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# Broughton Outlook

The Parish Magazine of St John's, St Martin's and St Peter's

Read about:



Familiar Face to some? page 6



Together - for what? page 10



Archbishop at Whalley page 16

Also:

September Events .....	2
Restoration Appeal .....	3
Parish Accounts .....	4
Youth Organisations .....	5
Holy Land Pilgrimage .....	6
Registers .....	7
Family Night .....	10
Update of Old News .....	11
Choir News .....	12
Bowling Section .....	13
Parish Diary .....	14
Reflections .....	16



## Marriage in Church



What a joy it has been to have so many marriages in the Parish Church this year. Marriage for anyone is both a solemn and a joyful event but there is that added dimension for a church ceremony. The words with the Christian background take on a fuller meaning – no wonder so many hearts are touched on that day.

As I wait for the bride at the main west door of the church I listen to the bells ringing out their peal to welcome the bride on this special day. It is truly a superb occasion. As I follow the choir through the church I know that when I turn there is the privilege of seeing the two eager faces of the Bride and Groom as they stand together ready to make their vows. Once these are made, the couple face each other and exchange rings with those marvellous words

*'With my body I 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.'*

The entry and exit music played on our new marvellous four manual organ creates an atmosphere that is truly out of this world.

I am frequently asked a number of questions about getting married in Church and so let me answer some of the most popular.

### Who can get married in our Church?

The short answer is 'almost anyone', but there are some formal rules and some necessary preliminaries we have to apply, and of course there are some legal rules too: for example, you must have your parents' consent if you're under eighteen; you must not already be married to someone else; and so on. But assuming there's no legal barrier, almost everyone can get married in church.

### The legal bit: Banns and Licences

If either of you lives in the parish, or maintain a home in the parish, the only legal preliminary needed is that we publish the Banns of your marriage. That means that on three Sundays before your wedding day I will announce your intended marriage and ask if anyone present knows of a reason in law why the Marriage shouldn't take place. I have never known an objection to take

place! In many ways it's an outdated legal formality. If one of you lives in the parish and the other lives in a different parish the Banns have to be read in both parishes. A licence can be used instead of banns but is not as convenient.

### What if we don't live in the Parish?

If neither of you lives in the parish it is still possible if one or both is accepted onto the Church's Electoral Roll. To do that you must have been baptised; and St John's, St Martin's or St Peter's must have been your 'habitual place of worship' during the six months before your Banns are called.

### What if one of us is divorced?

The Church of England teaches that marriage is for life, but we also recognise that, sadly, some marriages do fail. It is possible nowadays to marry in Church, but slightly different rules apply. I am most happy to discuss this.

### When can we get married?

Marriages can take place on any day between 8.00am and 6.00pm. The deciding factors are what other events are taking place in the Church and also the availability of parking.

### What about video?

We are quite happy for recordings - providing the copyright fee is paid and the agreement signed.

### Should we have one or two rings?

A wedding ring is a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, and of the commitment you are making to each other. It is entirely up to you whether you have one ring or two.

Obviously, there are always other questions but if anyone in your families intends to get married they should call at the Wednesday surgery or make initial contact by email, at an early date and I'll explain how it all works.

Yours, in Christ,

*Sidney Fox* (revsfox@lycos.co.uk)