

## MEETING THE CLERGY

In doing the above you may or may not speak to a member of the clergy, but you will need to make arrangements to see the minister who will conduct your wedding no later than four to six months beforehand, to discuss the details of your marriage service. You will probably meet him/her two or three times in all, including a rehearsal a few days before the wedding. This is not usually a problem - unless you live a long way from Aughton, in which case planning ahead will be essential.

## MUSIC

St Michael's organist will be pleased to discuss choices of music. He is generally available after the 10.30 am service on Sunday (no appointment is necessary). He can advise you on a suitable choice of hymns and other music, including the entrance of the bride, during the signing of the registers, and for the procession at the end of the service. You may, of course, have your own ideas already, but please discuss them with the organist as not every piece that sounds wonderful on a CD can be played on a church organ! The minister conducting your wedding is also able to discuss these with you.

When it comes to hymns, a good starting point is that they should all be well known and easy for your friends and family to sing! There are usually two or three hymns during the service. Most favourite hymns can be used, particularly at the beginning of the service, but those in the middle should be appropriate to the context of a marriage. That is, the words should help us to express something of the love, commitment or dedication that is central to marriage, or the love of God that is at the heart of the Christian message. The choir is usually available to lead the singing, if required, for an additional fee. **PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE AGREED YOUR MUSIC WITH US BEFORE YOU COMMIT ANYTHING TO PRINT.**

## YOUR MARRIAGE SERVICE

Within the marriage service, there are a number of options including, for example, a choice of music, readings, and prayers. The final decision on the content of the service rests always with the minister who conducts the service, so it is important that you discuss your proposals with him/her (and certainly before anything is put into print). He/she will go through the service with you in detail so that you know what the options are. The full text of the Church of England's marriage service, including all the recommended bible readings, is available at:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/texts/pastoral/marriage/marriage.aspx>

It is usually best not to be overly influenced by relatives, but rather to make choices that will allow you to make your commitment to each other in a way that is comfortable and meaningful for you both. It is possible for family members and friends, including clergy/ministers from your own church, to be involved in the service (for example, in reading a lesson or leading prayers), but once again, please discuss this with us at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

## **MARRIAGE PREPARATION**

Your wedding day lasts 24 hours, and you will no doubt put in many days of preparation (sorting out the service, flowers, dresses, catering, guest lists, and so on) to make sure it is successful. Your marriage is for life. We believe that you need to put in preparation time to make sure that your marriage is as successful as your wedding day. We want to give every couple the opportunity to spend some time, thinking about each other and about their future life together. Usually this preparation is done within the meetings you have with the clergy.

## **THE REHEARSAL**

A rehearsal is usually arranged for an evening in the week leading up to the wedding, on a date to suit you and the minister. Obviously, the presence of the bride and groom is essential, and it is certainly very helpful to have the chief bridesmaid, the best man, and the bride's father (or the person who will escort her into church). Other bridesmaids, page boys, anyone doing a reading, and at least one of the ushers, should attend if possible. Others are most welcome to attend if they wish, although there will not be anything specific for them to do.

## **THE MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE**

What is normally referred to as your 'marriage certificate' is, legally speaking, a certified copy of the entry of your marriage in the church's Marriage Registers. It is important to keep this document safely as a duplicate copy will cost at least £10 (2015 prices). If you need more than one copy on the day of the wedding, please let us know well in advance.

## **CAR PARKING**

St Michael's has only a small car park, in front of the church hall opposite the church (and if the hall is in use, even this may not be available). This means that most cars have to be parked in the street. Please note that the pub next to the church, the Stanley Arms, does not permit its car park to be used by wedding parties as it needs the spaces for its own customers. We ask that you make your guests aware of this when you send out your invitations or directions.

## **FLOWERS**

Most couples want to put flowers in church for their wedding. The Parish Office (Tel 01695 424457) can advise you what is appropriate and possible in St Michael's. Please do not make firm arrangements with a florist without speaking to us, as arrangements for setting up flowers need to take into account that there may be other events or services in church on the same day as your wedding.

## **BELLS**

St Michael's has a ring of six bells. These can usually be rung before and after the service, although we are not always able to provide ringers on weekdays as many of the ringers are at work during the week.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOS**

We welcome your official photographer and video operator (if any) to take photos during service. If the weather is very cold or wet, some couples may choose to have the official photographs taken in church rather than outside.

## **PASSPORTS**

If you are going abroad for your honeymoon, brides may wish to have their passport changed to their married name. You can do this before you are married provided you get a form from the Passport Office and give it to the minister who will conduct your wedding to be completed and signed. You will need to do this at least three months before the date of your wedding.