

*The Parish Church  
of St Mark,  
Sheffield &  
High Heath*



# *Your Wedding at St Mark's Church*



*A guide for  
couples and  
families*

*Welcome to St Mark's Church  
and Congratulations on your  
forthcoming marriage!*

We are delighted that you have chosen to begin your married life with a wedding ceremony at St Mark's and we will do our best to ensure that it is a special and meaningful occasion for you and your families.

A church wedding will add a spiritual dimension to your marriage. The ceremony includes God and looks to him for help and guidance. God's blessing is the main attraction for many couples whatever their beliefs.

You make amazing vows, or promises, in a church. You can only make vows this big in a church. These vows, made in public, will help you to stay together and grow together. God and your church are there for you to help you keep your vows.

The Vicar has a very particular role to play in your wedding. They can blend ancient tradition and modern experience to reflect your story. Because of the relationship with the Vicar, your wedding can be made personal, memorable, meaningful and beautiful.

Our church building is a place where decades of prayer and worship have taken place and that makes it a special place for you to begin your married life together; you will feel God's presence in this place like no other.

## *Who can get married in church?*

You are entitled to be married at St Mark's Church if one or both of you are resident in the parish of Shelfield and High Heath. If you are unsure about this talk to the Vicar who will be able to tell you where the parish boundaries lie. There are also numerous qualifying connections that can enable you to get married here, such as being a previous resident, or having a parent or grandparent who married here—again talk to the Vicar who can explain it to you.

## *Do I have to be baptised (Christened) to be married in church?*

No, baptism is not a requirement only residency or some other connection. If you decide later that you wish to explore baptism then the church will be only too happy to help you.

## *My partner believes in God but I'm not sure...would it be hypocritical to have a church wedding?*

You are welcome to have a Church of England wedding regardless of your beliefs. Take a look at the wedding service with the Vicar who understands that spiritual beliefs are varied and complex. This need not be a barrier to a wedding in church.

## *Can we marry on any day of the week?*

Yes, you can marry on any day between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.

## *Can we marry in church if one or both of us is divorced?*

The Church recognises that sadly some marriages do fail and will try its best to support people who find themselves in this situation. The Church does allow the re-marriage of people who have a previous spouse still living "under exceptional circumstances". You should talk to the Vicar about this early on and they will want to have some open and frank discussions with you before they make a decision about whether the marriage can take place. In all cases the decree absolute must be in place and available to see before enquiries are made.

### **A Plan of action:**

- First talk to the Vicar to check that all the legal requirements can be met and to look at a date for the wedding.
- The Vicar will then arrange a series of meetings with you to help you plan your wedding service, including what hymns, readings and other parts of the service you can customise.
- The Vicar may ask you to attend a preparation evening as your wedding day approaches, and there will also be an opportunity to meet with the organist to go through your music choices.
- A wedding rehearsal will be set on one of the days in the week leading up to the wedding. This is to ensure you are comfortable and aware of everything that is going to happen on the day.