

Occasional Offices (Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals) Policy

Incumbents' discretion

Whilst the below sets out our position on many aspects of occasional offices, the Incumbent may deviate from this policy for good pastoral or missional reasons, so long as any deviation is both legal and seemly. The PCC may require an explanation for any such deviation, and may offer guidance on what it feels appropriate or inappropriate. In particular a standing flexibility exists towards all non-statutory rules pertaining to dates and times for all serving members of the armed forces.

Fees and Charges

Statutory Fees will be charged according the Table of Parochial Fees relevant to time of the service.

Local charges are not statutory fees, in that they are set locally and are for services which may be refused.

However, we will not conduct a wedding or funeral without a Verger, and for contractual reasons a

'Professional Organist' fee is always payable at Ripley for weddings and funerals that include music, even when our organist is not used.

Our local charges are set as follows:

Baptisms	Professional Organist*	Vocational Organist*
Bishop Thornton	£51.00	£41.00
Burnt Yates	£51.00	£41.00
Markington	£51.00	£41.00
Ripley	£51.00	£41.00
South Stainley	£51.00	£41.00

Weddings	Heating	Verger	Professional Organist*	Vocational Organist*	Choir	Bells
Bishop Thornton	£86.00	£53.50	£122.50	£92.00	N/A	N/A
Burnt Yates	£86.00	£53.50	£122.50	£92.00	N/A	N/A
Markington	£86.00	£53.50	£122.50	£92.00	N/A	N/A
Ripley	£107.00	£64.50	£184.00	£117.50	£194.00	£49.50
South Stainley	£86.00	£53.50	£122.50	£92.00	N/A	N/A

Funerals	Heating	Verger	Professional Organist*	Vocational Organist*	Choir	Bells
Bishop Thornton	£86.00	£53.50	£102.00	£76.50	N/A	N/A
Burnt Yates	£86.00	£53.50	£102.00	£76.50	N/A	N/A
Markington	£86.00	£53.50	£102.00	£76.50	N/A	N/A
Ripley	£107.00	£64.50	£102.00	£76.50	N/A	£49.50
South Stainley	£86.00	£53.50	£102.00	£76.50	N/A	N/A

*Set in line with RSCM recommendations.

Collections

It is our custom to take a retiring collection at the end of baptisms, weddings, and funerals. This may be replaced by a collection from the congregation during the service at the request of the family involved.

- At baptisms the entirety of the collection is taken for the life and ministry of the church in which the service takes place. (This is because there are no fees or charges associated with baptisms, but there are costs.)
- At weddings the collection may be split 50:50 between the church in which the service takes place and a charity or charities nominated by the couple being married.
- At funerals the collection may be taken entirely for a charity or charities nominated by the family. At funerals the collection may be taken and processed by the church, or by the funeral director – in which case it must be taken in, and removed from the church in, a sealed box.

When collections are taken and processed by the church, a letter of thanks detailing the amount raised shall be sent to family by the Treasurer.

Decoration of Churches for Occasional Offices

Whilst we welcome baptisms, weddings, and funerals when we can, it is understood that they take place within the life and worship of the wider church community. Therefore seasonal decorations and installations in place within our churches may be present for baptisms, weddings, and funerals and these manifestations of the wider life of the church take precedence over individual services. On occasions this may limit access to parts of our buildings, and where this is the case we will endeavour to find workable alternatives.

Decorations, floral and otherwise, must not be placed in churches for occasional offices in any ways that harm or disrupt the fabric of the buildings, for example, it is never permissible to drive nails into walls or pews to hang flowers from.

Decorations, floral or otherwise, that are provided at the expense of a family for an office remain the property of that family, unless donated to the church. They are free to remove them from the church at their discretion. Any decorations left in the church beyond midnight of the day of the Office may be removed to storage within the church, and disposed of after 28 days if not collected.

We observe a tradition across our churches of removing flowers during Advent and Lent, but floral decorations may be put in place for occasional offices, and if they are donated to the churches will be gratefully retained until unsightly.

Photography During Occasional Offices

Members of congregations are discouraged from taking photos during services, and encouraged to instead be fully present in the experience and the moment.

Professional photographers may be hired by couples and families for Occasional Offices. They must work to minimise disruption to proceedings, photograph only those parts of a service directly related to the Office, and refrain from flash photography. Beyond these courtesies, if the couple or family is happy with the behaviour of the photographer, so are we.

Data Collection and Protection

For details on what data are collected for Occasional Offices, and how they are stored and protected, see our Privacy Policy.

Weddings

“Marriage is a gift of God in creation through which husband and wife may know the grace of God. It is given that as man and woman grow together in love and trust, they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind, as Christ is united with his bride, the Church.

The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together in the delight and tenderness of sexual union and joyful commitment to the end of their lives. It is given as the foundation of family life in which children are [born and] nurtured and in which each member of the family, in good times and in bad, may find strength, companionship and comfort, and grow to maturity in love.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God, and blessed by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with those celebrating a wedding at Cana in Galilee. Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty which all should uphold and honour. It enriches society and strengthens community. No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly but reverently and responsibly in the sight of almighty God.” *The Marriage Service, Common Worship*

The law regarding Holy Matrimony is found in The Marriage Act 1949 as amended, and Canons B30-36.

When will we conduct weddings?

Canon B35 limits the time for weddings to be between 8am and 6pm, locally we further restrict this to between 12noon and 5pm. With reference to the church diary, any date can be placed for a wedding, subject to the following:

- No more than one wedding per day in any one venue, and no more than two weddings per day across all venues.
- No more than two weddings in any seven day period.
- No weddings to be booked at Ripley during the annual 'Pig Festival'.
- No weddings in the week immediately before or after Easter.
- No weddings between 18th December and 8th January.

Whom will we marry?

We will conduct marriages for all those for whom it is legal, and have a Qualifying Connection with one of our parishes. It is understood that under Directions from the Bishop, a Qualifying Connection with any of our parishes is sufficient for a marriage to be solemnised in any of our parishes.

In most cases, the decision of whether or not to solemnise a marriage after a divorce lies with the minister who is asked to conduct it, with the expectation that they will have due regard for the House of Bishops advise on the subject, issued in November 2002. The exception, which we will not allow, is any instance in which solemnising the marriage would be ‘tantamount to consecrating an old infidelity’ i.e. a case in which the current relationship, from the information provided, is considered to be a direct cause of the breakdown of the former marriage.

When and where are banns to be published?

For couples for whom the appropriate preliminary is to publish banns, we will usually do so on the first three Sundays of the month two before the date set for the wedding.

If either of the couple to be married is a foreign national, even if banns may be an appropriate preliminary by virtue of UK residency, we still advise them to proceed instead under Common License, as complications can occur with other countries’ recognition of marriages solemnised without this precaution.

Under authority of the Bishop’s Directions, all banns are to be published at All Saints’ Church, Ripley.

What form will the service take?

The service must follow an authorised rite from either the Book of Common Prayer, or Common Worship. Beyond this provision, the form and niceties of the service are to be agreed between the couple and the officiating minister, with the minister’s opinion being definitive.

Confetti

Confetti may be thrown in the churchyards of Bishop Thornton, Burnt Yates, Markington, and South Stainley provided it is biodegradable in nature. Because of the volume of weddings at Ripley even biodegradable

confetti builds up through the Summer, so throwing it within the churchyard is not permitted. Instead people are encouraged to enjoy it as the Bride and Groom walk through the church gate onto the roadside.

Marriage Preparation

There is a duty for the minister taking a wedding to prepare the couple for marriage, this preparation to be conducted at their discretion.

Services of Blessing and Thanksgiving

Where a couple is already married they may request a service of blessing, or thanksgiving for their marriage. We are happy to work with them to provide such a service. For the purposes of settings dates and times, and for local charges such a service will be treated as a marriage service. A charge equivalent to the Statutory fee for a marriage service is also levied; on an occasion when the service is to take place somewhere other than in one of our churches the equivalent of the DBF portion of the statutory fee for a marriage service will be charged by the church within whose parish boundary the service is to take place.

In considering Blessings and Thanksgivings, the same discretion should be applied by ministers as outlined above for marriages after divorces.

The law currently prevents us from offering blessings for same-sex marriages.

Collections

The collection may be split 50:50 between the church in which the service takes place and a charity or charities nominated by the couple being married.