

Bamford Chapel and Norden United Reformed Church

Christian Marriage Booklet



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Introduction

The Minister, Elders and members of Bamford Chapel and Norden URC would like to offer their congratulations to you and extend our prayers to you as you plan for this important day in your lives. We thank you for wanting your wedding ceremony to be at Bamford Chapel.

Your wedding will be one of celebration, a joyful occasion for you, your families and your friends. It is also an opportunity to thank God for his gift of love. We trust that your wedding day will be all that you wish it to be and we pray God's blessing on you for that day and for the whole of your married life.

The contents of this booklet should help answer some of the questions you may have about your wedding ceremony. If anything is not clear or you have further questions please do not hesitate to speak to the Wedding Secretary or Minister.

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Section 1: A Church Wedding

1. Asking for a Christian Marriage

Bamford Chapel and Norden URC is a Christian Church. It is not however a marriage bureau and the building is not hired out for wedding receptions.

We are happy to arrange a Christian wedding service with couples who genuinely wish for a Christian marriage. It is important that you believe in God for otherwise there is little purpose in asking for God's blessing on your marriage.

We hope you will see Bamford Chapel and Norden URC as not just a place where you wish to be married but as somewhere where both of you can meet God and share in worship. We will be glad to welcome you at our Sunday services: the main service is at 10.30am (with crèche and Junior Church facilities) and there is also an evening service at 6pm.

The Church will try to support you in your marriage; we will pray for your happiness and growing together. We will be glad to keep in touch with you if you remain in the area. If you plan to live elsewhere, the minister will be glad to put you in touch with a neighbouring church. In short, we want to help you in any way we can to realise the Christian ideal of marriage as a life-long, fulfilling commitment.

2. The Marriage of divorced people

We believe that the gospel of Jesus Christ is to do with forgiveness, love and new beginnings. Therefore, our church is prepared to support the marriage of divorced people.

3. Marriage Preparation

The minister may wish to meet you on more than one occasion, perhaps with other couples, to talk about Christian teaching on marriage. If you would like opportunities for the discussion of marriage, please speak to the minister.

Section 2: Marriage and the Law

1. Notice of marriage

You must give Notice of your Marriage in person to the Superintendent Registrar, who is responsible for the legal side of your marriage. Notice cannot be given more than twelve months before your proposed date; for example, August 4th 2017 would be the earliest date you could register if your wedding was going to be on August 4th 2018.

2. Registration District

Bamford Chapel and Norden URC is situated within the Registration District of Rochdale. The Register Office is at Rochdale Town Hall (Vicars Gate entrance). You must phone the Register Office to book an appointment before attending (phone number 01706 924783/4). The Register Office will inform you of the relevant information you will need to take in with you.

If the Bride and Groom live in two different registration districts (i.e. local council areas) then Notice must be given to both Registrars.

3. Legal Condition for being married at Bamford Chapel and Norden URC

English law sets limits on who may be married at this church. You must fall into one of three categories:

- a) Bride or Groom must live within the boundaries of the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale.
OR
- b) That Bamford Chapel and Norden URC is the usual place of worship of Bride or Groom and that he or she regularly attends services here (Registrars can ask ministers to sign a written statement to this effect.) OR
- c) That Bride or Groom belongs to the United Reformed Church and lives in a Registration District without a URC Building.

4. Marriage by Certificate

This is now the only way of being married, as a marriage by Special licence is no longer an option.

- a) Notice: the new waiting/notice period is now **28 clear days** e.g. if a couple go to see the Registrar on the 1st January, they could not be married before the 29th January.
- b) The current Registration Fee is £35.00 for each of the two notices; this is payable to the Register Office. (These fees may vary from time to time please ask the Registrar)
- c) Residential qualifications: in order to give notice of your intention to marry, you must have lived within your Registration District for at least seven days when you give Notice.
- d) The Notices are a legal matter. They will be displayed on a notice board in the Register Office for 28 clear days. Banns/Notices are not called at Bamford Chapel and Norden URC.

5. Basis of Notice

Since January 2001, notice has to be given on a per person basis. In other words, BOTH PARTIES HAVE TO GIVE NOTICE IN PERSON to the Registrar of the District where they reside, even if they reside in the same district; a separate fee of £35.00 is payable for each notice, and a separate Certificate for Marriage is issued. It will not be possible, therefore, for one person to give details for both parties.

As far as Bamford Chapel and Norden URC is concerned, this means WE MUST RECEIVE TWO CERTIFICATES FOR MARRIAGE for every wedding at Bamford Chapel and Norden URC.

6. Documents needed for registering a wedding

There is a legal requirement for all people getting married to provide evidence of their identity, age and nationality to their Register Office. You will need to produce at least one of the following original documents (photocopies will not do):

- a) Passport
- b) Birth certificate (full copy): You will also be asked to provide evidence of your present address. Any document which has your name and address will be acceptable e.g. NHS Medical Card, Driving Licence, Council Tax bill, Bank or Building Society statement.

Deed Poll: if your name has been changed by Deed Poll, you will be required to produce a Name Change Document.

Previously Married: You must provide a Marriage Certificate, Divorce Decree Absolute, Death Certificate or Consent Form as evidence that your previous marriage has been terminated, **where applicable**.

If marriage, divorce or death certificates were issued in another country and are not in English, then a certified English translation must accompany any such document.

Where either party is a foreign national or further advice is needed, please telephone 01706 924783. (Please confirm any details (in section 6) which are relevant to you with the Register Office prior to your appointment.)

7. Collecting the Certificates

- a) When you give Notice of Marriage the Registrar will tell you the earliest day your certificate will be ready for collecting.
- b) Once the certificates are in your hands it is your responsibility; you must then deliver them to our Wedding Secretary or Minister as soon as possible.
- c) NO WEDDING CAN TAKE PLACE UNLESS THE MINISTER HAS RECEIVED THE TWO CERTIFICATES IN ADVANCE. We must have these documents by no later than **one month** before the wedding.

Section 3: Weddings at Bamford Chapel and Norden URC

1. Fees

- a) Total Fees: Bamford Chapel and Norden URC wedding fees total £550. These include the use of the Church and its heating when necessary, the services of the Minister, Wedding Secretary, Organist and Caretaker, as well as the statutory fees for the Authorised Person who represents the Registrar and for the issue of your copy of the entry into the Register of Marriages.
- b) Deposit: Please note that £80 of this £550 must be paid in **cash** as a non-refundable deposit to the Wedding Secretary, when the booking is arranged. Payment of the deposit secures the date and time requested for the wedding. Please advise the Wedding Secretary or Minister if you decide not to have your wedding at Bamford Chapel and Norden URC.
- c) Balance of Fees: The balance of fees must be paid in **cash**, please, by no later than one month before the wedding.

2. Wedding Rehearsal

It is your responsibility to contact the minister about four weeks before the wedding to arrange a rehearsal.

3. Flowers in Church

You may place flowers if you so wish. The most suitable time for doing this is on the morning of the wedding or after any earlier wedding on the same day. Flowers must be arranged before

being brought to the church ready for display. Please contact the Wedding Secretary or Minister to discuss this.

4. Confetti

We would appreciate your help in trying to ensure that NO confetti/rose petals/rice is thrown within the church grounds. Please ask your families and friends not to do this. Please also tell the photographer that confetti may not be thrown within the grounds.

5. Parking

Our main car park across Norden Road from the Church can hold over a hundred cars. Please ask all your guests and photographer to use it. There is a pedestrian exit immediately opposite the church gates. The entrance for cars is in Highlands Road. Jowkin Lane and our rear car park should NOT be used for wedding parking other than for those who need disabled access.

Section 4: The Wedding Service

Please note the minister will help you in planning the service. Think about the hymns you want, and then when the Minister meets with you he will offer guidance on the rest of the service.

1. Hymns. The choice of hymns must be discussed with the Minister. Most people have two hymns at their wedding; some have three. You will find a list of suitable hymns and music on the page 5 & 6.
2. Other Music: The Organist will advise on other music if you arrange an appointment. If you want music not in his library then you will need to supply a copy in advance.
3. Soloists, Groups or CDs:
 - a) You may have additional music such as solo or group items; you may wish to have a CD played. Please discuss this with the Minister.
 - b) Soloists or Groups may sing either during the service or the signing of the registers, or both.
 - c) Soloist's fees are your responsibility and are not part of the church fees.
4. The Order of Service:
 - a) The name of the Church should be printed as either:

Bamford Chapel and Norden URC or Bamford Chapel and Norden United Reformed Church

- b) Order of Service outline

Entry of the Bride

Welcome and Introduction

Hymn

Statement of Purpose

Prayer

Declarations

Prayers for Assurance and Sincerity

The Promises

The Vows

The giving and receiving of rings

The Marriage blessing

The Declaration of Marriage

Greeting

[Hymn]

Bible Reading(s)

Talk

Prayers

Hymn

Signing of the Registers*

Blessing

Exit of the Couple

*the signing of the registers can be done in the Church or in a separate room. The minister will discuss this with you when s/he visits you.

Suggestions for Hymns and Music

As man and woman we were made
As the bride is to her chosen
Beloved let us love: for love is of God
Bless, and keep us Lord, in your love united
Come down, O love divine
Come, my way, my truth, my life
Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round
For the beauty of the earth
God! When human bonds are broken
Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost
Happy are they who walk in God's wise way
I lift up my eyes to the hills
I to the hills will lift mine eyes
Jesus, stand among us at the meeting of our lives

Lead us, heavenly father, lead us
Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy
Love came down at Christmas
Love divine, all loves excelling
Make me a channel of your peace
Morning glory, starlit sky
Morning has broken
Now thank we all our God
O Jesus, I have promised
One more step along the world I go
Peace, perfect peace, is the gift of Christ our Lord
Praise my soul the king of heaven
Put peace into each other's hands
Surprised by joy no song can tell
The love of God is broad like beach and meadow
Through the changing scenes of life
Ubi caritas et amor

If there are other hymns that you might want please speak to the Minister. If you want to borrow a copy of either of our hymn books then please speak to the Wedding Secretary or the Minister.

Organ Music

Wagner: Bridal March from Lohengrin
(This is the traditional march for the entry of the bride)
Mendelssohn: Wedding March from a Midsummer Night's Dream
(This is the traditional music for leaving the church)
Brooker and Reid: A Whiter Shade of Pale
Caleb Simper: Postlude
Caleb Simper: Thou crownest the year
Charpentier: Prelude from Te Deum (Trumpet Tune)
Jeremiah Clark: Trumpet Voluntary (Prince of Denmark's March)
Elgar: Imperial March
Handel: Hornpipe in D from the Water Music
Handel: From music for the Royal Fireworks
Handel: The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba
Haydn (arr): The Saint Anthony Chorale
Purcell: Trumpet Tune in D
Purcell: March in C
Walton: Crown Imperial

The organist will be pleased to discuss your choice for the Bride's entry and for your leaving the Chapel, as well as any music you would like to have played as guests arrive or during the signing of the registers.

Section 5: Your Wedding Day

1. Bamford Chapel and Norden URC

Is a very popular venue for weddings. If every Bride and Groom are to enjoy "their day" it is essential that every wedding keeps to its allotted time.

2. Wedding times

Weddings are normally arranged to begin at 11am, 1pm or 3pm. This is the time when the service actually begins as the Bride enters the church. We allocate a two hour slot for each wedding; for example the 11am wedding is allocated between 10am and 12pm and that wedding party is expected to vacate the grounds by 12pm to leave the place free for the next party.

The other wedding parties have the use of the grounds until 2pm and 4pm respectively.

3. Ushers

You need at least two ushers, one for each door. They should know seating arrangements. The ushers must be here 45 minutes before the service begins.

4. The Bridegroom and Best Man

Should arrive no later than 30 minutes before the service. They will have to see the Authorised Person, who is acting for the Registrar and who will check the legal details before the service, before they take their seats in church.

5. The Guests

It is usual for the guests to arrive no later than 20 minutes before the service begins.

6. The Bridesmaids and Bride's Mother

Should arrive not less than 15 minutes before the service is due to begin. You need to arrange for the usher or some other person to escort the bride's mother to her seat.

7. The Bride

Needs to be there at least 5 minutes and preferably 10 minutes before the service is due to begin. This means there will be adequate time for photographs. In addition to this the authorised person will need to speak briefly to the bride before she enters the church.

8. We must stress the NEED FOR PUNCTUALITY on everyone's part. There may well be two other weddings on your day. When there are weddings it means that some people have to be here from 9am until at least 5pm. They will have worked hard to ensure your wedding runs smoothly and we hope that you will show them consideration by being punctual. If the start of the service is delayed you will have less time afterwards for photographs in the grounds.

9. The wedding service and signing of registers normally takes about 45minutes.

Section 6: Photography and Video

1. We allow the taking of some photographs and a video film during the service provided

that certain rules are strictly observed. These rules exist in order to try and ensure that nothing be allowed to spoil some of the most important moments in the life of any couple and that the solemnity of the occasion be respected.

2. Only one official photographer may take photographs during the service and only one video operator is allowed. They should see the Minister who will explain what is and is not permitted and show them where they can stand.

3. The photographer may operate from the gallery as long as there is no sound or anything to distract the congregation. Movement is permitted only during the singing of hymns.

4. Flash or extra lighting are not permitted.

5. Video operators must provide a stand for their cameras or operate from the gallery. No movement or sound is permitted. Certain recommendations apply to videographers, but the rules are somewhat confusing. The Church holds a C.C.L.I. (copyright) Licence. Our understanding is that this allows Church Members to audio/video record their wedding service. However, if the couple are NOT Church Members, or the wedding is being recorded by a professional videographer, it is recommended that the couple obtain a Wedding Video Recording Licence (WVRL). The WVRL may be purchased directly from www.wvrl.co.uk – the price range starts from £5.11. Furthermore, unlike the CCL, the WVRL covers the reception and any music overdubs.

6. Photography is permitted at the Signing of the Registers only after the legal formalities have been completed.

Section 7: Declarations, Promises and Vows

During the service there are three sets of statements which require responses from the bride and groom. The Vows and Declarations are legally binding statements; there is a choice for you for both the Vows and Declarations. There are no choices for the promises but these are also printed below.

1. Declarations (3 choices: a,b or c – you decide which you prefer):

a) I declare that I know of no legal reason why I, AB,
may not be joined in marriage to CD.

I declare that I know of no legal reason why I, CD,
may not be joined in marriage to AB.

b) I do solemnly declare
that I know not
of any lawful impediment
why I, AB,
may not be joined in matrimony
to , CD.

I do solemnly declare
that I know not
of any lawful impediment
why I, CD,

may not be joined in matrimony
to, AB.

- c) Are you, AB, free lawfully to marry CD?
I am.

Are you, CD, free lawfully to marry AB?
I am.

2. The Promises (no choice just as they are written)

The man is asked:
AB will you take CD
to be your wife in Christian marriage?
Will you love, comfort, honour and protect her,
in times of prosperity and health
and in times of trouble and suffering?
And will you be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?
I will.

The woman is asked:
CD will you take AB
to be your husband in Christian marriage?
Will you love, comfort, honour and protect him,
in times of prosperity and health
and in times of trouble and suffering?
And will you be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?
I will.

If either, or both, has children:
Will you promise to be faithful, loving and caring parents to N (and N)?
We will.

The immediate family is asked:
Will you, the families of A and C,
give your blessing to their marriage
and will you always support and encourage them?
We will.

The congregation is asked:
Will you, the friends of A and C,
support and encourage them in their marriage?
We will.

3. Vows (4 choices: a,b,c, or d – you decide which you prefer):

- a) I, AB, do take you (thee), CD,
to be my wedded wife.
I declare my love for you.
I give myself to you
as your husband in Christian marriage.
From this day,

I will share with you
in sorrow and joy,
in poverty and prosperity,
in sickness and health.
I will love you and honour you.
I promise to be faithful to you
until death parts us.
This is my vow.

I, CD, do take you (thee), AB,
to be my wedded husband.
I declare my love for you.
I give myself to you
as your wife in Christian marriage.
From this day,
I will share with you
in sorrow and joy,
in poverty and prosperity,
in sickness and health.
I will love you and honour you.
I will promise to be faithful to you
until death parts us.
This is my vow.

- b) I call upon these persons here present
to witness that I, AB,
do take thee, CD,
to be my lawful wedded wife:
in accordance with God's holy will,
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
till death us do part.
This is my solemn vow.

I call upon these persons here present
to witness that I, CD,
do take thee, AB,
to be my lawful wedded husband:
in accordance with God's holy will,
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
till death us do part.
This is my solemn vow.

c) I call upon these persons here present
to witness that I, AB,
do take thee, CD,
to be my lawful wedded wife:
I declare my love for you.
I give myself to you
as your husband in Christian marriage.
From this day,
I will share with you
in sorrow and in joy,
in poverty and prosperity,
in sickness and health.
I will love you and honour you.
I promise to be faithful to you,
until death parts us.
This is my vow.

I call upon these persons here present
to witness that I, CD,
do take thee, AB,
to be my lawful wedded husband:
I declare my love for you.
I give myself to you
as your wife in Christian marriage.
From this day,
I will share with you
in sorrow and in joy,
in poverty and prosperity,
in sickness and health.
I will love you and honour you.
I promise to be faithful to you,
until death parts us.
This is my vow.

d) I, AB, do take you (thee), CD,
to be my wedded wife:
in accordance with God's holy will,
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
till death us do part.
This is my solemn vow.

I, CD, do take you (thee), AB,
to be my wedded husband:
in accordance with God's holy will,
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,

for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
till death us do part.
This is my solemn vow.

If you have any questions or queries please don't hesitate to speak to The Wedding Secretary or the Minister.

Section 8: Check List:

1. Have you booked your date and time and paid your £80 deposit? Paying the deposit secures the booking.
2. If less than twelve months before the wedding day don't forget to Register your intent to marry at the Registrar's Office (see pages 1-3 for further details) Following this the blue certificates you receive from the Registrar must be handed to the Wedding Secretary or Minister as soon as possible.
3. Have you chosen your hymns, music for entry and exit, opted for the organ or CD music for the signing of the registers?
4. Have you chosen the declarations and vows that you would like to make from the choices available? (see pages 8-12)
5. In the three months running up to the wedding, the Minister taking your wedding will be in contact with you to arrange a time to meet to discuss the service. Please don't worry about the service. If you have chosen the items in point 3 above, the Minister will discuss the rest of the service with you.
6. No more than a month before the wedding we will need to arrange for a rehearsal. Present at the rehearsal normally are: Bride, Groom, Bridesmaids (or as many as possible), Page Boy (if applicable) Best Man, Father of the Bride (or whoever is walking the bride down the aisle) and anyone who might be taking some part in the service. The rehearsal normally takes no more than half an hour.
7. As is stated in this document the balance of your wedding fees will need to be paid no less than one month before the wedding day.