

Trinity Methodist Church - Building a Christian community where non-Christian and nominally Christian people are becoming deeply committed disciples of Jesus Christ

Getting Married In Church Information Pack

We are delighted that you are thinking about Trinity Methodist Church in Hexham for your wedding. However, the worship at Trinity is rather different from many churches, so you probably need to come to worship on a Sunday morning at 10:30 to make sure we really are for you.

So why get married in a church?

Here are some possible reasons:

Your family expects it.

The church stands for life-long marriage - and so do you.

You want a nice white wedding with all the trimmings.

You want God's help in your marriage so you can "make a go of it".

Wedding pictures look nice with a church in the background.

Your relatives go to church

Going to church is a way of showing that this is a special occasion.

It's not a "proper" wedding in the Register Office.

Your mother told you to.

You want God's blessing on your marriage.

Perhaps you haven't really thought about it!

Christian Marriage

Christians believe that God adds an extra dimension, to marriage, a spiritual dimension. The couple who pray together, stay together. Loving is the most demanding thing in the world. It's hard to go on being helpful and kind and forgiving when you don't feel like it, or when your new wife doesn't treat you like Mum does Dad, or when your new husband thinks that £10 a week will cover the housekeeping. But love is the major part of God's character, as it was of Jesus' too, and He can enable us to go on being loving. When you get married in Church, you are really saying that you want that extra spiritual dimension in your married lives.

So is a Church Wedding Different From a Register Office?

Most definitely. The Church is more than a Register Office with a cross on the wall. The Church is more than a nice place to get married. In Church, we don't just make promises in front of each other, we make them before God.

As you are seeking God's blessing for your marriage, I am sure you will want to start the journey towards the wedding in the right way. We prepare couples for the promises they will have to make, through courses: either *Christianity Explored* or *Alpha*. These are wonderful informal opportunities to share together over a meal and learn all about Christianity over ten or so sessions. For those who are already Church Members, then these courses are an excellent "refresher".

As Christians, we all believe that our relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important thing in our lives. Through worship on a Sunday, Bible Study and prayer, we endeavour to be more like Him day by day. Our courses are great ways to get involved in this process, and we run them throughout the year.

Hexham Community Church will be running Alpha again from September 2010.

If you don't live in Hexham, don't worry as there are courses running all over the country (indeed all over the world) and we will be delighted to put you in touch with a course near to you.

The Service

The wedding service is quite short, lasting 40 minutes altogether. We will have a rehearsal sometime before the big day, when we will go through the entire service. The promises the groom will make are as follows:

A.B., will you take this woman to be your lawful wedded wife, to live together according to the law of God in the holy estate of marriage? Will you love her, honour and keep her, and forsaking all others be faithful to her so long as you both shall live?

To which the answer is "I will", and:

I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, A.B., do take thee, C.D., to be my lawful wedded wife, 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.

The bride says exactly the same, apart from substituting "husband" for "wife". There is no "obey" in the service. Legally we have to use your full names, including all the embarrassing middle ones!

What about previously divorced people?

The Methodist Church stands for lifelong marriage and tries to do all it can to keep couples together. However, where appropriate circumstances apply, we will consider a second marriage. These appropriate circumstances usually depend on the new

relationship not being to blame for the break-up of the old, the "ex" spouse not being connected to the church here, and a responsible attitude to the "ex" spouse with regard to child support and access. In all cases involving a divorce, I will need to see your Decree Absolute.

Marriage must never be entered upon lightly or selfishly, but responsibly and in the love of God. We don't aim to make you feel guilty, but for you to feel secure about the future. We do believe in forgiveness!

The Cost

The basic price of your wedding is £240. When you make your booking, you will need a deposit of £75 to secure the date. This deposit is non-refundable and if you change the date you will need to pay another deposit. This is so that we can be fair to other couples who may be wanting to get married on your day. In all cases book early to avoid disappointment.

What Happens Next?

To arrange your wedding, come and see me at church on a Sunday (10:30am), and I will be glad to arrange an appointment to come round and share with you the information on Christianity Explored and the Alpha Course.

I will also need some information:

Proposed date and time of wedding;

Full names, dates of birth, addresses and occupations for bride and groom;

Full names and occupations for both bride's father and groom's father;

We look forward to meeting you.

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Things they say about Marriage

Most of the suffering in human life comes because we refuse to be disillusioned. For instance, if I love a human being, and do not love God, I demand of that man or woman an infinite satisfaction which they cannot give. I demand of them every perfection and every rectitude, and when I do not get it, I become cruel and vindictive and jealous.

Oswald Chambers

Incompatibility is at the heart of a marriage as long as one's got the income and the other's got the patability.

Amanda Stone

A Hollywood wedding is one where they take each other for better or for worse - but not for long.

E C McKenzie

The highest happiness on earth is in marriage. Every person who is happily married is a successful person, even when they have failed in everything else.

William Lyon Phelps

Have you not read that at the beginning the Creator "made them male and female", and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh"? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.

Jesus

Classic Wedding Hymns

All things bright and beautiful	Make me a channel of your peace
Amazing Grace	Morning Has Broken
Be thou my vision	O Jesus I have promised
Bind us together	O Perfect Love
Give me oil in my lamp	One more step along the world I go
He's got the whole world in His hands	Praise my soul the King of Heaven
Lead us, Heavenly Father, lead us	The King of love my Shepherd is
Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy	What a friend we have in Jesus
Love divine, all loves excelling	Will your anchor hold

And we have more than a thousand others to choose from! Come along to church any Sunday and check out the hymnbooks. Normally there are two hymns in a wedding. If you want anything special in the service, then we will try to oblige. Videos are welcome, as are photographs, but no flash photography during the service please.

Who is Jesus?

Jesus was born about 2,000 years ago into an ordinary family. No one knows the exact date of his birth, or the exact place of his birth, except that it was somewhere in Bethlehem, a small town even today.

Jesus lived, taught and died in the small country of Israel. He taught ordinary people about the coming of the Kingdom of God, not an earthly Kingdom, but a Kingdom of peace, that people could find in their own lives. He healed the sick, forgave those who needed to be forgiven, and lived with the outcasts of society. Those who were rich and powerful did not like this, because He spoke with authority, and made their religious leaders look foolish.

They decided to have Him killed, and rushed Him through a kangaroo court so that nobody could stop them. The best moral system and legal system that humanity had yet produced was responsible for His death. They nailed Him to a tree to warn others not to mock the authorities. Nobody knows exactly where He was crucified, but it was somewhere just outside the old city of Jerusalem.

The difference between Jesus and any other man is that God raised Jesus from the dead. Even though the world thought they had got rid of Him, they hadn't. No individual has changed history more than Jesus, the Son of God.

Christians believe that the death and resurrection of Jesus is of vital importance. Now Jesus has risen from the dead, and conquered death, we too can live forever. We can be forgiven the times we have fallen short of God's standards. God is perfect, so we all fall short of His standards many times in our lives. We need forgiveness. How can we be forgiven? What do we have to do to be reconciled with God? Jesus said that He came into our world not to be our judge, but to be our Saviour. He came not to condemn us for our failings, but to help us overcome them. Christians believe that *whatever* we have done, *whoever* we are, *wherever* we have been, we can be forgiven. It doesn't cost money, it doesn't need good works, *all* we have to do is put our trust in Jesus, and believe in Him.

If Christianity is true, it is of world-shattering importance. If it is false it is of no importance at all. What Christianity can never be is moderately important.

One of the key hallmarks of a true Christian is a sense of gratitude to God, a thankfulness for his love and forgiveness. Baptism as a child makes no difference - if you are old enough to have children, you are old enough to make a decision for yourself. Having parents who go to church makes no difference, Christianity is not hereditary. Being born into a Christian family does not make you a Christian, just as being born in a stable doesn't make you a horse!

We all fail and few Christians are perfect, but if you want to try and follow Jesus, then that is enough. God accepts all those who sincerely turn to Him, whatever they have done in the past. Jesus Christ still changes people's lives today. And He can change yours. Come to Trinity and find out.