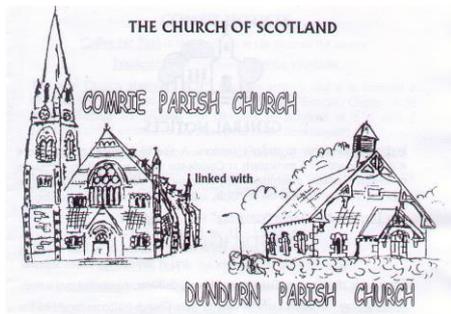


If you're thinking of being married in Comrie or St. Fillans, we hope this information helps you...



Marriage in the Parish Churches of Comrie and Dundurn

Getting married in our Church

We're pleased if you're thinking about getting married in Church. We want to help you have not just a day to remember, but very many happy days of married life. However, we live in the real world and we know that it's becoming harder all the time to keep a marriage strong. That's why we want to help you to build a good, firm bond between you which will remain strong for many years to come.

We think that the best time to start building that strong bond isn't on the wedding day but is right now! The promises which you make on the special day are very important, but they aren't the whole story! We would very much like to help you to think through some of the main issues about marriage in the months leading up to your wedding. We take very seriously the words of Jesus, that marriage is a lasting union between one man and one woman which, in an ideal world, will last for the whole time both partners are alive.

What is marriage?

Marriage is a partnership which lasts for life between one man and one woman. Marriage is about companionship, where there is real giving and receiving, helping and being helped, caring and being cared for. Each of you is wholly committed to caring for and looking after the interests of the other.

Why get married?

Nowadays, lots of people feel that they can get along fine just by living together. In the Church, we agree that marriage isn't just the wedding day! But we believe that marriage is a lifelong commitment. It's hard to make that sort of commitment, but it helps if there is a public declaration by the couple to the world that they are now together.

Commitment means promises - which are to be kept. So, it is only right there are promises to love and cherish for life, in good times and bad times alike.

In cohabitation, there is no similar need for commitment. Either one of the couple, however, can leave when they like. Marriage is completely different, because the idea of being together is taken very seriously. In the church, we think that you've got to be that serious about marriage if you are to stay together. We also think that kind of committed relationship is the one in which children are most likely to thrive.

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Who can get married in Comrie/Dundurn Church?

The policy of the church is to marry anyone who is a member of the Church or a son or daughter of a member, or anyone who lives within the parish. You don't have to be a member of the Church to be married in Church. However, as we have already said, you want God to be involved if you are being married in a church and we are happy to let you have any further information you might wish.

If either of you has been married before, you must let the minister know. The minister may be prepared to marry those who have been married before, and this must be discussed fully. During the marriage service mention may be made of the fact that we have all made promises in the past and these have been broken. We need sincerely to say sorry to God that we have not kept our word. But we also believe God is a God of the second chance when we are truly sorry, and so we will pray that you will know God's peace and His blessing upon your marriage. If you wish to discuss this further with the minister, please contact him.

Thinking about marriage...

It is a condition of being married in Comrie/Dundurn Parish Church that you meet with the minister where we will discuss some of the main issues about being married. We insist on this because we take the idea of lasting lifelong commitment seriously, and we trust you take it as seriously. If you have registered your intent to marry in one of our churches you should be in regular communication with the minister to ensure that life before and beyond the service of matrimony is discussed.

What is marriage built on?

Just as a house has foundations on which it is built and the bricks are held together by cement, so a marriage has to have a foundation and it has to have certain things to hold it together. We want to help you, as you prepare for marriage, to develop these foundations with each other, so that your marriage will be strong for a long time to come. These are the main things we will think about in the marriage preparation classes.

The foundation of marriage is love. There are different types of love: romantic love, sexual love, and "commitment-love". All of these types of love (sometimes different amounts of each at different times) are the foundation of marriage, and the church sees all this as the good gift of God. But since marriage requires all three types of love, one without the other isn't enough. It's like making house foundations with cement and pebbles but no water.

If you are currently living together, we are prepared to make arrangements for your wedding provided you discuss the matter with the minister fully. We aren't saying you cannot be married in church, and we emphasise the importance of marriage over living together.

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One of the things which helps hold a marriage together is a clear demonstration that you are married. Just as a house usually has a fence or wall round the garden to show what belongs to the house and what doesn't, the marriage ceremony demonstrates to your families and friends that you are now a married couple.

Marriage is a public act and so an official wedding is required. But there is no need for a huge event. A wedding is perfectly valid where there are two witnesses instead of two hundred, and it is equally a wedding in the sight of God. In the wedding service words are read from the Bible that "a man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife". The same holds true for brides who will also leave their parents and be united with their husband.

Leaving families and close family ties is difficult, and it certainly doesn't mean that families should be ignored. But it does stress that the couple is the new unit. Loyalty to each other is important. That means putting your husband or wife first- even before what you want. That certainly isn't easy and it takes a lot of patience and practice. Loyalty in this way affects the whole way we live our lives. For example, it affects the time we spend at work, or with our friends, or on the things that interest us. If these things (good as they are) mean that we are not putting our wife's interests or our husband's interests first then perhaps we need to think again.

God, I'm getting married!

God also has quite a bit to do with your wedding. You have asked to be married in church, where people meet week by week to worship God. You make your solemn promises to each other, and also before God. He sees whether you keep these promises in the years ahead. We also believe that God can help you, because He cares for you. You can come to Him in worship, and you can talk to Him in prayer. We would very much like to see you around church, if you care to come. If you would like to learn more about the God of love we worship, just have a word with the minister.

We really do wish God's richest blessing on you both as you take this important step in your lives. Remember that we're here whenever you need us.

Marriage isn't just the Wedding!

We want this day to be very special for you, and we hope that it will be the first of many very enjoyable days of married life. We will do all we can to make sure you have a lovely day to remember, but if you have any questions or concerns we do ask that you mention these sooner rather than later!

We are also concerned for you after you are married. If you are living in the area, we would be very pleased to see you along at church where we will make you feel as welcome as we can. If you ever need to discuss matters concerning your marriage, remember that *we aren't just here for the big day*, but for every day.

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Other details!

1. Church Officer. The Church Officer is automatically booked when a marriage is arranged within one of our churches. The Church Officer will prepare the church for the service and be present on the day to assist your guests and those whom you have invited to perform specific duties [eg Ushers etc]. You would probably wish to make a donation to the Church Officer for these extra duties [£45 would be appropriate].
2. Order of Service. The provision of a printed Order of Service with the words of the hymns and other information, if desired, is your responsibility and should be ordered only when *all the information has been agreed with the minister*.
3. Flowers. The arrangement of flowers in the church is your responsibility. However, in Dundurn, you should contact Mrs Cathy Moncrieff (685253) in the first instance.
4. Photographs. Photographs and video recordings can provide a very precious record of your wedding day, but what happens within the Church is first of all a service of worship and we believe it is important that nothing should distract our attention away from what is essentially a sacred moment. For this reason, it is important that any photographer speaks with the minister *prior to* the service of worship to discuss the extent and limitations of what is appropriate.
5. Organist. The minister can recommend an organist. However, it is your responsibility to speak with the organist and discuss his/her individual fee. It is customary to have two hymns in the service, although more can be sung if desired. These should firstly be discussed with the minister.
6. Rehearsal. The Marriage Schedule should be brought to the rehearsal and handed to the minister to ensure it is in his possession before the day of the wedding. The Orders of Service should also be brought to the rehearsal to ensure they are available for the ushers on the day. *Fees and donations should be brought to the rehearsal to avoid having to deal with these on the day itself*.
7. Church Donations. There is no charge for weddings at either Comrie or Dundurn. However, in arranging a marriage there are certain costs borne by the congregations. To offset these rising costs we would encourage a minimum donation of £250. Please make any donations payable to the appropriate church.
8. Bride's arrival. While it may be considered 'tradition' to be a little late for your wedding please be aware that you have invited your guests to be present at a specific time. The minister and organist will also be present. However, there is every possibility that the minister will have a subsequent meeting/event to attend and therefore Bride's are expected to arrive no later than 5-10 minutes after the intended time of the service.