

Anglican Parish of St Thomas Tāmaki



Marriage Booklet

The marriage service is a service of worship of God in which two people promise to love each other and spend the rest of their lives together.

By approaching us for your wedding ceremony, we understand that to be a request for a Christian marriage ceremony in the Anglican tradition.

This booklet is to help you plan your wedding ceremony and to answer some of your questions



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Planning for your Day

Your first step after reading this information is to arrange a meeting with the vicar or priest-in-charge who will help you decide if a church service is the “right” approach for your wedding day. If you live away from Kohimarama you will need to organise a time to visit. If you live overseas please email to book a phone call for when you are both available for the discussion.

It is helpful to book the day and time of your ceremony as soon as possible.

St Thomas Tāmaki

Our parish church was built in 1957 but the original church of which ruins remain, dates from 1843. The church will seat 120 guests. It also has an organ which provides music for a grand entrance and exit if required as well as music during the service. There is also an adjacent hall, which can accommodate up to 100 guests. There is also room for a marquee if one is required.

Please note that the seating capacity is finite. If you believe that you will need more seats than the indicated capacity, then we are unfortunately unable to help you.

The Marriage Service

Your service will be based on the marriage services in “**A New Zealand Prayer Book**” which offers an excellent basis for your service. You may include your own reflections and readings or write your own vows with the approval of the priest taking your service who will ensure that your vows meet the legal requirements. Your celebrant may also be able to provide some material for you to use if you wish.

We encourage you to sit down together, read through each of the services available and choose the service or elements of each service that best suit your thoughts and desires for your life together.

The Officiant

You will be married by the vicar or priest-in-charge. If you wish to be married by another Anglican priest please contact the vicar or priest-in-charge. Requests are sometimes made for couples to be married at our church by ministers or pastors of other Christian denominations using their own order of service. Regretfully this is not permitted. However, the clergy are happy to permit pastors from other denominations to pray for the couple or to do a

scriptural reading or to preach during the service. We are more than happy to marry couples from other denominations.

Music

We have an organ and organists available to play at your wedding, but if you are unfamiliar with traditional wedding music choosing can be difficult. Discuss this with the priest when you arrange your service.

CDs and soloists are sometimes used, but we encourage you to think about the words and contexts of the songs. Soloists will need to rehearse at least once with the accompanist prior to the service.

The music, hymns, soloists and CDs need to be discussed with the priest taking your service.

Rehearsal

It is important to have a rehearsal prior to the wedding service. This is an opportunity for everyone involved to become familiar with the service plan, eliminating nerves and difficulties on the day. Everyone who is involved with the wedding should be present, if at all possible.

Flowers

You may use the flowers which are already provided or you may wish to organise your own flowers and someone to arrange them. Please discuss this with the priest when you arrange your service.

Confetti

May be used outside our churches, however, if it is wet please use your discretion.

The Marriage Licence

We need a licence to marry you! Around two months before your wedding day you should apply to the registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, email: bdm.nz@dia.govt.nz, freephone 0800 22 52 52 or (64) 4 463 9362 to discuss your requirements. Their website is <https://www.govt.nz/browse/family-and-whanau/getting-married/get-a-marriage-licence/#who-can-get-it>

The licence is valid for three months and takes approximately three days to be prepared. The Anglican Church does allow the marriage of divorced people. However, it is assumed that both partners of the intending marriage desire to abide by the life-long nature of marriage. If you have been previously married

you will need to show the registrar the legal papers relating to the dissolution of that marriage.

The clergy are licensed marriage celebrants and as such are bound by the laws not only of the Anglican Church, but also of New Zealand. They will therefore not perform a wedding service which violates either legal system.

From time to time people who are already married wish to re-affirm their wedding vows in church in the presence of God. We are happy to facilitate such a ceremony and will provide a wedding blessing certificate to mark the occasion. This service follows very closely the structure of a normal wedding service. However, the vows are said in such a way as to acknowledge that they are being re-affirmed.

The licence is addressed to the priest marrying you and should be delivered to the priest at least two weeks before your wedding day. Please check the details carefully before delivery to the parish. If there are any inconsistencies on the documents go back to Births, Deaths and Marriages for them to be corrected.

Fees:

Church and priest \$500 excluding GST

Organist (if desired) \$150 excluding GST

It is expected that couples who get married in St Thomas Tāmaki will make a financial contribution both for the use of the church and facilities. There is considerable time and expertise given in all the preparation involved in making this an extra special day. Some eight hours of clergy time is given to each wedding which can include the initial meeting, two preparation evenings, a rehearsal and the wedding service. Full payment should be made prior to the wedding service (ideally when the marriage licence is delivered) or it can be given to the priest at the rehearsal.

Reception

The reception may be held in the church hall or at any other convenient venue. The church hall can be hired for light refreshments or a meal after the wedding for a fee of \$400 excluding GST. This is generally done by couples who wish to offer hospitality to friends who will not be attending the formal wedding reception or where a more intimate reception is preferred.

The priest who celebrates your marriage will not expect to be invited to join in your festivities following the service. You will need to issue an invitation if you would like them to attend. Their attendance will of course depend on their own commitments.

Before the wedding

Preparing to be married

At this time of preparing for your wedding, we encourage you to think about your relationship:

- What are the things that are going well?
- What are the things that aren't going so well?
- How can communication be improved?

Although you may have been living together for some time our experience is that this is a good time to take stock of the good and not so good things of your partnership. There will never be a better time to think about these things!

Pre-marriage sessions may be arranged with the priest. Each of these lasts 1½ hours. Here we discuss informally some of the basic, important issues you will be facing in married life. While these sessions are not compulsory they do provide a great opportunity for couples to spend quality time together reflecting on married life. They also give the clergy a chance to get to know you better.

The Wedding Service

The groom and his party should arrive at the church about twenty minutes before the service begins.

The bride and her party should arrive at the time of the wedding or a little before to allow time for photographs.

Many brides are escorted up the aisle by their father or mother, some by both parents and sometimes the bride and groom come in together. The bride may choose to walk down the aisle by herself. Bridesmaids may precede or follow the bride.

Photographs and Videos

Photography and videography of the service are permitted. However, the only photos to be taken during the service are by arrangement between the priest and the official bridal photographer and videographer. No flood lights are to be used in the church. Professional photographers are well aware of the need for

discretion in their movements so that attention is not withdrawn from the bride and groom and the sanctity of the occasion is marred. If friends and family are taking the photos, requirements should be discussed with the priest marrying you and it would be helpful for them to attend the rehearsal.

Ushers

It is helpful to have two ushers at your wedding (although one is sufficient for thirty or fewer guests). Please ask your ushers to help in the following ways.

- Introduce themselves to the priest taking the service.
- Welcome your family and friends.
- Hand guests any printed material relating to the service.
- Guide guests to seats near the front of the church, leaving the first row or two of seats for immediate family.
- Collect any printed material left in the pews after the service.
- Arrange for the removal of flowers from the church if the service is during Lent or you are taking your flowers with you to the reception.

A Public Service

A wedding is a public service and the doors of the church will be left open during the service.

Finally

Our aim is that your wedding day is not only a day for you to remember and cherish for all your life together, but is a joyful service in which a serious and life long commitment is made.

Summary of the process

- Initial enquiry. This booklet will be sent. No bookings will be made at this stage of the process.
- Read this booklet.
- If you decide to go ahead, contact the priest of the parish for further discussion and to set a date.
- Meet with the priest taking your service at least twice and attend a rehearsal at an arranged time.
- Send the marriage licence to the vicar or priest-in-charge and pay the fees at least two weeks before "The Day."
- Rehearsal – in the week before is best.
- The BIG Day!!