

Your Wedding in the United Benefice of Holland Park

Welcome and congratulations! We are delighted you have decided to have your wedding at St George's or St John's. We will do all we can to ensure your wedding day is a very happy one and that your marriage begins on the firmest of foundations.

We will help you to prepare carefully for your marriage, both with the logistics and emotionally and spiritually. You will be invited to a marriage preparation session where, in an informal way, we will discuss the practicalities, as well as some of the dynamics, of getting married.

Getting married doesn't need to cost a lot of money! The service itself is at a fee set nationally by the Church of England. Part of the fee goes to the church for the use of the building, and the rest is offset against the priest's salary. The church council sets its own additional fees for heating, the church organist, a choir or soloists – whatever you choose to have.

Inside this pack:

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- Some readings for your marriage service

FAQs

Logistics and liturgy

1. What form of Service should we have?

Three forms of Marriage Service are authorised by the Church of England, the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, the 1928 Revised Prayer Book, and the 2001 Common Worship. The first two are written in an older form of English, and the difference between them and the last is not just the language used but, more importantly, in the emphasis of what marriage is for. It may be that some people are attracted to the 'old' language but the emphasis there is on the transfer of property, while the 2001 Service is based on the relationship of love between the couple – it is the one we recommend. Whether the words are old or modern, the service will be conducted with beauty, dignity and warmth.

2. Do we need to have an Order of Service sheet?

Yes. The priest can provide you with examples. The Order of Service includes details of the music and readings as well as words of hymns and any prayers that the congregation will say. The two or three hymns you choose should be agreed with the priest in advance. Words and the number of verses of hymns can vary enormously so please be careful of versions downloaded from the internet as they may be set to match different tunes. We can email you the words of hymns if needed. Of your two readings, at least one must be from the Bible. The website www.yourchurchwedding.org provides lots of tips to help you plan your service. Do please remember to print extra copies for choir, organist and clergy. The final details of the service must be finalised in good time, at least two weeks before the service.

3. Who will be taking our service?

There are several clergy who conduct weddings, but it will be made clear to you at the beginning of the process of organising which member of the team will be conducting yours.

4. Does the bride have to be 'given away'? If so, must it be done by her father?

The answer is no, it isn't necessary for anyone to give the bride away, unless that is what you desire. Sometimes a member of the family walks down the aisle with the bride; some couples these days meet one another just inside the entrance of the church and walk down the aisle together.

5. Should we have ushers?

Ushers are needed to hand out service sheets and any buttonholes, to show people to their seats and generally to look after people. After the service they are needed to check that no cameras and other belongings have been left behind in the pews.

6. Does our marriage have to be witnessed?

Yes, by two people who are over the age of 18 and who understand English. Being present at the service, they sign the registers along with the bride, the groom and the officiating priest. *Please note, the bride must sign in her maiden name.* All signatures should be legible.

7. Can we have a choir?

Yes. Again please let us know at least six weeks in advance. A choir is not essential but can help lead the singing of the hymns as well as singing an anthem, if you want one, during the signing of the registers.

8. Will there be a rehearsal before our wedding day?

Yes, usually during the same week of the wedding. Generally speaking, only the bride and groom need to be present.

9. When should the bride, groom and ushers arrive?

The bridegroom and best man should arrive at least twenty minutes before the service. The ushers should also arrive at least thirty minutes before the service to give out service sheets. While it is traditional for the bride's party to sit on the left and the groom's on the right, this does not have to be the case; it is usually easier to have everyone sitting together. The bride and bridesmaids, page boys etc. should arrive no later than five minutes before the service. This gives time for photos to be taken on arrival and to have a quiet moment in the porch to calm last minute nerves! If you are using cars between home and church, please check whether there are any additional hazards - such as road closures.

10. Can photographs be taken during the marriage service?

This is a very special and sacred moment in your lives and the flashing and clicking of cameras is distracting. Your official photographer must speak to the clergy half an hour before the service to agree where photographs are allowed. There will be an opportunity for informal pictures and brief, formal poses with flash if wanted during the signing of the registers. Once the Service is over, photographs can be taken of you leaving the church and, of course, outside.

11. Are we allowed to have the service recorded by video camera?

Yes, but bear in mind that the fee doubles for *all* musicians (Director of Music, organist and choir). The video recordist should arrive in good time before the wedding so he or she can discuss with the clergy the best place to stand.

12. How long will the church service last?

Usually between 40 and 45 minutes, depending on how many readings and hymns you have. Great care is taken over the timing of services so it is extremely important that you arrive on time. Musicians and clergy often have other engagements to get to after the service so, if you are late, it may mean reducing part of the service!

13. Can our guests throw confetti?

Confetti must be bio-degradable like rice and rose petals because other kinds of 'confetti' are very difficult to sweep up! If you use these, they should be thrown outside well away from the church doorways.

14. Is there room for parking?

In a word, no! Parking in the surrounding streets is very restricted. Limited on-street parking is available on meters in the vicinity, though this can be busy. St George's is close to Notting Hill Gate and Holland Park underground stations, and the many buses which pass along Notting Hill Gate. St John's is a short walk from Olympia or Shepherds Bush stations.

15. Anything else?

If you have any additional queries, do call or email the Parish Office.

The legal bits

Qualifying to be married at St George's or St John's

Do we have to be baptised or confirmed to get married in the Church of England?

No, although we are always willing to discuss the possibility of baptism and/or confirmation with anyone who wants to learn more about the Christian faith.

How can we qualify to get married?

There are various ways in which you can qualify, as set down by law.

Banns

If either of you live in the parish you are entitled by law to be married at either church by Banns. Banns are the announcement during the church service during three successive Sundays of your intention to get married. They are designed to give you the chance to think over your choice, and to give the community an opportunity to object to your marriage on legal grounds.

If only one of you lives in the parish and your partner lives in another parish, you can get married here, but your banns have to be called both here and in the parish where your partner lives. It's your responsibility to make sure that your banns are called in the parish where you live. To prove that your banns have been called in the other parish, we will ask you to give us a Banns Certificate, which you can get from the priest of that parish. This needs to be given to us a fortnight before your wedding.

You can find out which parish you live in by going to www.achurchnearyou.com.

If you don't live in the parish

If neither of you lives in the parish, you can still qualify to get married by banns if either of you has a qualifying historical connection with the parish (which is explained below) or you qualify to go onto the electoral roll by attending public worship regularly for at least six months. After the six months has elapsed, you can complete an electoral roll form and return it to our Parish Office to get onto the electoral roll.

Qualifying Historical Connection

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

- 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

- a parent or grandparent of that person was married in the parish.

Evidence of any such connection will need to be produced to a member of the clergy.

If one or both of you has been divorced

The clergy will want to discuss with you how the previous marriage went wrong and the needs and concerns of any children from a previous relationship. If the clergy are happy to marry you then you can be married by banns under the same qualifying conditions as above. We will need to see a certified copy of your Decree Absolute – a Decree Nisi is not acceptable.

If you are not members of the Church of England

People of all denominations have the right to be married in their parish church. If one of you belongs to another faith, which is not Christian, then it may still be possible for you to get married but you must have the normal Christian service.

If you do not have British citizenship

If one or both of the applicants is subject to immigration control, then prior to marriage in church s/he must obtain a Superintendent Registrar's Certificate, which is valid for twelve months. This will require a letter from us confirming that we are willing to conduct the wedding on an agreed date.

If banns cannot be read or are defective

A common licence will be required when banns cannot be read because one of the couple is resident abroad or where the reading of the banns was defective.

If you are temporarily in the parish

Those temporarily in the parish (at least 15 days) can be married by Common Licence.

Other cases

There is also a special Archbishop's Licence if you cannot satisfy the 15 day requirement for a Common Licence but have ties with the parish and the permission of the Vicar.

Applying for a licence

The Common Licence should be applied for to one of the Diocesan Surrogates, which the clergy can advise you on.

The Superintendent Registrar's Certificate should be obtained from a local Registry Office. In the case of Holland Park this is Chelsea Old Town Hall, King's Road, London, SW3 5EE.

Contact Numbers and Fees

Contact details

The Parish Office
St George's Church
Aubrey Walk
London W8 7JG

Email: office@stgeorgescampdenhill.com

Tel: 020 36029873

Clergy

The Reverend Dr James Heard
The Reverend Peter Wolton
The Reverend Neil Traynor

Music

St George's

Director of Music: Andrew Wells

St John the Baptist

Director of Music: post vacant

Flowers: See separate section below.

Fees

In 2019 the fees are as follows:

Wedding:	£600
Organist (without choir):	£150
Organist (with choir):	£185
Choir:	Each singer £90; soloist £140
Heating (during winter months)	£50
Hire of community space and kitchen (up to four hours)	£150

Wedding fees should be paid no later than four weeks before your wedding day, by a BACS transfer, cash or currently-dated cheque, payable to 'St George's Church' or 'St John's Church' as appropriate.

Wedding 'to do' checklist

Between 12 and 6 weeks before the wedding:

- For those who live outside the parish, ask the vicar at your parish Anglican church(s) to read the banns.
- Get your names put on the church Electoral Roll at St George's or St John's.
- If you are divorced, provide us with the Decree Absolute.

By 6 weeks before the wedding:

- Let us know whether you would like the choir.
- Contact the Director of Music to discuss hymns and music for the service.

By 4 weeks before the wedding:

- Get clergy to check the draft Order of Service.

By 3 weeks before the wedding:

- Pay the wedding fees.
- Check the date and time for the rehearsal.
- Give the Parish Office the name and details of your florist.

Week of the wedding:

- Give banns forms/certificates to clergy.
- Contact to office to arrange delivery time of flowers.
- Bring printed service sheets to church.

Wedding music

Music is always a matter of personal taste. We are keen to help you choose music that is right for your wedding. Whether you decide that the music should be simple, or more elaborate, the choice of hymns and other pieces are very much up to you in consultation with the Director of Music and clergy. If you have no idea what you want or are totally confused by what is available, we can suggest suitable pieces.

- Before the service starts, the organist will play between ten and twenty minutes of music as the guests arrive. Please let us know if there is something you would particularly like to be played at this point.
- We recommend that you choose a short processional piece for the entry of the bride and something suitably happy and jolly for when you leave the church.
- You might also like to choose music to be played or sung during the signing of the registers – one or two pieces lasting about five minutes is usually enough.
- There are other places in the service where further anthems or solo pieces can be included. The Director of Music and clergy will be happy to discuss these with you.
- We include in this pack a list of hymns often used at weddings for you to look at and consider as well as suggestions for music during the signing of the register.

Music for your wedding is co-ordinated at each church by the Director of Music at that church. You do not necessarily have to choose traditional pieces for your wedding, although there are 'tried and tested' pieces that work very well in the church building. We are very happy to accommodate other choices, wherever possible, and the Director of Music will be able to advise on their suitability.

The Musicians

The number of musicians that you have performing for your wedding will depend very much on the music which you choose, the size of the event and your budget. It is always possible to find low-cost options which will work beautifully in the space.

- An organist is required to play the entry and exit pieces, accompany hymns and any other musical items. If you want your own organist to play (rather than ours) the full organist's fee is still payable. Your choice of organist is subject to the approval of the Director of Music.
- A choir is often employed to lead the hymn-singing and to perform choral works at the signing of the register and/or at other points in the service. The church uses fine professional singers who are selected by the Director of Music. A minimum of four singers is needed in the choir. However, some anthems require eight or more choristers.

- If you would like some solo music to be sung/played at your wedding, you will need a soloist. The soloist can often be drawn from the choir, although that singer will need to be paid a soloist's fee.

The Director of Music will find and co-ordinate musicians for your wedding, source music where necessary, and organise rehearsal time. You may have a friend or family member whom you would like to have perform at your wedding, and we are happy to accommodate this where possible.

Above all, **enjoy** choosing your wedding music. Don't be shy of having something that is well known or very different. We are here to help and to make sure your music enriches your wedding service. Do please ask us for any help you may need.

Please note that, if you would like to make an audio recording of your wedding service, the musicians' fees are increased by 50%. For videos, the fees are increased by 100%.

Popular wedding hymns

Title	NEH	Hymns Old & New
Alleluya, sing to Jesus	271	
And did those feet (Jerusalem)	488	
At the name of Jesus	338	
Be still for the presence of the Lord		53
Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart	339	
Come down, O Love divine	137	
Dear Lord and Father of mankind	353	
Father, hear the prayer we offer	357	
For the beauty of the earth	285	
Give me joy in my heart (Sing Hosanna)		153
Glorious things of thee are spoken	362	
Guide me, O thou great Redeemer	368	
I cannot tell (Londonderry Air/ Danny Boy)		226
I the Lord of Sea and Sky		235
Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us	393	
Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy	239	
Love divine, all loves excelling	408	
Now thank we all our God	413	
O Jesus, I have promised	420	
O worship the King	433	
O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness	52	
Praise, my soul, the King of heaven	436	
Seek ye first the kingdom of God		442
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord	186	
The King of love my Shepherd is	457	

To listen to a selection of hymns go to: www.yourchurchwedding.org.

Favourite Wedding Music

There are CDs available with recordings of wedding music which may help you to make a choice before discussing music with the Director of Music. Below is a list from one music publisher (Kevin Mayhew Ltd. 'Favourite Wedding Music')

You are not limited to this list but they may help give you some ideas.

Title	Composer	Time (mins.)
Bridal March from <i>Lohengrin</i>	Wagner	2.01
Te Deum Prelude	Charpentier	2.11
Arrival of the Queen of Sheba	Handel	4.04
Trumpet Voluntary	Clarke	2.34
Gavotte	Boyce	1.39
Trumpet Tune and Air	Purcell	3.19
Jesu, Joy of man's desiring	J.S. Bach	3.33
March from <i>Scipio</i>	Handel	1.49
Sheep may safely graze	J.S. Bach	4.08
Toccatina and Fugue in D Minor	J.S. Bach	9.49
Air and Suite No. 3 in D	J.S. Bach	4.52
Ave Maria	Schubert	2.35
St Anthony Chorale	Haydn	1.58
March from <i>Occasional Oratorio</i>	Handel	2.23
Largo from <i>Serse</i>	Handel	2.58
Wedding March	Mendelssohn	4.53
Badinerie, Second Orchestral Suite	J.S. Bach	1.35
Siciliano, Second Flute Sonata	J.S. Bach	2.36
Chanson de Matin	Elgar	4.04
Toccatina (Symphony No. 5)	Widor	6.17

Florists, Caterers and Printers

You are welcome to use your own florist, but we recommend Mystique Flowers, who know St George's and St John's especially well. They can be contacted on 020 7371 5888

Please be aware that the church is often used throughout the week, so when you have chosen your florist, please liaise with the Parish Office regarding access to the church to find a mutually suitable time slot.

You may choose your own printers, but we can offer suggestions if needed.

If you are interested in providing drinks / food after the service in our community space, please let us know. You can use your own caterer, but we recommend:

All in Hand Catering
<http://allinhandcatering.com>
Mike Glennon - 07739 564072

or

Maureen Suan-Neo
<http://maureensuanneo.co.uk>
maureen_suan_neo@yahoo.com
07815 068437

Notes for Florists

1. Please liaise in good time for access to the church by calling the administrator at the Parish Office on 020 3602 9873.
2. It is assumed that unless otherwise arranged, the flowers will remain in church for the following Sunday. However, in Advent and Lent, all flowers must be removed before the Sunday.
3. No flowers or extra candles are to be placed on the altar, or the font.
4. Please ensure that aisles and passageways are not blocked and that those parts of the church used for the service are not obscured by flowers.
5. St George's has pedestals on which flower displays can be mounted.
6. No drawing pins are to be used.
7. If a candelabra are used, suitable matting must be placed underneath to prevent wax damaging the floors.

Readings

There is a space in the wedding service for two readings. Frequently, couples choose to have one biblical reading and one non-biblical. Here are some suggestions.

OLD TESTAMENT AND APOCRAPHA

Genesis 1.26-28

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Song of Solomon 2.10-13, 8.6-7

My beloved speaks and says to me:

'Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;
for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.'

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm;
for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave.

Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame.

Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it.

If one offered for love all the wealth of one's house, it would be utterly scorned.

Jeremiah 31.31-34

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt – a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Tobit 8.4-8

When the parents had gone out and shut the door of the room, Tobias got out of bed and said to Sarah, 'Sister, get up, and let us pray and implore our Lord that he grant us mercy and safety.' So she got up, and they began to pray and implore that they might be kept safe.

Tobias began by saying,

'Blessed are you, O God of our ancestors,
and blessed is your name in all generations for ever.

Let the heavens and the whole creation bless you for ever.

You made Adam, and for him you made his wife Eve as a helper and support.

From the two of them the human race has sprung.

You said, "It is not good that the man should be alone;
let us make a helper for him like himself."

I now am taking this kinswoman of mine,
not because of lust, but with sincerity.

Grant that she and I may find mercy
and that we may grow old together.'

And they both said, 'Amen, amen.'

NEW TESTAMENT**Matthew 5: 1-10**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and he taught them, saying:

'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst in the cause of righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'.

Mark 10: 6-11 and 13-16

Jesus said, 'From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female.

For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife,
and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh.

Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate'.

People were bringing little children to him, in order that he might touch them;

and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant,
and he said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them;

for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.

Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God

as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms,

and he laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

John 2: 1-14

On the third day, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine'. And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come'. His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'

Now, standing nearby, there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it.

When the steward had tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (although the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

John 15: 1-8

Jesus said to his disciples, 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower.

He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit.

Every branch that bears fruit, he prunes to make it bear more fruit.

You have already been cleansed, by the word that I have spoken to you.

Abide in me as I abide in you.

Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself,

unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.

Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit,

because apart from me, you can do nothing.

Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch,

and they wither. Such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you,

ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples'.

John 15: 9-12 (and possibly verses 16-17 also)

Jesus said to his disciples, 'As the Father has loved me,

so I have loved you; abide in my love.

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love,

just as I have kept my Father's commandments and I abide in his love.

I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you,

and that your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

(You may also wish to read verses 16-17)

'You did not choose me, I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last;

so that my Father may give you whatever you ask in my name.

This is my commandment to you: love one another.

Romans 7.1, 2, 9-18

Do you not know, brothers and sisters – for I am speaking to those who know the law – that the law is binding on a person only during that person’s lifetime? Thus a married woman is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives; but if her husband dies, she is discharged from the law concerning the husband.

I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, and the very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. For sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.

Did what is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.

Romans 8.31-35, 37-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies.

Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who dies, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 12.1-2, 9-13

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

I Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels,
but do not have love, I am a noisy gong, or a clanging cymbal.

And if I have prophetic powers,
and understand all mysteries and all knowledge,
and if I have faith so as to remove mountains,
but do not have love, I am nothing.

If I give away all my possessions,
and if I hand over my body to be burned,
but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind.

Love is not envious, or boastful or arrogant or rude.

It does not insist on its own way;
it is not irritable or resentful.

It does not rejoice in wrongdoing,
but rejoices in the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things,
hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends.

But as for prophecies, they will come to an end.

As for tongues, they will cease;
as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

So faith, hope, love abide, these three;
and the greatest of these is love.

Colossians 3: 12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another; and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body.

And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Philippians 4: 4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I will say, Rejoice.

Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable,

if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received, and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

I John 3: 18-24

Little children, let us love in deed and in truth, and not merely talk about it.
This is our way of knowing we are committed to the truth, and are at peace before him,
no matter what our consciences may charge us with;
for God is greater than our hearts and all is known to him.
Beloved, if our consciences have nothing to charge us with, we can be sure of this;
that God is with us and that we will receive at his hands whatever we ask.
Why? Because we are keeping his commandments, and doing what is pleasing in his sight.
His commandment is this: we are to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ,
and we are to love one another as he commanded us.
Those who keep his commandments remain in him and he in them.
And this is how we know that he remains in us: from the Spirit that he gave us.

I John 4: 7-12

Beloved, let us love one another because love is of God;
everyone who loves is begotten of God and has knowledge of God.
The one without love has known nothing of God, for God is love.
God's love was revealed in our midst in this way: he sent his only Son to the world,
so that we might have life through him.
Love, then, consists in this: not that we have loved God,
but that he has loved us, and has sent his Son as an offering for our sins.
Beloved, if God has loved us so, we must have the same love for one another.
No one has ever seen God. Yet if we love one another God dwells in us,
and his love is brought to perfection in us.

NON SCRIPTURAL READING SUGGESTIONS

Ancient Sanskrit

Look well to this day for it is life, the very best of life.
In its brief course lie all the realities and truth of existence:
the joy of growth, the splendour of action, the glory of power.
For yesterday is but a memory, and tomorrow is only a vision;
but today, if well lived, makes every yesterday a memory of happiness,
and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day.

A Reading from *The Prophet* by Kahil Gibran 'On Marriage'

Then Almitra spoke again and said,
'And what of marriage, master?'
And he answered saying:
'You were born together,
and together you shall be, for evermore.
You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.
Aye, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.
But let there be spaces in your togetherness.
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.
Love one another, but make not a bond of love:
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.

Fill each other's cup but drink not from the one cup.
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous,
but let each one of you be alone.
Even as the strings of a lute are alone,
though they quiver with the same music.
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together - yet not too near together,
for the pillars of the temple stand apart,
and the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

A Reading from *The Prophet* by Kahil Gibran 'On Friendship'

Your friend is your needs answered.
She* is your field which you sow with love,
and reap with thanksgiving.
And she is your board and your fireside.
For you come to her with your hunger, and you seek her for peace.
When your friend speaks her mind,
you fear not the 'nay' in your own mind,
nor do you withhold the 'ay'.
And when she is silent your heart ceases not to listen to her heart;
for even without words,
in friendship, all thoughts, all desires,
all expectations are born and shared with joy that is unclaimed.
When you part from your friend, you grieve not;
for that which you love most in her may be clearer in her absence,
as the mountain to the climber is clearer from the plain.
And let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit.
For love that seeks aught but the disclosure of its own mystery, is not love,
but a net cast forth: and only the unprofitable is caught.
And let your best be for your friend.
If she must know the ebb of your tide, let her know its flood also.
For what is your friend that you should seek her with hours to kill?
Seek her always with hours to live.
For it is hers to fill your need, but not your emptiness.
And in the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures.
For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.

**The pronoun 'she' or 'he' may be used, whichever you find most appropriate.*