

Preparing for your wedding

with Kilmacolm Parish Church



So, you've decided to get married in church or by our minister!

We can assure you that you will be made most welcome in church, not only on your wedding day, but in the weeks and months before, and for many years after!

By asking our minister to conduct your wedding, either in church or in another venue you have asked him to share in what will probably be one of the most unforgettable days of your life. It is a great privilege and joy for the minister to do this and to meet your family and friends. But as well as asking the minister to help you in the day, you are also asking God to share with you in your joy. You are asking his blessing on your marriage and you are in effect saying "Please God, make our marriage a good one." We hope and pray that he will, however both of you will need to work hard to ensure that he does.

In marriage, you will be entering into a covenant with each other in the presence of your friends and family, and of course God. You will both make promises; a ring, or rings will be exchanged as a sign and symbol of your love as well as reminding you of the covenant you have entered. A covenant is an agreement between two parties - each makes promises and each takes responsibilities. Included in the covenant is the promise to remain loving, faithful and respectful to each other (note - there is no mention of obeying!), and you promise to be with each other through the good times and the bad times 'for as long as you both shall live'. The church believes and teaches that marriage is for life and we hope and pray that your marriage will be strong, healthy and that you will spend many years together.

You are entering into a wonderful adventure of love and discovery. Of course it won't always be easy (anything worthwhile never is), there will be readjustments; there will be give and take; but you will have each other, and grow to discover the strengths and weaknesses; the friendship and joy; the companionship and the thrills that go with spending time with each other. This is what marriage is all about.

The next few pages give you some information about the legal side of marriage, the wedding day and the service itself. We trust it helps you in your plans.

On behalf of the Kirk Session

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. Bryan Kerr, Minister

Legal Issues ...The Registrar

A couple intending to marry should make contact the Registrar's Office in the three month period prior to the date of marriage and not later than twenty nine clear days before the date. The Registrar in Inverclyde operates an appointment system. You can contact them on 01475 714250 for more information. If the marriage is taking place outside the Inverclyde area, it is the Registrar of that district who should be approached.

Each of you will need to fill in a marriage notice, and these are available from the Registrar or online. These must be completed and handed in to the Registrar no later than 29 clear days before the date of your wedding (however it is helpful to give them 10-12 weeks to process your forms). You can download the forms from <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/registration/registering-a-marriage-or-civil-partnership/>

When the Registrar is satisfied that there is no legal reason why you should not marry you will be given a Marriage Schedule. This can be picked up, from the Registrar, by prior arrangement sometime during the week of the wedding. This can only be collected by one of the parties being married. It is important that you give the minister's name and the church (or venue) where the wedding is to take place.

By law, a marriage cannot take place without a Marriage Schedule and it is the couple's responsibility to ensure it is applied for and issued in good time. You should ensure that you bring this schedule with you to the wedding rehearsal where the minister will check the details. You must take this home with you and the groom or best man must bring it with them on the day of the wedding. This document must be in the minister's possession before the service can begin.

The completed schedule will be given back to you at the end of the service and it is your responsibility to ensure that it is lodged with the Registrar within three days of the wedding. (note - anyone can hand the completed schedule to the Registrar).

Legal Issues ... The Schedule

You need certain details about the church in order that you can complete your schedule with the registrar. If your marriage service is in the church then under the place of marriage you should put - 'Kilmacolm Parish Church'. The minister's name is 'The Reverend Bryan Kerr' (he signs his name 'Bryan Kerr' for the 'celebrant and witness details form') and the denomination to which he is attached is 'The Church of Scotland'. Should it be needed the address of the church is High Street, Kilmacolm, PA13 4BP.

This form must be filled in accurately - if not, it may have to be changed before the wedding can take place.

Legal Issues ... Your Passports

If one of the individuals getting married is going to change their surname and is going to be travelling abroad in their married name immediately after the wedding then they can apply for their passport to be changed in advance. A 'P.D.2' form must be filled in and attached to the appropriate change of name form. The forms are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/passports-for-newly-weds-and-civil-partners>

Meeting with the minister

The minister is always on hand to help you with any questions you have regarding your wedding. The minister, after your initial meeting, will want to meet with you on occasion (either onsite in Kilmacolm or online) to discuss your wedding and what married life might look like for you. A rehearsal will be arranged for sometime in the week leading up to the wedding.

What about the church?

We hope that couples who wish to be married in church, by a Christian minister, asking God to bless their marriage will feel able to come along and join with the congregation in worship. This will allow you to feel the support and fellowship of the family of God, and to perhaps understand a little more about God, his love and promises to us and to make understand what it means to make a commitment. We understand the demands that are placed on the lives and diaries of individuals, not least physical location and the challenges of family life, and we do not expect to see people every week in church (unless they feel able to which would be lovely!). However attending on occasion allows you to get a feel for the church and for our minister so that you are as comfortable as possible on your wedding day, Worship takes place each Sunday at 11am and you can attend online if distance is an issue.

Music

The Minister will give you contact details for the church organist if you are getting married in church and you should contact them to discuss your choice of music for the marriage ceremony as soon as possible. In addition to the hymns you will likely also want to choose two pieces of music, one to be played as the the couple (or one of them) comes down the aisle, and one to be played as the wedding party leaves the church. You may also want something played as you sign the schedule in front of your family and friends. If you are being married outwith the church but still want hymns then you should speak to the minister to ensure a competent musician used to accompanying congregational singing is able to play.

It is important to remember your wedding is a day you will want to remember and we are certain you don't want it to be cringeworthy as you look back. To that end the minister and organist will work with you to ensure the musical choices are appropriate for a wedding ceremony.

Photographs & Videos

We are happy to allow professional photographs and videos to be taken of your wedding, provided this is done discreetly. The minister will ultimately decide on the placement of photographers and videographers (and their equipment) for the duration of the service and they should remain in the one place for the majority of the service so as not to distract the guests attention away from you as the couple getting married.

We allow the official photographer to take a few photos during the service. The minister will speak to your photographer on the day of your wedding regarding this. We ask that guests do not take photographs during the service. The minister can also encourage your guests to comply with your wishes about posting photos on Social Media at the start of the service in a fun way.

If the service is recorded, whether by a family member or a professional videographer, any live music performances or commercial music recordings captured (or dubbed on afterwards in post-production) will require permission. The Limited Manufacture Licence (LM) from PRS for Music is the best way to obtain this. Most professional videographers will hold a copyright license to allow video to be taken. However, if you have a family friend or a 'keen amateur' taking the video you might have to purchase a license in order to comply with regulations.

Kilmacolm Parish Church has the ability to livestream your wedding service from the church for family and friends who are unable to attend. Speak to the minister about this possibility.

Fees

There is no fee for the services of the minister either to conduct your wedding in Kilmacolm Parish Church or in another venue.

A fee of £90 has been set for the organist.

There is also no fee for the use of the church. The Kirk Session instead invite couples to consider how much other aspects of the day are costing and make a suitable donation to the work of the church, including the amount of time our minister will spend arranging, writing and conducting your service. However, it should be understood that the ability to make a donation or not will not affect our desire to host your wedding.

The Kirk Session review all charges annually and the fees you pay are the fees in place on the day of your wedding. If there is any change to the above rates, you will be contacted by the Kirk Session.

If your wedding date happens to fall during the minister's holidays, or if he is unable to take your wedding for any other reason, we will arrange for another minister to officiate.

Making use of the space

Kilmacolm Parish Church seats many hundred people but it can also feel full with a much smaller number. The minister will speak to you about how best to make use of the space.

For smaller weddings we invite couples to consider the use of the very picturesque 13th century Murray Chapel within our building which provides seating for up to 30 people.

Flowers

You may wish to decorate or have flowers in the church for your wedding. Your florist should arrange a convenient time with the minister well in advance of your wedding. It is your responsibility to ensure that a time is agreed for your florist to gain access to the church. If a time is not agreed we cannot guarantee that the church will be open to allow access.

Flowers may be left for the church service on the Sunday. They may be moved as each week church members donate flowers for the service. Your flowers will be delivered to people who the minister thinks would appreciate them. Please let the minister know if you wish to leave your flowers or take them away with you after the wedding service. Please note that flowers and ribbons must not be attached to the pews with sticky tape, but tied, or looped round the pew ends.

Confetti & Scrambles

It would be helpful to our cleaner if the throwing of confetti could be discouraged within the church. We also do not allow scrambles because of the danger to children on the road at the church door.

Your reception

The minister is not able to attend every reception, but, if you would like the minister to attend yours then you should invite him along with the rest of your guests. (Also, please do not expect the minister's spouse to attend if you have not invited her!)

Arriving on the day

The ushers are asked to arrive 30 minutes before the service. Those being married should aim to be at the church along with their supporters who will be standing alongside them at least 20 minutes before the service. If one of the parties being married (or both) wish to 'make an entrance' and walk down the aisle they should arrive in time and allow a maximum of five minutes for photography before they enter the church.

Remember that no-one has the right to turn up late to your wedding - not even the couple!

The Service

There are many different parts to your wedding service and the minister is very happy for you to be involved in creating the wedding service that you want and that suits you. You will be able to choose hymns and vows as well as readings. The following sections may help with some of these choices.

Hymns

You should also choose two hymns, in consultation with the organist. Here are a few suggestions from the Church Hymnary (4th Edition):

14 The Lord's my Shepherd	519 Love Divine, all loves excelling
52 How lovely is the dwelling place	528 make me a channel of your peace
63 All people that on earth do dwell	695 Your love, O God, has called us here
110 Glory be to God the Father	696 We come, dear Lord to celebrate
124 Praise to the Lord	697 Let's praise the Creator who gave us each other
152 Praise the Lord, his glories show	698 The grace of life is theirs
160 Praise my soul the king of heaven	699 God beyond glory
182 Now thank we all our God	700 As man and woman we were made
184 Sing to the Lord a joyful song	738 Glorious things of thee are spoken
200 Christ is made the sure foundation	Be our chief guest Lord
268 O God of Bethel	As Wedding music fills our hearts
462 The King of love my shepherd is	As two we love are wed this day
489 Come down O Love Divine	

There are other hymn books and song books available, please speak to the Church Organist or minister about this.

Printing an order of service

The following is a guide to what you can print on the Order of Service.

Processional - title
Welcome and Introduction
Hymn
The Marriage Ceremony
Prayers
Exchange of Vows
Exchange of Rings
The Blessing
Scripture Readings
Address
Prayers
Hymn
Blessing
Signing of the Marriage Schedule
Recessional - title

The processional is the part where the one or both of the couple come in to your chosen piece of music and the recessional the part where the couple go out to your chosen piece of music. It is sometimes nice to have the names of the piece of music noted in your order of service but this is not essential. Similarly, it is not uncommon for the order of service to comprise simply the words of the chosen hymns and nothing else. You can put in as little or as much as you like. The church also has a video system and the words of the hymns can be projected on a large screen with a suitable wedding background if you do not wish to print an order of service.

If you would like family or friends to contribute with readings or anything like that it can be accommodated at various places in the service. Similarly, if you want more hymns they can be included too.

Making your wedding service 'yours'

Everyone wants to put their own stamp on their wedding service and there are a myriad of ideas and possibilities out there. The minister is always happy to discuss your ideas and how they might be incorporated and share past experience of what has worked for others.

In most services the minister will share the idea of the Unity Candle when three candles sit on the table at the front. The first two are lit either before the service begins or at the start by representatives of each family (sometimes mums or those who have played a significant part in the lives of the couple) with the couple taking a light from those candles and together lighting 'their' candle after their vows are taken.

There are many other ideas such as hand fasting where the couple's hands are bound together and a prayer offered. Where there are families being blended at the wedding there are some lovely ideas which create an display or ornament or artwork comprising something the couple and all the children symbolising that the wedding is about more than the couple.

It has been said that only civil celebrants or humanist celebrants provide a 'personal' and tailored wedding or a couple. We could not disagree with this any more strongly as we know that your wedding in than hands of our minister will reflect who you are as a couple, encompass your ideas and also bring the right mix of humour and welcome without compromising on the dignity and special nature of the day for you and your guests.

If you have an idea or two, the minister will be delighted to discuss them with you.

Vows

We have included four different vows that can be said by both the couple. You can choose which one you would prefer to say on your wedding day. You can either repeat the vow line by line with the ministers help or read them from a card.

Vows 1

In the presence of God
and in the company of our family and friends,
I, , give myself to you, ,
to be your husband/ wife,
and take you now to be my wife/ husband.
I promise to love you,
to be faithful and loyal to you,
in times of sickness and in times of health,
in times of want and in times of plenty,
in times of sorrow and in times of joy
for as long as we live.

Vows 2

In the presence of God
and in the company of our family and friends,
I, , give myself to you, ,
to be your husband/ wife,
and take you now to be my wife/ husband.
I will love you,
and be faithful and loyal to you.
All that I am I give to you, all that I have, I share with you,
in times of sickness and in times of health,
in times of want and in times of plenty,
in times of sorrow and in times of joy
for as long as we live.
And this is my solemn promise.

Vows 3

In the presence of God
and in the company of our family and friends,
I, , give myself to you, ,
to be your husband/ wife,
and take you now to be my wife/ husband, my partner for life.
From this moment onward,
in all good times and difficult times we will share,
in times of prosperity and poverty,
in times of good health, sickness and grief,
while we're young and as we grow old,
to love you, support you and respect you,
to encourage you for the rest of my life.
. . . . , this is my promise to you.

Vows 4

In the presence of God
and in the company of our family and friends,
I, , give myself to you, ,
to be your husband/ wife,
and take you now to be my wife/ husband,
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.

Words exchanged with rings at every service

. . . . , I give you this ring
as a sign of our marriage,
of our constant faith and abiding love,
With my body I will 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.

Readings

Your service will include a reading from the Bible and you may wish to assist the minister in the choice of readings. Suitable readings include:

John 15:9-12

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

1 Corinthians 13

Love never gives up.
Love cares more for others than for self.
Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.
Love doesn't strut,
Doesn't have a swelled head,
Doesn't force itself on others,
Isn't always "me first,"
Doesn't fly off the handle,
Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,
Doesn't revel when others grovel,
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
Puts up with anything,
Trusts God always,
Always looks for the best,
Never looks back,
But keeps going to the end.
Love never dies.

But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly. And the best of the three is love.

Ephesians 3:14-21

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of

Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge —that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 5:25-33

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Song of Solomon 8:7

Many waters cannot quench love;
rivers cannot sweep it away.
If one were to give
all the wealth of one's house for love,
it would be utterly scorned.

You may also want readings or poems from other sources. Below are a selection of readings that could be used in your service. Remember, if you want a friend or family member to read something, just ask the minister.

Love's Philosophy by Percy Shelley

The fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean;
The winds of heaven mix forever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single:
All things by a law divine
In another's being mingle--
Why not I with thine?

See, the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower could be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea;--
What are all these kissing's worth,
If thou kiss not me?

From the 'I Ching'

When two people are at one in their inmost hearts
They shatter even the strength of iron or of bronze;
And when two people understand each other in their inmost hearts
Their words are sweet and strong like the fragrance of orchids.

To keep your marriage brimming - Ogden Nash

To keep your marriage brimming,
With love in the loving cup,
Whenever you're wrong, admit it;
Whenever you're right - shut up!

Fidelity by D.H. Lawrence

Man and woman are like the earth, that brings forth flowers
in summer, and love, but underneath is rock.
Older than flowers, older than ferns, older than foraminiferae,
older than plasma altogether is the soul underneath.
And when, throughout all the wild chaos of love
slowly a gem forms, in the ancient, once-more-molten rocks
of two human hearts, two ancient rocks,
a man's heart and a woman's,
that is the crystal of peace, the slow hard jewel of trust,
the sapphire of fidelity.
The gem of mutual peace emerging from the wild chaos of love.

The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran

Then Almitra spoke again and said, and what of Marriage, Master?
And he answered saying:
You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore.
You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.
Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.

Love one another, but make not a bond of love:
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same
music.
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together yet not too near together:
For the pillars of the temple stand apart,
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

Love by Roy Croft

I love you, not only for what you are,
But for what I am
When I am with you.

I love you, not only for what
You have made of yourself,
But for what
You are making of me.

I love you for the part of me
That you bring out;
I love you for putting your hand
Into my heaped-up heart
And passing over
All the foolish, weak things
That you can't help
Dimly seeing there,
And for drawing out
Into the light
All the beautiful belongings
That no one else had looked
Quite far enough to find.

I love you because you
Are helping me to make
Of the lumber of my life
Not a tavern but a temple;
Out of the works of my every day
Not a reproach but a song.

I love you because you have done
More than any creed
Could have done
To make me good,
And more than any fate
To make me happy.

You have done it without a touch,
Without a word, without a sign.
You have done it
By being yourself.

Sonnet 116 by William Shakespeare

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! It is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran

Love has no other desire but to fulfil itself.
But if you love and must needs have desires,
let these be your desires:
To melt and be like a running brook
that sings its melody to the night.
To know the pain of too much tenderness.
To be wounded by your own understanding of love;
And to bleed willingly and joyfully.
To wake at dawn with a winged heart
and give thanks for another day of loving;
To rest at the noon hour and meditate love's ecstasy;
To return home at eventide with gratitude;
And then to sleep with a prayer for the beloved in your heart
and a song of praise upon your lips.

Wedding Prayer from North American First Nations People

Now you will feel no rain,
For each of you will be shelter to the other.
Now you will feel no cold,
For each of you will be warmth to the other.
Now there is no more loneliness for you,
For each of you will be companion to the other.
Now you are two bodies,
But there is only one life before you.
Go now to your dwelling place,
To enter into the days of your togetherness.
And may your days be good and long upon the earth.

Apache Blessing from North American First Nations People

May the sun bring you new energy by day,
May the moon softly restore you by night,
May the rain wash away your worries,
May the breeze blow new strength into your being,
And all of the days of your life may you walk
Gently through the world and know its beauty.

From Captain Corelli's Mandolin by Louis de Bernieres

Love is a temporary madness,
it erupts like volcanoes & then subsides.
And when it subsides you have to make a decision.
You have to work out whether your roots have so entwined together
that it is inconceivable that you should ever part.
Because this is what love is. Love is not breathlessness, it is not
excitement,
it is not the promulgation of eternal passion.
That is just being "in love" which any fool can do.
Love itself is what is left over when being in love has burned away,
and this is both an art and a fortunate accident.
Those that truly love, have roots that grow towards each other
underground
and when all the pretty blossom have fallen from their branches,
they find that they are one tree and not two.

And finally ..

If there is anything at all of which you are uncertain please do not hesitate to contact the minister.

You have chosen to be married by a Christian Minister, in God's sight. May you know of God's blessing and guiding in all your preparation and in your new life together as a married couple.

For your notes ...

For your notes ...

Kilmacolm Parish Church

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