

# Public Worship

## Procedures, Policies and Regulations

*Updated March 2023*

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## Introduction

The Bishop, as 'chief pastor of all within his diocese' (Canon C18.1) has overall responsibility for ensuring that all the people of the Diocese of Guildford have good access to public worship and to Christian teaching. Clergy, supported by Churchwardens and PCCs, carry forward this episcopal ministry into the parishes and communities of the Diocese. What clergy and parishes do, therefore, should be done in communion with the Bishop and with accountability to the Bishop.

In general, a Bishop's responsibility covers the following:

### Doctrine

What we do should conform to the meaning of the Declaration of Assent, which every licensed Deacon and Priest is required to make.

### Mission

What we do should further the extension of God's Kingdom in Christ into the experience of the people. The Canons were re-issued in 2012 (7th edition ISBN 9780715110584) and are available in a loose leaf folder from the **Church House Bookshop** and other suppliers. They are also available as an electronic book on the **Church of England website**. The cost of such reference materials can be seen as legitimate expense of office, especially for Incumbents, and can be reclaimed from PCCs.

### Order

What is done must meet the essential demands of the order of the Church. The law provides for the way we do things and what may be done, where and when and by whom.

Every parish priest should be conversant with the following:

- **The Book of Common Prayer**, which is a standard for doctrine in the Church of England
- **Canon Law**, which sets out the basic order of the Church in the conduct of worship
- All forms of worship and resources for worship authorised for use in the Church. Both Canon Law (see Canon B5) and this range of authorised material give flexibility to clergy and parishes. If there is any doubt as to the meaning, clergy and parishes can always seek the comment of the **Bishop of Dorking**, who is the link person on this for the Bishop's Staff.

## Basic Requirements

Under Canons B11 and B14, the law requires:

- That Holy Communion is to be celebrated in every parish church on Sundays and Principal Festivals and on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. The Bishop may, for reasonable cause, make exceptions to this, for example, in multi-parish benefices, where a benefice-wide pattern is appropriate
- That Morning and Evening Prayer are read in each parish each Sunday unless the Bishop, after consultation with the PCC, gives dispensation for this requirement
- That a sermon is preached in every parish church each Sunday except for reasonable cause, approved by the Bishop of the Diocese.

The Bishop expects these requirements to be met.

## The Conduct of Authorised Worship

Canon Law gives further provision concerning the conduct of these services.

- Only priests may preside at the celebration of the Holy Communion
- Licensed and other persons properly authorised by the Bishop may lead other authorised acts of worship and preach
- Those who lead such, and especially the clergy, should normally be properly vested.  
(More guidance is given under ['Clergy and Robes'](#))

It should be noted again, that, within the bounds of regular authorised worship, in line with the relevant canons, there is scope for the inclusion of local custom and for the use of variable provision to meet a diversity of needs.

## Informal Acts of Worship

It is clear, that in this context of mission in a diverse and mobile culture, the church needs to provide opportunities for worship designed to meet very specific needs. These may range from informal worship for parents and their children, events for young people, contemplative styles of worship (e.g. Taizé), special occasions, regular worship of an evangelistic nature etc.

Common Worship gives flexibility and permission for informal services. [A Service of the Word](#) may replace either Morning or Evening Prayer. For the first time in Anglican history, our Liturgy

provides a service without prescribing what is said, which can be determined locally and informally. Please read and follow the guidance found on pages 21 - 24 and the Notes on pages 26 - 27 of [Common Worship](#).

Further guidance and commended material will be found in [New Patterns for Worship](#) (Church House Publishing) with its excellent examples of how (and how not!) to do it. An informal [Service of the Word](#) may be followed, on occasion, by a celebration of the Holy Communion where the first part of the Liturgy consists of an informal word service followed by the Liturgy of the Sacrament. Please see [Common Worship](#) page 25. An authorised eucharistic prayer must be used, together with the authorised collect and absolution, otherwise informal or extemporised prayer may be used. Such rites require careful preparation by the president and lay leaders.

The Bishop encourages activity of this sort. Parishes need to think about how they can increase the opportunities for people of every age and culture to encounter Christian teaching and worship.

If this is to be carried forward in a manner which holds our sense of communion with our inheritance, as both catholic and reformed, then the following will apply:

- All worship in the parish should be publicly advertised so that people are clearly aware of the nature, content and timing of all acts of worship in the parish church
- All worship - formal or informal, authorised or experimental - should be properly prepared and rehearsed
- All who have a role to play in the enactment of worship must themselves be prepared, trained and under supervision
- The highest standards of excellence attainable should be sought in all aspects. Whether the music is traditional or modern, it needs to be reaching towards improved standards of performance
- Regular acts of worship need to reflect the balance of Anglican worship in praise, thanksgiving, confession and absolution, intercession, the reading and ministry of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments
- All worship is an offering made by the whole community. It should have a sense of encouraging everyone to enter into what it is about

The Bishop needs to be kept informed of what parishes are doing in the way of experimental,

informal or alternative patterns of worship.

Canon B5 paragraph 3 says:

"All variations in forms of service and all forms of services used under this Canon shall be reverent and seemly and shall be neither contrary to, nor indicative of, any departure from the doctrine of the Church of England in an essential matter."

The Bishop is the judge of this and is ready, through the resources of the Diocese, to offer advice and critical reflection in what parishes are seeking to achieve in these matters. Nevertheless, clergy have discretion to change the words of authorised services according to pastoral need, and subject to the above - see Canon B5.1

## The Reading of Scripture

The [Common Worship](#) lectionary offers flexible variety in the systematic reading of Holy Scripture. Clergy and Readers may choose particular readings for special services in accordance with pastoral and evangelistic circumstances. The Principal Service readings for Sundays and Holy Days also have alternative 'tracks' to be considered.

For churches desiring to study a single book of Scripture systematically, or pursue a similar course of special study, provision is allowed **outside** the principal seasons (ordinary time). The church should be reading Scripture together at the time of the celebration of the Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection. At other times, there is local freedom. Clergy and LLMs have the duty to ensure that all who read the Scriptures are duly prepared, and do so audibly, clearly and intelligibly. Stage training is not irrelevant.

## Worship and the Law

The best guide is Liturgy, Order and the Law (Rupert DH Bursell, Oxford 1996). The reader will need to substitute the references to the Alternative Service Book 1980 with the similar provision now available in [Common Worship](#).

## Assistants at Holy Communion & Public Worship with Communion by Extension

The Bishop encourages the use of suitable lay people to assist in the administration of Holy Communion. There are three contexts for this:

- The administration of the consecrated bread and wine in the Holy Communion in church
- The taking of the consecrated elements to the sick and housebound

- The exceptional circumstances of the Bishop authorising Public Worship with Communion by Extension

People who engage in these ministries do so under the Bishop's authority. The Bishop, therefore, reserves the right to remove such authorisation at any time.

## Clergy and Robes

Sometimes, confusion can arise over exactly what the law requires. In November 2002, General Synod debated, but failed, to pass a motion seeking change in the present rules on the robing of clergy in services. As far as vesture is concerned, the matter is covered by Canon B8:

"Of the vesture of ordained and authorised ministers during the divine service

1. The Church of England does not attach any particular doctrinal significance to the diversities of vesture permitted by this Canon, and the vesture worn by the minister in accordance with the provision of the Canon is not to be understood as implying any doctrines other than those contained in the formularies of the Church of England.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of this Canon, no minister shall change the form of vesture in use in the church or chapel in which he officiates, unless he has ascertained by consultation with the Parochial Church Council (PCC), that such changes will be acceptable; provided always that in the case of disagreement, the minister shall refer the matter to the Bishop of the Diocese, whose direction shall be obeyed.
3. At the Holy Communion, the presiding minister shall wear either a surplice or alb with scarf or stole. When a stole is worn, other customary vestments may be added. The epistoler and gospeller (if any) may wear surplice or alb to which other customary vestments may be added.
4. At Morning and Evening Prayer on Sundays, the minister shall normally wear a surplice or alb with scarf or stole.
5. At the Occasional Offices, the minister shall wear a surplice or alb with scarf or stole."

The Canon applies to services of Holy Communion and Morning and Evening Prayer conducted in a church or chapel in the parish or for all occasional offices, that is, weddings and funerals, and this Canon must also be presumed to apply to any baptism service not forming part of a service of Holy Communion.



At Holy Communion, the Canon requiring robes applies to the presiding minister and to all services of Holy Communion held in the church or chapel.

At Morning and Evening Prayer, the minister is normally required to robe for services conducted in church on Sundays and Major Festivals, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. It does not apply to the midweek saying of the daily offices.

With regard to house communions, celebrations in residential establishments, youth weekends and all such events outside the church or chapel, clergy should make their own judgements as to what is pastorally appropriate.

In relation to other services in the parish church or chapel, the minister and PCC are free to agree what is appropriate. This would include Family Services, Services of the Word, youth events, Taizé style worship and so on. All acts of worship conducted under the authority of the Bishop and the Church of England should be consonant with the doctrine, teaching and discipline of the church.

The following are considered to be signs of good practice in making decisions.

- Clergy should avoid unilateral decisions. The Canons are clear that the custom of the Church, provided it is lawful, should be followed by the minister and only changed by agreement with the PCC. It is important that the PCC is able to express its own mind. The Bishop is arbiter in cases of dispute. It is not right for clergy to introduce change in vesture unilaterally, whether introducing additional vesture or abolishing it.
- The Bishop appreciates clergy who bring their concerns to him and share their practice with him. It helps in discerning what is happening in the church. As we all know, the pattern of robing has changed over the centuries and will continue to do so. It has also been a source of division and controversy and we need to exercise care not to stir up unnecessary conflicts diverting our attention away from the mission priorities of the Kingdom in our time.
- It is important to remember, whatever our personal view, that we are the servants of the people - ministers of the Gospel. In these diverse times, we need to keep a careful balance in our practice. On careful reading, the Canons are not overbearing: they do permit variety.

## **Gluten-Free Bread and Non-Alcoholic Wine**

This guidance considers the needs of those suffering from coeliac disease and those suffering

from alcoholism in relation to the Eucharistic celebration.

The elements for Holy Communion in Canon Law and good practice requires that the bread of the eucharist, which may be leavened or unleavened, must be "of the best and purest wheat flour that it is convenient to obtain" (Canon B.17). In the spirit of this where 'ordinary' bread (i.e. leavened bread) is used, the supply ought to be of fine quality bread rather than cheap, mass produced bread. Where unleavened bread is used, this can either be the widely used forms of wafer bread (including thicker biscuit-type wafers which can be broken into many pieces) or it can take the form of matzah, i.e. the Jewish unleavened bread used at the Passover Meal which comes in the form of a biscuit.

Gluten-free bread, usually in wafer form and square in shape for easy recognition, is also both legal and pastorally desirable for those suffering from coeliac disease. Canon B.17 is not intended to restrict any of these possibilities, but it does point to the requirement of quality in what is provided. Only the best should be offered to God in the service which is the living memorial of Christ's Passion.

Equally, those for whom any alcohol would be medically harmful can be legally and properly provided with non-alcoholic wine. This is wine from which the alcohol has been extracted and is readily available commercially. This is not the same as using unfermented grape juice or other fruit juices, which are not wine and are neither Scriptural nor Canonical. A very small quantity of non-alcoholic wine can easily be consecrated for such persons in a clinical chalice (i.e. the small cup sometimes used in home Communion) or in a secondary chalice.

As with gluten-free bread, this should only be used for the particular communicants for whom it is prepared. An alternative way of communicating people with an alcoholic predisposition, where the merest drop would not affect them is by 'intinction' (the consecrated bread being carefully dipped in the consecrated wine, with care taken that fingers do not contaminate the contents of the communion cup). Either method is perfectly proper depending on the circumstances.

Non-gluten wafers are obtainable from [Charles Farris](#) and [Kevin Mayhew](#). Non-alcoholic wine is obtainable from [Charles Farris, Frank Wright and Mundy](#) and [Kevin Mayhew](#).

All those who assist must be given proper training and instruction in the meaning of the sacrament and in the ordering of its administration in the parish. Those authorised to assist in taking the reserved sacrament to the sick will need training in ministry to people who are ill or housebound.

The law provides (in regulations made under Canon B12, as appended to the published version of

the Canons) that application must be made in writing to the Bishop by the Incumbent or priest in charge, with the support of the churchwardens. The policy of Guildford Diocese is to encourage that any such application should have the full support of the PCC. Applications should make clear whether authorisation is limited to distribution of the consecrated elements in church, or includes distribution of Holy Communion to the sick and housebound.

Those who have been nominated by this process will be authorised by the Bishop, after simple training provided in each Deanery by the Discipleship, Vocation and Ministry Team. They will receive a certificate of such authorisation in accordance with Canon B12.3. The Discipleship, Vocation and Ministry Team will inform the Bishop of those who are to be given permission. Such people shall have this ministry publicly acknowledged in the parish and their names made known to the church. They may be admitted at a public service in the parish, if desired. Local custom will vary as to the manner and style of the administration of communion.

Whatever the tradition of the parish, it should be borne in mind that individual customs about the reception of the sacrament varies and there must be sensitivity to the desires of those receiving the sacrament. For example, people may expect to take the chalice for themselves or to have it ministered to them. Some people now prefer to receive by 'intinction' (the consecrated bread being carefully dipped in the consecrated wine, with care taken that fingers do not contaminate the contents of the communion cup).

Public Worship with Communion by Extension must follow the order duly authorised by General Synod and the Guidelines issued by the House of Bishops. The law requires the Bishop to give explicit permission, either for a specific occasion or more generally. It is to be an exception rather than the normal practice.

Please see [Public Worship with Communion by Extension](#) - (Church House Publishing ISBN 0 7151 2053 0)

## **Christian Initiation and the Admission of Children to Holy Communion before Confirmation**

Under the arrangements agreed by the House of Bishops and the Synod, parishes are encouraged to consider offering children the opportunity to receive Holy Communion before they have been confirmed. The General Synod, at its session in February 2006 finalised earlier less formal arrangements by passing Regulations under Canon B15A.1(c).

Theologically, the basis for this is the interrelationships between the Rites of Initiation as we have received them in the Church of England. It is in the light of what God has done, and the

clear undertaking made by parents and Godparents at a child's baptism to bring this person to confirmation, that it is possible to consider children receiving Holy Communion before their confirmation.

Parents and Godparents need help in seeing the importance of this as a framework for bringing the child up in the Christian faith, as members of the Christian Church and so into adult vocational life. The Church needs to ensure that it has provided the necessary systems of pastoral care and Christian nurture to make this a real possibility. In this way, in the process, the link is firmly held between baptism, admission to Holy Communion and confirmation.

This process fits with the developmental needs of children and young people. Normally, seven years of age will be the earliest at which children should receive the sacrament in the Diocese of Guildford.

How is this to happen?

- The Parish Priest initiates the process by requesting the PCC to agree, in principle, to children receiving Communion in the parish before they are confirmed. Before the Bishop gives consent, a clear (if not unanimous) resolution of the PCC is needed, indicating that this is their wish, as well as that of the Parish Priest, and setting out their commitment to a process of Christian nurture for all involved, which makes pastoral and evangelistic sense of the policy
- Accompanying the PCC Resolution should be an outline of the parish programme for the nurture of these children and the support of them and their families
- The parish must have in place a realistic and attainable programme, which will bring children to confirmation. The minimum age for confirmation is normally 12, but parishes which opt to introduce children into the Eucharistic fellowship of the church may want to wait until a later age
- The Bishop expects the Parish to have consulted with the Children and Families Ministry Adviser in the Diocese over these arrangements, who will advise the Bishop before he grants permission

## Process

The Parish Priest will need to have prepared the PCC and people in advance of the formal decision of the PCC. The PCC must not take this decision without due consideration. The Children's Officer, or a deputy, should be invited to the PCC as a consultant.

After the PCC has agreed to the principle, a three to six month programme of preparation should be initiated. This should include preparatory sessions primarily with:

- The children who are affected
- Their parents and families (and, if possible, their Godparents)
- Leaders of all children's and young people's organisations in the church
- Schools - especially church schools
- Lay leadership - Wardens, PCC members, MU leadership, etc. The Education Dept is available to provide support in achieving this

A date should be fixed for the church to welcome the children to communion. The Worship Committee has produced a simple rite for use on such occasions and an alternative is available in [Common Worship: Initiation Services](#).

The church calendar should include a regular occasion (annual or less frequently) for welcoming children duly prepared.

The parish will need to ensure that the on-going Programme for the nurture and education of these children, leading them to confirmation and into adult membership of the Church, continues. This is an opportunity for the Parish to develop and build on its strategy for including children and young people in the whole life of the Church and to use this as a basis for ministry to children and young people and their families in the Parish.

The Regulations prepared by the House of Bishops and passed by General Synod in 2006 (GS 1596A) should be studied and followed. Copies are available from the Children and Families Ministry Adviser..

Neither children nor adults can be admitted to Holy Communion in the Church of England before they have been baptised.

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## Parents

Parents should be encouraged to bring their children to baptism as the gate of entry into the life of the Church of God. This may need the provision of bridging ministries to families which help them move into the life of the Church.

It is vital that parents are made aware of the process of Christian nurture provided in the Parish, both for their children and for themselves.

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## Children

For children, three elements need considering:

- The direct provision by the Church of teaching, fellowship and recreation
- The help given to parents to bring their children up as Christians within the home
- The character of the education provided in local schools

There is a pastoral task to be undertaken with each family. Here we accept that as each parish is different, so each family is unique and so none should be surprised at the need for variety in custom and practice.

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## Schools

This is an opportunity to strengthen our links with schools and ensure that the work we do builds on the work done in the schools. The Board of Education can help in ensuring that we are aware of the content and character of RE in all schools in the Diocese.

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## Growing

Parishes will need to reflect upon:

- How people are prepared for and supported in the parental role and task
- How the Church becomes a place where children and young people are listened to and heard, encouraged to think through and own their own faith, and feel themselves to be part of the body of Christ
- How the Church grows as an inclusive community. In this instance, moving from an atmosphere of being an adult institution to which children and young people go, towards becoming a community where all people find their home in Christ

## Outcomes

- Young people who have discovered the riches of the Christian tradition and taken it to themselves in personal faith. In this, there will be the discovery of the foundations of spirituality in prayer and worship, a deepening understanding of the faith and a development of Christian vision for the shaping of human life in the future
  - A Church whose sacramental life has been enriched and whose links with the emerging worlds of children and young people have been greatly strengthened
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## Contacts and Resources

Parishes should consult the Children and Families Ministry Adviser for advice on preparation programmes and the on-going nurture of children and their families. The Children and Families Ministry Adviser can also provide details of parishes that admit children to Communion.

Published preparation programmes and related materials are available for inspection and borrowing in the Resources Room at the Education Centre.

The Worship Committee has produced a Rite of Admission authorised for use in the Diocese. There is also material for admission in [Common Worship: Initiation Services](#) as well as other material for marking the spiritual journey of children and 'others along the Way'.

## Baptism, Confirmation, Affirmation and Reception

Initiation into the Christian community is a cause for celebration and, as part of their Episcopal ministry, Bishops enjoy the privilege of baptising and confirming those who have been prepared for these significant stages of the Christian journey.

The Bishops use Common Worship: Christian Initiation for all services of Baptism and Confirmation, and Confirmation is set in the context of the Eucharist. Full details of the baptism and confirmation services are to be found in [Common Worship: Christian Initiation](#) (2005, ISBN 9780715121023) and are also available on the [Church of England website](#).

Electronic and printed versions of the services for Confirmation with Holy Communion, and Baptism, Confirmation with Holy Communion, as edited for use in the Diocese are available from the [Bishop of Guildford's office](#). It is important that the introduction to each service is read

carefully, as these provide background and explanation of the services and the opportunities they offer. The [Bishop's Chaplain](#) is able to give guidance on practical matters.

Attention is drawn to the Commentary by the Liturgical Commission at the end of the volume (which includes a helpful frequently asked questions section), as well as to the notes, which have legal force.

There is a range of additional supportive services which recognises different stages of a person's spiritual journey leading up to adult baptism and confirmation. The service for Affirmation of Baptismal Faith, and one for Reception into the Communion of the Church of England are now clearly set out and can be included in a confirmation service where appropriate.

The list of confirmations for the following year is prepared each summer. Further provision will be considered if growth in the number of candidates warrants it, but any special requests should be made through the [Area Dean](#) to the Bishop of the Diocese.

Candidates in the Diocese should normally be 12 years of age or over at the time of confirmation. If a Priest wishes to present a child under this age, s/he should request permission of the confirming Bishop before starting the course of preparation.

### **At Least One Month before the Confirmation**

Clergy wishing to present candidates in another Church should give the incumbent notice, with any necessary details of the candidates. Where it appears that there may be fewer than ten candidates for a confirmation, the Incumbent should inform the confirming Bishop, who may wish to cancel the confirmation and ask the Incumbent to take the candidates to another confirmation.

Incumbents are asked to send to the confirming Bishop the details (including questions such as baptism and affirmation) of the proposed order of service, including hymns, and the number of candidates. The collect and readings should also be agreed with the Bishop. They should normally be the principal service readings, if the confirmation takes place on a Sunday or Festival, rather than those provided specifically for initiation services.

The confirmation register and the 'Confirmation summary and declaration' form should be made available to the Bishop before the service starts. For the latter, ask the [Area Dean](#), who should have a supply. The baptism register of the Church in which the service takes place should be filled in if a baptism takes place in the service.

Cards signed by the Bishop are available from Church House Guildford, GU2 7YF. Their use is



encouraged as this avoids the Bishop having to sign cards or books after the service.

There is, nowadays, no dress code for confirmations. Girls need not wear white and head-dresses should not be worn.

Deanery confirmations take place in the context of the Eucharist. It is fitting that those who are initiated into the fullness of the Christian faith should receive Communion from the Bishop who is the presiding minister in the whole process of Christian Initiation. It is important, therefore, that candidates should be prepared for this and instructed in how to receive Holy Communion. It is appropriate for children to have tasted un-consecrated bread (whether leavened or unleavened) and wine, so that this is not a totally novel experience at their first Holy Communion. This applies also to those receiving Holy Communion before confirmation.

### Baptisms at Confirmations

There is an increasing rediscovery and appreciation of the importance and meaning of baptism which places it at the heart of Christian life and mission. Baptism is much more than a beginning to the Christian life. It expresses the identity which is ours in Jesus Christ and the shape of the life to which we are called.

Our celebration of baptism and confirmation should help us all to see ourselves as a Baptised Community, called to partake in the life of God and to share in the mission of God to the world. Therefore, if there are candidates to be baptised, it cannot be too strongly emphasised that this should take place at the time of the actual confirmation. Moreover, baptism is about admission into the Universal Church and not simply into the local community. The Bishop is, therefore, the normal minister of adult baptisms, representing this wider dimension of the Church; the presenting minister is asked to make the sign of the cross (with the oil of baptism, if desired).

The Bishops are happy to baptise by immersion where this is the custom of the Church. Otherwise, the main font should be used, where possible, and plenty of water available, for baptism is not a dabbing or sprinkling, but a flowing or pouring of water onto the candidate. Although water may be put into the font before the service, it is important for there to be some water to be poured into the font at the time when the water is blessed, so that the congregation can both hear and see that this is 'living water'.

It is important that all members of the congregation have copies of the appropriate texts to follow and the candidates should have been clearly instructed in what to expect.

### The Use of Oil

Common Worship includes some helpful explanation and teaching about the use of oil at

initiation services. It is the practice of both Bishops to anoint with the oil of Chrism, and the oil of baptism may be used instead of water earlier in the rite.

When Chrism is used at confirmation, the candidate is anointed at the words, 'N, God has called you by name and made you his own'.

## The Confirmation

Confirmation essentially includes the prayer for the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit preceding the laying on of hands. The laying on of hands itself may take place in a group or groups at the communion rail (or an equivalent place if this is not convenient): alternatively, candidates may come up in pairs to kneel before the Bishop.

Whichever method is used, there needs to be a full, detailed and careful rehearsal in order that all candidates know exactly what is expected of them.

The laying on of hands is an act of prayer and, at the moment that the Bishop is laying on hands, there should be complete stillness and no movement of any candidates at all. Where there is room, this stillness can be best achieved by the Bishop moving round a group rather than pairs or single candidates coming to the Bishop one after the other.

Where confirmation takes place in a group either around a 'nave sanctuary' or before the chancel step, they should be in place for the whole confirmation prayer, not simply the laying on of hands. The presenting Priest is asked to announce the Christian name of the candidate being confirmed. (Please note that the Bishop will use the preferred Christian name only at the confirmation, and that name cards are not needed). It is important that candidates should be rehearsed in saying their 'Amen' to the words the Bishop uses at the laying on of hands. This 'Amen' is intended to be said by the candidate as his or her seal and affirmation of the confirmation prayer, but frequently the congregation will want to join in this 'Amen' to show support for what is taking place and this practice is to be encouraged.

## Affirmation of Baptism and Confirmation

Sometimes, people feel the need to make an important step of personal commitment many years after they were baptised and confirmed, and feel the need for this to be acknowledged before the Church in a corporate setting. The new liturgies provide for exactly such a 'public affirmation of baptismal faith', including the use of water.

An affirmation rite can be incorporated into a confirmation according to pastoral circumstances, as agreed in advance with the confirming Bishop, or used instead within the regular worship of a parish.

Providing it is clear that there can be no rebaptism (because baptism is once for all and because God's grace and call are always theologically prior to our response), candidates may themselves affirm their previous baptism, in water, either by sprinkling, using the sign of the cross with water, by walking through the pool or by full immersion.

Where the latter is the preferred option, the person affirming their baptism may be assisted by one or two people in the water, but those assistants must not say anything because those affirming have already spoken for themselves immediately prior to going into the pool (using the form of words found in Christian Initiation under the section 'Declaration for Affirmation'). In other words, they are doing this for themselves, whereas at a baptism, it is the Church which baptises. Nevertheless, the fact that they may go under the water, or use the water in other ways, can make real for them, in the present, the sign of the gracious act of God in baptism which, for them, may otherwise be felt to be too distant.

At a confirmation service, this affirmation can be made with those being confirmed, with the particular form of words indicating renewal. The Bishop may both lay-on hands and anoint the person who is affirming, even if they have previously been confirmed. Once again, a Christian may renew his or her faith by re-appropriating the sign, though the words spoken by the Bishop are different, so that the principle of the unailing (and therefore unrepeatable) nature of God's call is also protected.

### **Bishop's Chaplain at Initiation Services**

It is helpful if a member of the clergy, a LLM (Reader) or server present, can act as the Bishop's Chaplain. The Chaplain will need to take the Bishop's staff when he reaches his chair and place it somewhere safely (not on the holy table) until it is needed. The Bishop will normally require the staff when processing, from the presentation of the candidates until after their confirmation, and for the final blessing. He may also ask the Chaplain to stand close by, on his left, in order to give and receive the staff. (the Chaplain should hold the staff in his or her left hand, with the crook facing inwards). Either the Chaplain or a server may also be asked to hold the Bishop's book or a card when the Bishop needs to use both hands for liturgical gestures.

### **Length of Service**

Services which may include baptism and other rites in the context of the Eucharist need not be over-long if care is taken in the number of hymns or songs and their length (or repetition); the number of readings and the judicious editing of the available options (e.g. the commission and prayers of intercession may be omitted); a carefully-thought-out plan for the administration of the Sacrament and the consumption of what is left over; and an efficient preparation and marshalling of the candidates.

The Bishop's Chaplain at Willow Grange is available to consult about liturgical matters including the use of space and the finalising of the service booklet. Organists or Music group leaders need to be guided as to what is appropriate for Christian Initiation. Lengthy anthems or repeated worship songs must be avoided. On the other hand, a good organist or music group may greatly enhance the actual confirmation with quiet 'Spirit' music, even at the time of the confirmation itself. This should only be attempted after consultation with the confirming Bishop.

The intention is to produce an inspiring and well-balanced service that will be memorable for the candidates and an inspiration to those who come to support them on these special occasions.

### Ecumenical Confirmation Services

An ecumenical confirmation service has now been agreed between the Guildford Diocese and local Methodist Churches. This is available in hard copy from the Bishops of Guildford's office and must be used where it has been agreed that a joint service will take place.

### Godparents

#### Who can be a Godparent?

Canon B23.4 states that, 'No person shall be admitted to be a sponsor or godparent who has not been baptised and confirmed. Nevertheless, the minister shall have power to dispense with the requirement of confirmation in any case in which in his judgement need so requires.' This gives the minister a certain amount of discretion about godparents who are not confirmed, but the requirement for godparents to have been baptised cannot be varied or dispensed with.

Parents may act as godparents to their own child, as long as there is at least one other godparent (B23.1). If they do so, then the requirements about baptism and confirmation apply to them just as they would to any other godparent.

Nothing is said about a minimum age for someone to be a godparent, though Canon B23.2 says that godparents should be 'persons who will faithfully fulfil their responsibilities, both by their care for the children committed to their charge and by the example of their own godly living.' This suggests that godparents need to be of an age to understand and to fulfil their commitments, and the expectation that godparents are confirmed also suggests that a godparent should not be a young child.

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#### What is a sponsor?

The Church of England also uses the term 'sponsor' in relation to rites of initiation. A sponsor is

the equivalent of a godparent for an older candidate: 'When one who is of riper years is to be baptised, he shall choose three, or at least two, to be his sponsors, who shall be ready to present him at the font, and afterwards to put him in mind of his Christian profession and duties' (Canon B23.3). The canon makes clear later (B23.4, quoted above) that the same requirements (of baptism and, normally, of confirmation) apply to sponsors as to godparents.

The notes to Holy Baptism in Common Worship: Christian Initiation also give guidance about who and what a sponsor is: 'The term "sponsor" is used for those who agree to support in the journey of faith candidates (of any age) for baptism, confirmation or affirmation of baptismal faith.' (Note 6, p 99).

The commentary in CW:CI (p 342) suggests that sponsors may also be appointed, in addition to godparents, when a child is being baptised. In this case, they have the spiritual role of supporting the child's growth in faith, without the responsibility of the social role which is usually associated with godparents. So, for instance, sponsors might be found from within the church to supplement godparents chosen by the child's parents. Such sponsors might expect to have a role in encouraging the child's growth in faith and in church membership, but would not expect to have to buy them birthday presents!

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### Some presenting pastoral issues

In pastoral practice, two issues commonly arise:

**6. Not all the proposed godparents are confirmed**

Here the minister can dispense with the requirement of confirmation, and this very often happens. But it can be worth using the occasion, not to impose the requirement, but to issue an invitation. As the proposed godparent prepares to take on a serious responsibility towards their godchild, would they like to think about confirmation for themselves? Some parishes have found unconfirmed godparents to be receptive to this kind of invitation. There is an opportunity to be grasped here, but also a pastoral risk (especially if the baptism is booked and fairly imminent), that people pursue confirmation 'in haste' or without the opportunity to consider fully the implication for their own life.

**7. Clergy increasingly find that new parents ask whether unbaptised friends or family members can be godparents**

Sometimes the proposed godparent was not baptised as a child, and has no desire to be baptised now, but does have a strong desire to support the new parents and their child. Sometimes this is because the suggested godparent is a member of another faith

community; sometimes the suggested godparent is agnostic, or possibly even hostile to faith, but has been chosen primarily for the social role of a godparent, or because they have already supported the parents.

It is this second issue which is proving to be increasingly common, and which can be particularly challenging to respond to. It would be contrary to Canon, and would seem to lack integrity (both for the person being asked to be a godparent and for the baptism service) for the unbaptised friend simply to make the promises as a godparent, but it can be pastorally difficult not to acknowledge the genuineness of the friend's desire to support the child, and to deny them a chance to express their commitment publicly. This is a particular challenge when parents have already promised, or at least offered, the godparent role to that person.

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### **Some possible solutions**

Perhaps a good starting point is to recognise that in the service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child the church has already provided material which allows for parents to appoint, in a public service, those who are not godparents, but who will have a key role in supporting them as they bring up their children.

The service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child allows for the appointment of Supporting Friends, who make promises in the service which relate to their support of the family and the child, but which do not commit them to a particular form of that support, or to a specific form of upbringing for the child. In particular, (and in contrast to the promises made in the baptism service) no promises are made about 'drawing them by your example into the community of faith', walking with them 'in the way of Christ', or helping them 'to take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church'.

#### **From the service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child**

##### **Thanksgiving and Blessing**

*Where parents wish to recognise the role of supporting friends it may be appropriate for them to stand with the parents at the thanksgiving. One of them may present the children to the minister, and informal words may be said.*

*The minister says:*

Do you receive these children as a gift from God?

**We do.**

Do you wish to give thanks to God and seek his blessing?

**We do.**

### **Giving of the Gospel**

*A copy of a Gospel is presented with these words:*

Receive this book.

It is the good news of God's love.

Take it as your guide.

*The minister may address the supporting friends and say:*

Will you do all that you can to help and support *N* and *N* in the bringing up of *N*?

**With the help of God, we will.**

### **An option separate from the Baptism Service**

The first conversation to have with parents, then, is whether they wish to make use of a Thanksgiving service as something separate from baptism, which enables their friends to play a significant part in the service. It will important not to make this offer in a way which suggests that it is some sort of 'second-class' option.

The Thanksgiving service can be offered in two different ways:

- It can be offered as an **alternative** to baptism, as part of the process of helping parents to discern which form of pastoral service most clearly reflects what they are seeking from God and the Church
- It can be offered as a preparation for baptism. The Thanksgiving service takes place first, involving the Supporting Friends (who may include those who can also be godparents), followed by a baptism service at a later date, involving the qualifying godparents

If this option is not appropriate, then the possibility of something extra within the baptism service needs to be considered.

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### **Options within the Baptism Service**

Here the key questions will be where to put anything extra within the service, and what form of words to use

In considering where to put additional material, there are two obvious options:

8. At the very start of the baptism service. The baptism service already includes the option of a short prayer of thanksgiving near the beginning of the service (CW:CI p 66), and this could be the point to add in extra material

9. At the start of the Presentation section, either immediately before, or immediately following, the congregational response and before the parents and godparents make their commitments.

The important thing will be to keep any extra material away from the baptism itself, so that the service gives a sense of movement from the general support needed by any child, which these friends are offering, to the more focused support needed for Christian nurture, which the parents and godparents will offer.

If one of these locations in the baptism service is used, a further question will be whether these additional friends make their commitment on their own, or whether the parents and godparents join in too.

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### What should be said?

The first option is to use material from the *Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child*, such as the question to the Supporting Friends:

Will you do all that you can to help support *N* and *N* in the bringing up of *N*?

**With the help of God, we will.**

Other material from the Thanksgiving service could be incorporated as well, if desired.

An alternative is to insert a different form of public commitment, which is tailored to fit the role which the parents are seeking and which the person can respond to. An insertion like this is technically informal, in that it is entirely additional to, and does not replace any authorised part of, the baptism service. Almost by definition, it needs to be determined locally and on a case by case basis, rather than being provided or commended by central authority, but it can still be solemn and public.

The following suggestions give a sense of the sort of question and response which might be appropriate to insert:

*N*, will you do everything in your power to support *N* as *he/she* grows to maturity and adulthood, and be for *him/her* a source of confidence, encouragement and love?

**I will**

or



*N*, will you offer your care and your love to *N* as *he/she* grows up, celebrating with *him/her* in times of joy, and supporting *him/her* through times of difficulty?

**I will**

The main difference between these suggestions and the texts from the Thanksgiving service is that the Thanksgiving focuses the Supporting Friends' role on supporting the parents, whereas the above suggestions focus the promised support on the child.

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### **Keeping things clear**

Friends who make this public commitment are not recorded in the Baptism Register as godparents (though a marginal note in the register might acknowledge their role). The family will still need to choose a sufficient number of baptised persons as actual godparents. But the friends could (like the godparents) be given a card to remind them of the undertaking they have made, using a form of words such as this:

To *N*, to remind you of the undertaking you have made today, on the occasion of *N*'s baptism at at *X* Church, to be for *him/her* a source of confidence, encouragement and love. May God strengthen you to fulfil this promise and bless the support you give.

Though it will be important not to confuse these friends with the godparents, and to keep their roles distinct, when it comes to the moment of baptism itself, it might be appropriate to invite the friends to come close to the font, along with the parents and godparents, as additional and important witnesses of the baptism.

If a Thanksgiving Service is used instead, then a certificate for the child, which records the names of the Supporting Friends, will be important, as well as cards for the Supporting Friends themselves. A register of Thanksgiving Services should also record Supporting Friends' names.

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### **Questions of terminology**

What are these 'friends' to be called? Anecdotal evidence suggests that 'Sponsors' is a term being used in some circumstances, and this might be a good suggestion, were it not for the fact that the word is already used in another sense in the Church of England.

Though the term 'Supporting Friends' is less well known, it can be commended as terminology which the Church has already provided in its services, which is already in use, and which, in due

time, can become better known.

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## Summary

- Though it is possible in some circumstances for godparents to be appointed who are not confirmed, it is neither appropriate, nor permitted, to have godparents who are not baptised
- Where unbaptised godparents have been suggested, one possibility is to offer a Thanksgiving Service at which they can be appointed as Supporting Friends; another possibility is to incorporate an extra, locally determined, element in a baptism service in which these friends can make a different sort of commitment from that made by godparents
- The term 'sponsor' is not appropriate for these extra friends, because of its use for those who have a specific role in baptism and confirmation which relates to the candidate's Christian nurture
- Any additional role given to friends in a baptism service should take place early in the service, at or before the Presentation of the Candidate.
- In all situations, it will be important to keep the role of godparents and sponsors distinct from any additional role given to others within the Baptism Service.

## Marriage

The rules regulating the solemnisation of marriage must be strictly observed; otherwise the marriage may be invalid and the member of the clergy and the parties may be liable to severe penalties. It is only possible to mention here the more important rules of general application. In all cases of doubt or difficulty, the facts should be referred to the [Diocesan Registrar](#), 1 The Sanctuary Westminster SW1P 3JT. The law relating to the solemnisation and registration of marriages is to be found in the Marriage Act 1949.

The Faculty Office of the Archbishop of Canterbury has recently re-issued Anglican Marriage in England and Wales: A Guide to the Law for Clergy and the third edition is now available. Further details are available from the Faculty Office (address as for the Diocesan Registrar).

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## The Capacity to Marriage

Both parties must have attained the age of 16 (see Marriage of Minors). The parties must not be so related to one another as to be within the prohibited degrees of relationship.

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## Time and Place of Marriage

A marriage in Church must be solemnized between 8am and 6pm, in the appropriate place, as indicated in the section on 'Preliminaries'.

## Preliminaries to a Church of England Marriage

One of the following is required before a marriage may be solemnized according to the rites of the Church of England:

- **Banns**, which are the normal preliminary and can be used in most cases where one of the parties has a qualification for the Church or Chapel where they wish to marry. Marriage by banns may not be possible if notice is given allowing insufficient time before the marriage is to take place; and in the case of the marriage of foreigners, it is recommended that the licence procedure be used rather than banns if there is any doubt as to the legal requirements of the foreigner's home country for recognition of an English Church marriage
- **A Common Licence**, which may be used as an alternative in all cases appropriate for banns, and may also be used where there is not sufficient time for publication of banns. It is granted in the name of the Bishop of the Diocese, who has discretion whether to grant it. In order to obtain such a licence, one of the parties must have one of the qualifications as for banns i.e. residence in the parish, electoral roll membership, or a qualifying connection under the Marriage Measure 2008. Application should be made to a [surrogate](#) for granting marriage licences within the Diocese, or to the Diocesan Registrar. A common licence must also normally be used where one, or both of the parties, is a foreign national. Please see the guidance on marriage for foreign nationals on the [Faculty Office website](#)
- **A Superintendent Registrar's Certificate**. This is also an alternative to banns, involving the publication of a notice at the Register Office of the district. The minister of the Church in question has discretion whether to accept a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate as an adequate preliminary. It can only be used where a party is resident in the parish or on the Church electoral roll.

- **A Special Licence**, which is required where neither party is resident nor has a qualification for another type of preliminary, or where the marriage is to take place in a building which is neither a parish Church nor licensed by the Bishop for marriages. However, a special licence is only granted at the discretion of the Archbishop of Canterbury, each application being considered on its merits. Application for such a licence should be made to the Registrar of the Court of Faculties at 1 The Sanctuary, Westminster SW1P 3JT

## Publication of Banns

Banns are to be published in the parish Church of the parish where the parties reside, or if they reside in separate parishes, the parish churches of both parties. The most important exceptions to this rule are:

- If there is a Chapel licensed by the Bishop serving the district within which a party resides, banns may be published in that Chapel instead of in that party's parish Church
- Where one of the parties lives in a parish with more than one parish Church, or in the area of a benefice comprising more than one parish, or in the area of a benefice held in plurality with other benefices, the requirement is satisfied if banns are published in any one of the parish Churches within the area of the benefice or benefices, provided that the Church in question has been designated by the Bishop as an acceptable substitute
- If one of the parties lives in a parish where there is no regular Sunday service in the parish Church, or where the parish Church is temporarily out of use due to demolition or repair work, banns may be published in the parish Church of any adjoining parish
- In certain circumstances, if a party is a member of the Armed Forces or the daughter of such a member, banns may be published in an appropriate naval, military or Air Force Chapel
- Where the marriage is based on a qualifying connection under the Marriage Measure 2008, banns are to be called in Church where the marriage is to take place and in the parish Church of the parish(es) where the parties actually reside

There is also provision for banns to be published in a parish Church, or licensed Chapel, which is the usual place of worship of one of the parties; but the party in question must be enrolled on the Church electoral roll of the parish in which that Church or Chapel lies. This provision, however, is not an alternative to publication in the parish Church of the parish of residence; if this provision is relied upon, banns must be published both in the parish Church(es) of residence and in the usual place of worship of the party concerned.

Banns must be published on three Sundays (not necessarily consecutive) and if there is more than one Church concerned, a 'certificate of due publication' of banns must be obtained from all the Churches except the one where the marriage is to take place, and must be delivered to the member of the clergy performing the marriage.

Before publishing banns, the minister of the Church where they are to be published can require seven days notice from the parties.

### Qualifying Connections

A person has a qualifying connection with a parish if:

- that person: was baptised in the parish (this does not apply where the baptism formed part of a combined service of baptism or confirmation); or had his or her confirmation entered in a church register book of a Church or Chapel in the parish; or has at any time had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least six months; or has at any time habitually attended public worship in the parish for at least six months; or if
- a parent of that person has at any time during that person's lifetime: had his or her usual place of residence in the parish for at least six months; or habitually attended public worship in the parish for at least six months; or if
- a parent or grandparent of that person was married in the parish. In all cases involving Church services, i.e. coming to, going to, attending normal Church services, baptism, confirmation, or marriage; this applies only to Church of England services

A copy of the Marriage Measure 2008, important guidance from the House of Bishops, and an electronic document containing a specimen welcome form for the use of parishes and couples can be found on the Church of England website

### Marriage Preparation

The duty of clergy to prepare couples for marriage is set out in the Canons. Whilst marriage preparation courses can be an enormous help, they should not be seen as an alternative to personal interviews between the Priest and the couple. The obligation on clergy is to explain the Christian understanding of marriage within the framework of grace (Canon B30) and to check the couple are free to marry in law, which will include checking ages and any degree of kindred and affinity (see Canons B30 and B31). If either party has been previously married to a partner who is still living, it is also essential to see divorce papers. If the couple do not live locally, it may be possible to delegate certain aspects of marriage preparation, but it is reasonable in most circumstances to expect a couple to attend at least one interview with the Priest who is to

conduct the marriage, or a close colleague.

Special care should be taken in respect of those who are not British or European citizens, and such marriage will normally be by common licence.

### Solemnisation of Marriages after Banns or Licence

Clergy should not normally solemnize a marriage in any building other than a Church in which banns have been published. A marriage may be solemnized in a party's own parish Church, even if banns were not published there, where the circumstances mentioned previously under the heading 'publication of banns' apply. If banns were published in a 'usual place of worship', the marriage may take place there.

### Marriage of Minors

If a party to a marriage is aged 16 or 17 and the marriage is by banns, the banns may lawfully be published without proof of parental consent, but the parents or guardians can give notice of dissent from the banns, and if they do so, the publication of the banns is void. If the marriage is by licence or Registrar's certificate, the consent, in writing, of parents or guardians must be obtained and produced on the application for the licence or certificate. If in doubt, the Diocesan Registry should be consulted.

### Affinity

The law now permits certain marriages, which were previously unlawful because of a relationship created between the parties by another marriage: e.g. stepson and stepmother. Such marriages involve a special procedure and must not be solemnized after banns. If in doubt, contact a surrogate or the Diocesan Registry

### Marriage after Divorce

In November 2002, the House of Bishops, the Convocations and the General Synod completed their work on this long-standing and complex matter. In brief, after many years of opposition to such marriages by the former Church Assembly and the General Synod, the House of Bishops proposed an acceptable way of discerning the appropriateness or otherwise of such marriages. Statute Law has always left the decision to the parish Priest, and this remains the case. The House of Bishops has, however, issued Advice to Clergy contained in Marriage in Church after Divorce (GS1449), which effectively replaces the old Convocation rules.

The civil law places clergy under an obligation to conduct the wedding services of all who are legally entitled to be married. The clergy are offered an exception to this general duty in regard to those who are divorced and whose previous married partners are still living. Clergy may

conduct the marriages of such divorced people, but are under no obligation to do so. That has basically been the position since the matrimonial acts of the 1930's and 40's.

It is important to recognise that, in affirming the position in law as it existed before, as well as after, the convocation acts, the Church is not, in any way, changing its doctrine of marriage. Canon B30 succinctly states the doctrine and remains in force. A contemporary statement is to be found in Marriage: A Teaching Document from the House of Bishops of the Church of England, Church House Publishing (1999 ISBN 0 7151 3829 4).

The motions passed by the General Synod use the language of 'exception' in relation to the conduct of such weddings. That language is not quantitative but qualitative in meaning. It is not saying clergy should only perform such services rarely. It is saying that a marriage following divorce in the lifetime of the previous partner is exceptional in relation to the doctrine and teaching of the Church on marriage. It is also the case that requests for marriages in Church are less frequent than such marriages before a civil registrar.

Statute Law recognises that clergy may, in conscience, not be willing to conduct marriage after divorce during the lifetime of the former spouse. For some, that will be on doctrinal grounds of indissolubility and the sacramental character of marriage. All Christian Churches, however, find pastoral solutions to the tragic fact of marital breakdown. The law rightly protects the consciences of clergy who do not feel able to conduct these marriages for a doctrinal reason.

Bishops do not possess the power to direct their clergy as to what they are to do in these matters. Any guidance offered by the Bishop must be seen as advice to help clergy who have the responsibility, in law, for these decisions themselves. Clergy must make up their own minds as to whether they will offer this ministry.

The decision about whether to conduct marriages in Church following divorce is not, strictly speaking, a matter for the PCC, but consulting them about the principle (as opposed to individual cases) ought to be an important part of any decision-making process for parish clergy. Though an individual Priest may not wish to marry those who have been divorced, he or she is free, though not obliged, to permit another Priest to solemnize such marriages in their parish. It is for the incumbent, subject to due consultation, to decide whether and how to delegate the interviewing of couples who apply for a marriage after divorce. For example, it might be felt appropriate in some circumstances to ask the Priest who will be preparing the couple for marriage also to conduct the interview process. It would be unfair, however, to expect title curates in IME 4-7 to undertake this task without proper supervision. It will be important to have a clear statement of principles in the light of the advice paper of the House of Bishops, and to clarify who will adjudicate if a particular case seems to contradict the norms set out in these guidelines. Further

advice on this matter is available from Willow Grange.

In determining whether or not to marry a particular couple, clergy must have in mind the House of Bishops advice to clergy contained in Marriage in Church after Divorce, (annexed to the current edition of the Canons of the Church of England). This includes a leaflet for enquirers, providing an explanatory statement and an application form. The form and booklet are also available on the Church of England website.

### **Bishop's Forms A, B, C and D**

The Archbishop of Canterbury has directed that his Faculty Office is required to be assured by the relevant Bishop that the Priest applying for a special licence has duly followed the House of Bishops' Advice and has consulted with the Diocesan Bishop.

It is, therefore, important and saves considerable time, for the Priest and the parties concerned, if clergy applying for a special licence carefully follow 4.7 of the House of Bishops' Advice; i.e. copy to the Bishop the 'Marriage in Church after Divorce' form as issued by the national Church (as below), including a signed statement from the cleric indicating that s/he is willing to conduct the marriage of the couple concerned.

For the sake of clarity and consistency, the Bishop of Guildford requires exactly the same procedure in relation to application to the Diocesan Registry for common licences. Please complete and return the appropriate form to the Bishop's office for each marriage in Church following a divorce, and ensure that is accompanied by a copy of the 'Marriage in Church After Divorce' form, signed by the couple and the Priest who intends to conduct the marriage service.

### **Marriage Preparation Materials**

#### **The Church of England Weddings Project**

Now a primary source for those seeking weddings, for parishes and clergy. For full details of this initiative, which is fully supported by the Diocese of Guildford. you are encouraged to refer to the [Archbishops' Council website](#).

The project provides a comprehensive range of new materials to make connections between wedding services and providing for ongoing pastoral support of the marriage.

#### **Books for Couples**

#### **Growing Together**



Andrew Body (Church House Publishing £6.99)

### **The Marriage Book**

Nicky and Sila Lee (Alpha International)

### **Group Work Courses**

#### **Growing Together**

Andrew Body - A flexible marriage courses including CD Rom (Church House Publishing £19.99)

#### **Choosing Marriage**

[Guildford Mother's Union](#) (£6 plus booklets)

#### **The Marriage Preparation Course**

(Alpha International £50 plus booklets)

### **Marriage Inventories**

#### **Prepare / Enrich UK**

SVS Kingsland Square, St Mary Street, Southampton SO14 1NW

Tel: 023 8021 6003

#### **Focus**

Quel Bec, Cothelstone, Taunton, Somerset TA4 3ED

Tel: 01823 432420

### **For Clergy and Churches**

#### **Using Common Worship**

Stephen Lake (Church House Publishing £8.95)

### **On Marriage**

#### **Making the most of Weddings**

A guide for Churches on making the most of opportunities that weddings offer. (See regulations on [marriage in Church of divorced people](#))

### **Teaching**

#### **Marriage**

A teaching document from the House of Bishops of the Church of England (Church House Publishing)

### **The Book of Common Prayer**

Preface to the Marriage Service and the Declaration of Duties of husband and wife, with reference to the Epistle to the Ephesians Chapter 5, Colossians and 1 Peter

### **Common Worship**

Pastoral Services (The Marriage Service: Pastoral Introduction) (page 102), Preface (page 105);  
Alternative Preface (page 136)

### **Same Sex Marriage Services**

The Diocese of Guildford follows the stated position of the Church of England on same sex marriage. You can [view the pastoral guidance on same sex marriage](#) on the Church of England website.

### **What may clergy perform for civil partnerships and same sex marriage?**

Guidance for clergy when it comes to acts of worship following civil same sex weddings comes from the pastoral guidance on same sex marriage from the Church of England and is reproduced below:

#### **Acts of worship following civil same sex weddings**

19. As noted above, same sex weddings in church will not be possible. As with civil partnership, some same sex couples are, however, likely to seek some recognition of their new situation in the context of an act of worship.

20. The 2005 pastoral statement said that it would not be right to produce an authorized public liturgy in connection with the registering of civil partnerships and that clergy should not provide services of blessing for those who registered civil partnerships. The House did not wish, however, to interfere with the clergy's pastoral discretion about when more informal kind of prayer, at the request of the couple, might be appropriate in the light of the circumstances. The College made clear on 27 January that, just as the Church of England's doctrine of marriage remains the same, so its pastoral and liturgical practice also remains unchanged.

21. The same approach as commended in the 2005 statement should therefore apply to couples who enter same-sex marriage, on the assumption that any prayer will be accompanied by pastoral discussion of the church's teaching and their reasons for departing from it. Services of blessing should not be provided. Clergy should respond pastorally and sensitively in other ways.

## Parish Records

The Diocesan Record Office is at:

Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking GU21 1ND.

Tel: 01483 518737

Email: [shs@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:shs@surreycc.gov.uk)

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyhistoryservice](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyhistoryservice)

Since 1952, the deposit of non-current parish records for safekeeping has been encouraged by successive Bishops of this diocese for two reasons:

- For physical preservation from the increasing risks of vandalism, theft and fire, and the more insidious danger of damp in unventilated safes; in a record office, books and papers can be kept in fireproof ventilated strongrooms
- For security of consultation. Strict supervision of the increasing number of people who consult records for historical and genealogical purposes is essential. A record office can relieve the Incumbent and parish officers of this burden. There is no transfer of ownership. Records so deposited can be taken back, e.g. for an exhibition, or for legal purposes

The Parochial Registers and Records Measure 1978 has, among other provisions, made the following requirements obligatory throughout England and Wales:

- In every diocese, the Bishop must designate a Diocesan Record Office and appoint a competent inspector
- A first inspection and listing was to be made of all records (irrespective of age) remaining in parish custody, and of the conditions in which they were stored. After this initial inspection and listing of all records, further regular quinquennial inspections of all records remaining in the parish were to follow
- All records more than 100 years old must be deposited in the Diocesan Record Office unless the permission is obtained for their retention. This permission will be given only if a ventilated steel cabinet, made to certain specifications, is provided, and the temperature and relative humidity are regularly monitored.
- Records less than 100 years old may either be deposited in the Diocesan Record Office or retained at the Church. If retained, the conditions are less stringent than those above, but the records must be kept in a safe or steel cupboard in a suitable location

Surrey History Centre, the headquarters of Surrey Heritage, which is the appointed diocesan record office for the diocese of Guildford and much of the diocese of Southwark under the Parochial Registers and Records Measure, holds historic baptism, marriage and burial registers from the parishes within the dioceses. Over many decades, Surrey County Council, through the History Centre, has provided archive quality storage for these and other parish records, which have been cared for by its team of professional archivists and conservators and made freely available to researchers in their public reading room. In order to broaden public access further to these important records, Surrey Heritage, with the consent of the Bishop, has now entered into partnership with Ancestry, the online family history operation. Ancestry has mounted digital photographs of the registers on its website and these images are accessible via online indexes by subscribers.

Free access to the existing microform copies of the registers (and if necessary to the original volumes themselves) at Surrey History Centre will continue to be provided, and visitors to the History Centre will have free access to the Ancestry website, as will all members of the Surrey library network at any library branch. The History Centre receives a small royalty payment on all image downloads over the 10 year period of the agreement, which will be reinvested in preservation and cataloguing operations and in activities to promote the archives in its care.

Under the Measure, the Archivist-in-Charge is empowered to issue certificates of baptism, marriage and burial from Registers deposited with the Record Offices. Cheques for the appropriate fee should be made out to Surrey County Council. In the case of registers, this means books in which the last entry is more than 100 years old.

If any parish has completed registers in its custody which have not thus far been deposited and which fall within the scope of the project, Surrey History Centre will be delighted to take them in on deposit under the Parochial Registers and Records Measure, which will enable them to be included. Please contact the Centre on 01483 518737 or email [shs@curreycc.gov.uk](mailto:shs@curreycc.gov.uk)

## **Identity and Passport Service**

The General Register Office is now part of the Identity and Passport Services (IPS). It can be contacted at:

General Register Office  
PO Box 2  
Southport  
PR8 2JD  
Tel: 0300 123 1837