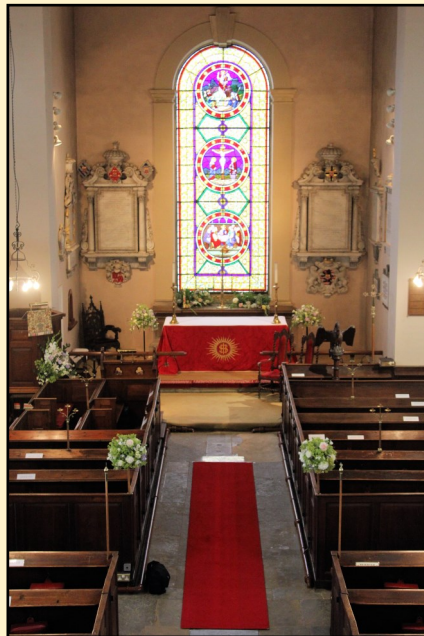


## Weddings and Blessings – St Michael's Church

**“Both wedding ceremonies and blessing ceremonies are welcomed at St Michael's Church – there is a difference between the two which must be understood by couples planning their big day.”**

Both weddings and blessings are frequent events held in the lovely St Michael's Church. Many involve local people, parishioners of Aynho, and others are considered “connected” to Aynho through a period of qualification<sup>1</sup>.

Marrying in church is personal, meaningful and spiritual just as you want it to be. Churches are special and unique places to get married in - the prayers, promises and the whole service of celebration become part of your marriage, on the day itself and beyond.



Wedding couples should begin their preparation by reading this helpful explanation and guidance from the Church of England - <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/weddings>

**Couples who seek a Blessing of their marriage have something different to a wedding ceremony:**

A husband and wife can have their marriage blessed in church, whether they got married in the UK or abroad.

The Church of England service is called a Service of Prayer and Dedication, which is often known as ‘a blessing’.

It is a simple service acknowledging the commitment already made between husband and wife during a civil ceremony and asks for God's blessing and guidance in your new life together.

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Qualification for a wedding entails a number of attendances over a period of time at Church services both at St Michael's church and/or, for the convenience of couples at one of the other churches within the Astwick Vale Benefice of which St Michael's Church is a part. The Rector will discuss this with each wedding couple before they set out on their planning.

Because it is not a marriage service, banns are not required, there is no exchange of rings and there is no signing of the Register.

It can be designed to have a similar feel to a wedding with hymns, readings, flowers and even bells if you would like that, or it can be an intimate, low key service.

Many couples have opted for this service where one or both of them are remarrying after divorce. If this is your situation, talk things through with your vicar who can offer guidance on remarrying in church or having a blessing.

Further information is at <https://www.yourchurchwedding.org/article/wedding-blessings/>

Most importantly couples should email [office@astwickvalebenefice.org](mailto:office@astwickvalebenefice.org) to begin the fact finding and the discussion about the possibilities within the couple's circumstances.

#### Additional Information:

Fees – are charged in accordance with the Church of England's fees set out for each calendar year: additional charges for local things set out by Aynho's Parochial Church Council (PCC).

The details can be obtained by application to the [treasurer.stmichaels@aynho.org](mailto:treasurer.stmichaels@aynho.org)

Flowers – are welcomed in St Michael's Church for the wedding or blessing but there is guidance about how much and where, focussing on the celebration in the place of worship rather than turning the already lovely Church into a "Hollywood magical"!

